

# THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 45, NO. 4 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY WINTER 2025

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

FOUNDED 1952



4

AOS 2025 FALL MEETING

**AOS 2025 FALL MEETING REPORT  
AND COMPILATION**

*by Greg D. Jackson*

6

**AOS 2025 FALL BOARD  
MEETING REPORT**

*by Dee Gertler*

## IN THIS ISSUE

7

**AOS 2025 FALL MEETING  
MEET YOUR NEW AOS  
OFFICERS**

*Cover: A Canada Warbler visits the Gertler's  
new water feature. (Alan Gertler)*

8

**BACKYARD BIRDING  
BACKYARD WATER FEATURE**  
*by Alan & Dee Gertler*

9

**AOS 2025 WINTER MEETING  
MEETING SCHEDULE, FIELD  
TRIPS, MEET THE SPEAKER:  
BONNER BLACK**

## ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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 THE YELLOWHAMMER.....Robert Reed  
 ALABAMA BIRD RECORDS.....Greg Jackson  
 NORTHWEST FLORIDA BIRD RECORDS....Bob Duncan  
 AOS ARCHIVES CURATOR.....VACANT

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 Greg Jackson, Craig Litteken,  
 Eric Soehren, Collin Stempien

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

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 Shirley Farrell, Stan and Dana Hamilton, Don Self

#### FIELD TRIPS

Patsy Russo

#### DAN C. HOLLIMAN RESEARCH FUND

Greg Harber  
 Scot Duncan, Eric Soehren

#### MEETINGS

Dianna and Paul Porter



WELCOME TO NOTES FROM THE Nest! Before I share highlights from our Fall Meeting and upcoming plans,

I want to begin with heartfelt thanks to Drew Haffenden, our past president, for his exceptional leadership. Drew brought in internationally known speakers, introduced skill-building workshops to sharpen our bird identification skills, and worked closely with the City of Dauphin Island to secure a beautiful meeting location—no more setting up and taking down tables and chairs! Beyond logistics, Drew has also dedicated himself to conserving vital migratory habitats and monitoring shorebird populations. Thank you, Drew, for all you've done to advance birding in Alabama and beyond.

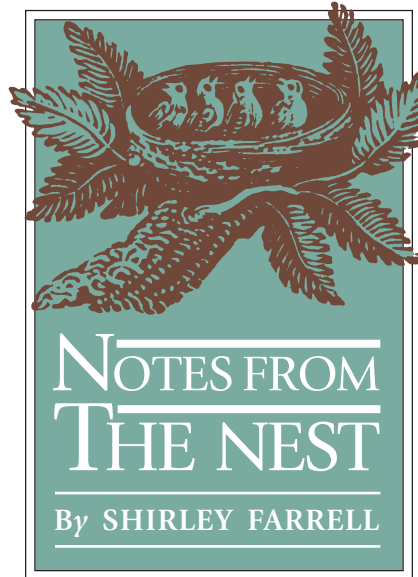
The Fall Meeting offered a variety of exciting birds, such as Roseate Spoonbill—though not always in large numbers! While that elusive Yellow-headed Blackbird managed to evade us all during the official count, we still recorded 149 species overall. Our keynote speaker, Tom Stephenson, co-author of *The Warbler Guide*, treated us to two outstanding sessions. On Friday night, a fascinating short history of field guide technology and comparisons of different field guides, and on Saturday night, an excellent tutorial on faster and more accurate warbler identification using new visual details, such as undertail covert patterns.

Our compilation session came with a side of freshly baked Subway cookies—because who says a little positive reinforcement doesn't work? I'm not opposed to a touch of bribery if it means keeping everyone around for the compilation. You can expect a treat at every one of them—consider it a new AOS tradition worth sticking around for!

Photos from the Saturday night session and the compilation are available on the AOS Facebook page, so be sure to follow us there for updates, photos, and future event details.

As I step into the role of President, I've learned that some longtime members didn't realize AOS is still very active. Let's change that narrative! We've been birding across Alabama and Northwest Florida since 1952, and we're still going strong.

One of Drew's final initiatives as president was forming the AOS Outreach Committee, chaired by Greg Jackson, to



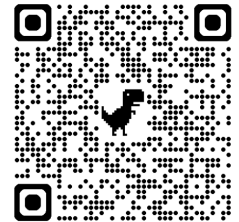
strengthen connections with both current and potential members. The committee is developing free events and field trips, and we'll be posting a calendar of events on our website along with monthly reminder emails (except during *Yellowhammer* publication months). Keep checking the AOS website for these trips.

Member slide shows will return to Friday evenings at our three annual meetings, with each participant sharing up to 10 slides. (Yes, I'm putting a cap on it!) We'll also feature a Friday presentation or workshop—sometimes led by members, sometimes by keynote speakers—focused on bird identification, habitat, or behavior.

Saturday afternoon will also include a special presentation or workshop. Wait until you read about the winter meeting's special Saturday presentation. You will be up close and personal with some special winged friends.

To help us plan meetings and programs that best meet your interests, please scan the QR code or use the link provided to complete our AOS Member Survey. Your feedback will guide our programming and help us nurture future AOS leaders.

Thank you for being part of our vibrant community of birders, learners, and conservationists. Together, we'll continue to watch, wonder, and protect the incredible avian life that connects us. I look forward to seeing you—binoculars in hand and sweet treats at compilation—at our next meeting!



### Membership Dues

Membership dues are for the *calendar year*, so as we approach the new year, don't forget to renew your membership. Better yet, go ahead and join for life and stop paying each year. Send your check, payable to AOS, to Hal Smith, 3590 Eagle Nest, Opelika, AL 36801, or online at AOSbirds.org. NOTE: After February 1, 2026, send your check, payable to AOS, to the new Treasurer, Lori Oswald, 303 Le June Way, Birmingham, AL 35209.

AOS FALL MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, OCTOBER 10-12, 2025

## AOS Fall Meeting Report

By GREG D. JACKSON

**T**HE OCTOBER 2025 AOS MEETING HELD ON Dauphin Island was both a treat and bird-wise, a bit of a letdown. On Friday night, we were enlightened by a brief, but fascinating trip through the history of American ornithology by “Mr. Warbler” himself, Tom Stephenson, a professional bird tour guide and writer who co-authored the excellent photo guide on North American wood-warblers (*The Warbler Guide*, also available as a phone app).

Tom led us on the traditional Saturday morning “Exploring Dauphin Island” field trip. I tagged along as co-leader to navigate and facilitate, and we were joined at various times by 10 to 15 good birders, including the pleasurable company of most of the Duncan Birding Machine (Bob, Lucy, and Scot)!

We faced two big challenges as we hopped around the Island’s best songbird spots. First, it was probably the slowest passerine migration weekend I can recall there. Even worse, we had to fight and work around strong NE winds making birding difficult and keeping birds in the cover. We decided to do the best we could and go for “lemonade out of lemons.”

We gathered early near Green Park, then caravanned to the airport. Emerging from our vehicles in that open area we quickly learned of the local wind conditions! The marsh grass was whipping all around, and what birds dared pop up quickly dove back into the vegetation. Even the large waders and shorebirds present the prior morning were now scarce in that “gentle breeze.” Many people eventually got glimpses of distant Marsh Wrens and Seaside Sparrows, and a few larger birds were noted in flight, but it was a challenge. A small group of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, now regular on the Island and many other spots on the Alabama coast, passed in the distance. The Reddish Egret that was so evident the prior day wasn’t on display, nor were the Black-crowned Night Herons viewed previously. (Of course, the following morning was beautiful and calm at the airport, with birds obvious and cooperative—just the way things go sometimes!)

We decided to check the East End of the Island around Ft. Gaines but dealt with windy conditions there as well. A small flock of Palm Warblers was in view near the fort but there were few other songbirds other than gnatcatchers. Scot spotted a Merlin which flew right over our heads, always fun. At this point it was time for us to emulate the birds and dive into the cover of the Shell Mounds, hoping the changing weather had brought a bounty for us.

It was not to be, and this was obvious not long after stepping out of the car. Just a few birds were present at first on the south and east sides of the Mounds. We had nice studies in a live oak, then lower in a weedy patch, of a Prairie Warbler with discussion by Tom of the identification points. Eventually wandering through the less windy portions of the Mounds led to a few other warblers such as Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Northern Parula, and Magnolia, but numbers were low. Only a few other passerines were evident.

It was time to move on, and with the weather we felt the Goat Trees might be a good spot. It was still slow birding there, but at least a few songbirds were about for study and comment. Scattered vireos and warblers were present, and Lucy spotted a Veery which thankfully stayed in good view for all. The best warbler show of the morning was certainly provided by a beautiful Yellow-throated which was fascinated, and quite irritated, by its image in the side mirror of a car parked near the entrance. We watched this bird for several minutes at close range attacking the “intruder” who dared be in his presence; this phantom sometimes appeared in the car’s side windows, too, raising the level of frustration for this lovely warbler!

Others on the island photographed a Vermillion Flycatcher on Cadillac, and a select few found a Roseate Spoonbill.

The morning was coming to a close, and after some discussion of conditions we decided to end the formal field trip. It was a great experience being with Tom and hearing his expert comments on warblers and many other species. We thank Tom for sharing this knowledge in the field and at the

evening presentations. And, of course, it was just fun being in the field with the great folks of AOS!

Saturday evening, we elected new officers for the coming two years—more about that From the Nest.

Then we were again honored by Tom sharing with us many useful warbler ID tips. The banquet was awesome as usual. It is always a treat to visit and catch up with friends we see only two or three times a year.

### *2025 AOS Fall Meeting Compilation List Dauphin Island, Alabama, October 10-12*

**N**OTEWORTHY BIRDS OF THE WEEKEND WERE ROSEATE Spoonbill, Shiny Cowbird, Bronzed Cowbird, and Marbled Godwit. Count total was 149 species.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	Short-billed Dowitcher
Canada Goose	Lesser Yellowlegs
Blue-winged Teal	Willet
Mallard	Greater Yellowlegs
Ruddy Duck	Gull-billed Tern
Pied-billed Grebe	Caspian Tern
Inca Dove	Forster's Tern
White-winged Dove	Royal Tern
Mourning Dove	Sandwich Tern
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Black Skimmer
Rock Pigeon	Laughing Gull
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Ring-billed Gull
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	American Herring Gull
Clapper Rail	Lesser Black-backed Gull
Virginia Rail	Double-crested Cormorant
Common Gallinule	White Ibis
Purple Gallinule	<i>Roseate Spoonbill</i>
American Avocet	Brown Pelican
American Oystercatcher	American Bittern
Black-bellied Plover	Little Blue Heron
Killdeer	Reddish Egret
Semipalmated Plover	Snowy Egret
Snowy Plover	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
<i>Marbled Godwit</i>	Green Heron
Ruddy Turnstone	Great Egret
Red Knot	Western Cattle-Egret
Stilt Sandpiper	Great Blue Heron
Sanderling	Black Vulture
Dunlin	Turkey Vulture
Baird's Sandpiper	Osprey
Least Sandpiper	Sharp-shinned Hawk
Pectoral Sandpiper	Cooper's Hawk
Western Sandpiper	Northern Harrier

Bald Eagle  
Red-shouldered Hawk  
Broad-winged Hawk  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Eastern Screech-Owl  
Great Horned Owl  
Barred Owl  
Belted Kingfisher  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
Downy Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
American Kestrel  
Merlin  
Peregrine Falcon  
Eastern Kingbird  
Eastern Wood-Pewee  
Eastern Phoebe  
Vermillion Flycatcher  
White-eyed Vireo  
Red-eyed Vireo  
Loggerhead Shrike  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Fish Crow  
Carolina Chickadee  
Tufted Titmouse  
Bank Swallow  
Tree Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Brown-headed Nuthatch  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Carolina Wren  
Northern House Wren  
Marsh Wren  
Gray Catbird  
Brown Thrasher  
Northern Mockingbird  
European Starling  
Eastern Bluebird  
Veery  
Swainson's Thrush  
Hermit Thrush  
Wood Thrush  
Scaly-breasted Munia  
House Sparrow  
House Finch  
Seaside Sparrow  
Lincoln's Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow

Eastern Towhee  
Eastern Meadowlark  
Orchard Oriole  
Red-winged Blackbird  
*Shiny Cowbird*  
*Bronzed Cowbird*  
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Common Grackle  
Boat-tailed Grackle  
Northern Waterthrush  
Black-and-white Warbler  
Tennessee Warbler  
Orange-crowned Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Hooded Warbler  
American Redstart  
Northern Parula  
Magnolia Warbler  
Blackburnian Warbler  
Yellow Warbler  
Chestnut-sided Warbler  
Palm Warbler  
Pine Warbler  
Yellow-throated Warbler  
Prairie Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler  
Scarlet Tanager  
Northern Cardinal  
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 **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.

# AOS Board Meeting Report

By DEE GERTLER



THE AOS board meeting was called to order by President Haffenden on October 3, 2025 at 6:10 p.m. via TEAMS. The April 2025 minutes were approved.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Lori Oswald reported for Hal Smith that a new Quicken program has been purchased. Total assets are \$49,787, with DIBS donations of \$1,260. The fall meeting has 39 registrants. VP Shirley Farrell has the checkbook and will sign all checks at this time.

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

VP Farrell announced the new slate of officers:

President            Shirley Farrell  
 Vice President:   Craig Litteken  
 Treasurer:        Lori Oswald  
 Secretary:        Dana Hamilton  
 Field Trips:       Patsy Russo  
 Meetings:         Dianna and Paul Porter

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**BIRD RECORDS:** The new checklist is out. Changes affect the order and names but not in the number of species in Alabama at present.

**ALABAMA BIRDLIFE:** Eric Soehren submitted his report that *Alabama Birdlife* Vol. 70, no. 2 (December 2024) is completed and under final review. Eric and Robin McDonald are considering a change of printing companies as photo quality in recent issues doesn't meet their standard. We will switch to Alabama Power Company if pricing is similar.

**THE YELLOWHAMMER:** Bob Reed needs input for the newsletter, especially photos.

**CENSUSING:** Greg Jackson reported two summer counts were held in Clay and the northern part of Mobile County.

## NEW BUSINESS

**AOS Promotion:** Greg Jackson does not want the organization to lose relevance—we have great birders, a long history and many important projects as our legacy.

A number of projects to enhance AOS outreach in the birding community were proposed by Greg Jackson and Shirley Farrell. Detailed discussion ensued and work on these concepts was requested by the Board.

Larry Gardella moved to form a committee, chaired by Greg Jackson and to include Shirley Farrell, Joe Watts, Larry Gardella, Annabel Markle and Molly Caldwell, to work on the proposed projects for promotion of AOS. The motion passed unanimously.

Greg Jackson moved that any person or family who has not previously held membership and who registers for a meeting, shall be eligible for a one-year free membership in AOS, to include one year of free publications. The motion passed unanimously.

President Haffenden stated that the post office box on Dauphin Island should be renewed as it is \$100 and entitles the group to discounted Dauphin Island space rental for meetings.

The next board meeting is Friday, January 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

### *Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions*

Spring 2026	February 10, 2026
Summer 2026	May 10, 2026
Fall 2026	August 10, 2026

# Meet Our New Officers



*President*

**DR. SHIRLEY J. FARRELL**

Shirley Farrell serves as an Associate Professor and Program Coordinator for Gifted Education at Troy University. A respected leader in concept-based and technology-enhanced instruction, she integrates innovative digital tools, artificial intelligence, and creative design to prepare educators for the evolving needs of gifted and talented learners. Her national presentations and workshops highlight her expertise in the intersection of pedagogy, technology, and innovation.

Outside the university, Shirley swaps laptops for binoculars. She is a lifetime member of AOS and combines her passions for teaching and birdwatching through outreach projects like *Flying WILD*, which invites others to explore the science and wonder of birdlife across the state. She loves gardening and creates gardens at schools and her home. Whether leading professional development, designing AI-integrated lessons, or identifying warblers along the Gulf Coast, Dr. Farrell is dedicated to helping others see the connections between learning, technology, and the natural world.



*Vice President*

**CRAIG LITTEKEN**

Craig Litteken is a long-time birder currently living in Daphne. He is originally from cow and corn country in southern Illinois, east of St. Louis, Missouri. After a few years living in Columbia, Missouri, and a brief stop in Washington DC, Craig moved to Daphne in 2007 with his wife and two daughters. Most of Craig's birding happens in Baldwin and Mobile counties, but he can sometimes be found checking out birding spots throughout the state, especially in north Alabama. Craig is also currently a member of the Alabama Bird Records Committee. In his professional career, he works for the federal government doing project management for large infrastructure projects throughout the U.S.



*Treasurer*

**LORI OSWALD**

Lori Oswald was first introduced to birding by attending the Audubon Mountain Workshop in the mid-1980s. She enjoys birding every day whether in her back yard, on Dauphin Island, traveling around Alabama, across the United States or internationally. A pair of binoculars is always nearby. She is a longtime member of AOS and current AOS Treasurer and past President and current Treasurer of Alabama Audubon. Lori is a retired CPA and worked mainly in the financial services industry, including PricewaterhouseCoopers, Regions Bank (formerly AmSouth Bank) and Protective Life Corporation. She is a graduate of Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business.



*Secretary*

**DANA HAMILTON**

Dana Hamilton grew up in Oxford, Alabama, attended the University of Alabama and Birmingham Southern College, then worked in federal civil service until her retirement in 2011. Dana lives in Irondale with her husband of 43 years, Stan Hamilton, and her two strictly indoor kitties, Gabby and Simba. Dana is a long-time member of AOS. She participates in Christmas Bird Counts, Breeding Bird Surveys, and the Summer Bird Counts. She first became interested in birding by watching and learning the local birds coming to the feeder. Then a friend invited Stan and Dana to join a day trip to see Wood Storks in a swamp near Gainesville, Alabama. She was hooked and began traveling to see birds and wildlife around Alabama and then further afield to Africa, Asia, South America, Central America, and the continental United States. Additionally, she travels to Europe and the United Kingdom for art, history, and sightseeing. Dana enjoys learning about native plants, tending her pollinator garden, learning wildlife photography, and seeing live music.

## A Backyard Water Feature

**S**EVERAL TRIPS TO CHAPMAN Mountain Preserve convinced us that we should add a water feature to our own backyard. We already had a birdbath with drip but felt many of the migrants were not dropping in.

We completed the feature in March 2025 (thanks to the Lewises for instructions) and knew that when the titmice started visiting every day we might be rewarded. The addition of more native plants (kudos Michelle Reynolds) was definitely an upgrade.

To date, we have recorded 40 species at the feature, including 14 warbler and

*BELOW: The water feature (center) has attracted 14 warbler species in 2025, including Black-and-white (left) and Kentucky (right). (All by Alan Gertler)*

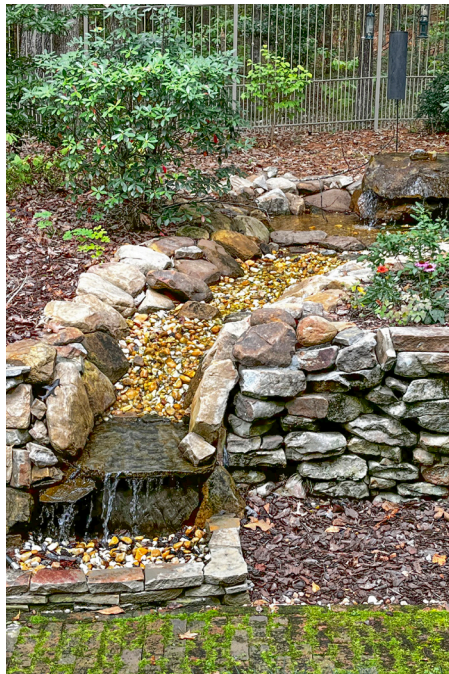


four thrush species (Swainson's, Gray-cheeked, Hermit, Veery,). We missed Ovenbird, Hooded, and Bay-breasted warblers, which have visited in past years but hope to see them next year.

This year's warblers included Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, Kentucky, Canada, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided, Pine, Tennessee, Nashville, Yellow-rumped, Northern Parula, and American Redstart.

Teaching our landscape crew not to remove our "perches" over the feature and not to blow all the leaves from the yard is an ongoing task.

And many lessons have been learned the hard way—triple lining is a must, certified electrician/plumber a must, and that horticulturalist on staff should be confirmed in writing.



AOS WINTER MEETING, GUNTERSVILLE STATE PARK, JANUARY 23-25, 2026

# AOS Winter Meeting Schedule



OUR WINTER MEETING WILL BE A RETURN TO Guntersville State Park in Guntersville, Alabama. Unless otherwise noted, all activities begin or occur at Lake Guntersville Lodge. This same weekend is also Eagle Awareness Weekend. Although we are a separate event from the Eagle Weekend, you will be able to browse the exhibitor tables. However, reserve your room early to ensure you are staying at the lodge.

The lodge is located at 1155 Lodge Drive, Guntersville, Alabama 35976. For more information, contact the reservations department at (256) 505-6621 to reserve your room for the winter meeting January 24-26, 2026. To make reservations online, go to: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/lake-guntersville-state-park>. May need to use group code AOS.

Choose from cabins that rest on the bank of the Guntersville Lake, chalets nestled in the ridge-tops, or the resort lodge on the pinnacle of Taylor Mountain that offers a stunning view. Select accommodations are handicap accessible. When making the reservation tell them you are with the Alabama Ornithological Society to get our rate. In addition to the cost of the room, there will be taxes and fees added.

Casual dress is appropriate throughout the meeting. However, the wind is chilling as it blows across the lake. Dress warm with coats, hats, and gloves.

**To register online for the AOS winter meeting, go to: [AOSBirds.org](http://AOSBirds.org)**

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2026

**6:00 p.m.** Board Meeting via TEAMS

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2026

Birding on your own if you arrive early.

**5:00 p.m.** Dinner on your own

**5:30 p.m.** Registration—Goldenrod Room

**6:00 p.m.** Social Hour—Goldenrod Room  
finger foods, tea and water

**7:00 p.m.** **Special Presentation** with Michelle Reynolds  
"Country, Coastal and City Shrikes:  
Loggerhead Shrikes of Alabama"  
Goldenrod Room (See page 12 for details)

**7:45 p.m.** Member Photos—You must preregister  
with Shirley Farrell to show photos. Limit  
of 10 photos per person.

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2026

**7:00 a.m.** **Field Trip 1:** Exploring South Sauty Creek  
and Morgan's Cove: *The Snipe Hunt Returns!*  
Meet in the Lodge (See page 10 for details)

**7:00 a.m.** **Field Trip 2:** Guntersville City Shores:  
Gulls and Divers. Meet in the Lodge Lobby  
**OR** 7:30 a.m. at the City Harbor parking lot  
(See page 10 for details)

**4:00 p.m.** **Special Presentation** "Raptors of Alabama"  
with Raptor Ridge and Valerie Castanza  
Goldenrod Room

**5:00 p.m.** Registration—Goldenrod Room

**5:30 p.m.** Social hour—Goldenrod Room

**6:00 p.m.** Dinner—Goldenrod Room

**7:00 p.m.** Announcements

**7:15 p.m.** **Keynote Speaker:** "Beyond The Birds"  
with Bonner Black (See page 13 for details)

**9:00 p.m.** Adjourn

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

**8:00 a.m.** Birding on your own

**12 noon** Compilation in the Lodge Lobby  
with sweet treats

## *AOS Winter Meeting Field Trips*

**Saturday, January 24, 2026, 7:00 a.m.**

**Field Trip 1: High Falls and Morgan's Cove:  
The Snipe Hunt Returns!**

**Leaders: Michelle and Linda Reynolds**

This exciting new destination for our Guntersville meeting is one that Linda Reynolds calls a "must see!" We'll begin our morning at High Falls, taking in the breathtaking cascade and scanning the area for winter visitors that frequent the surrounding woodlands and waters.

Afterward, we'll make our way to Morgan's Cove, where our last visit turned into a real-life snipe hunt—we counted 100 snipes on a sandbar and discovered a Great Blue Heron rookery tucked high in the pines across South Sauty Creek. This year, we'll return to explore South Sauty Creek and Morgan's Cove (Site #49, Northeast Loop), a beautiful stretch within Buck's Pocket State Park known for its rich habitat variety and surprise sightings.

The calm waters here attract migratory waterfowl, Great Blue Herons, and Great Egrets, while the forested slopes nearby are home to Bald Eagles. Don't blink when we reach

the cove—Belted Kingfishers may dive dramatically for their dinner! We'll also keep our eyes open for the distinctive Loggerhead Shrike—place your bets now: how many do you think we'll spot this time?

Pack your binoculars, your sense of adventure, and maybe a snack or two—this High Falls and Morgan's Cove birding trip is one you won't want to miss!

**Saturday, January 24, 2026, 7:00 a.m.**

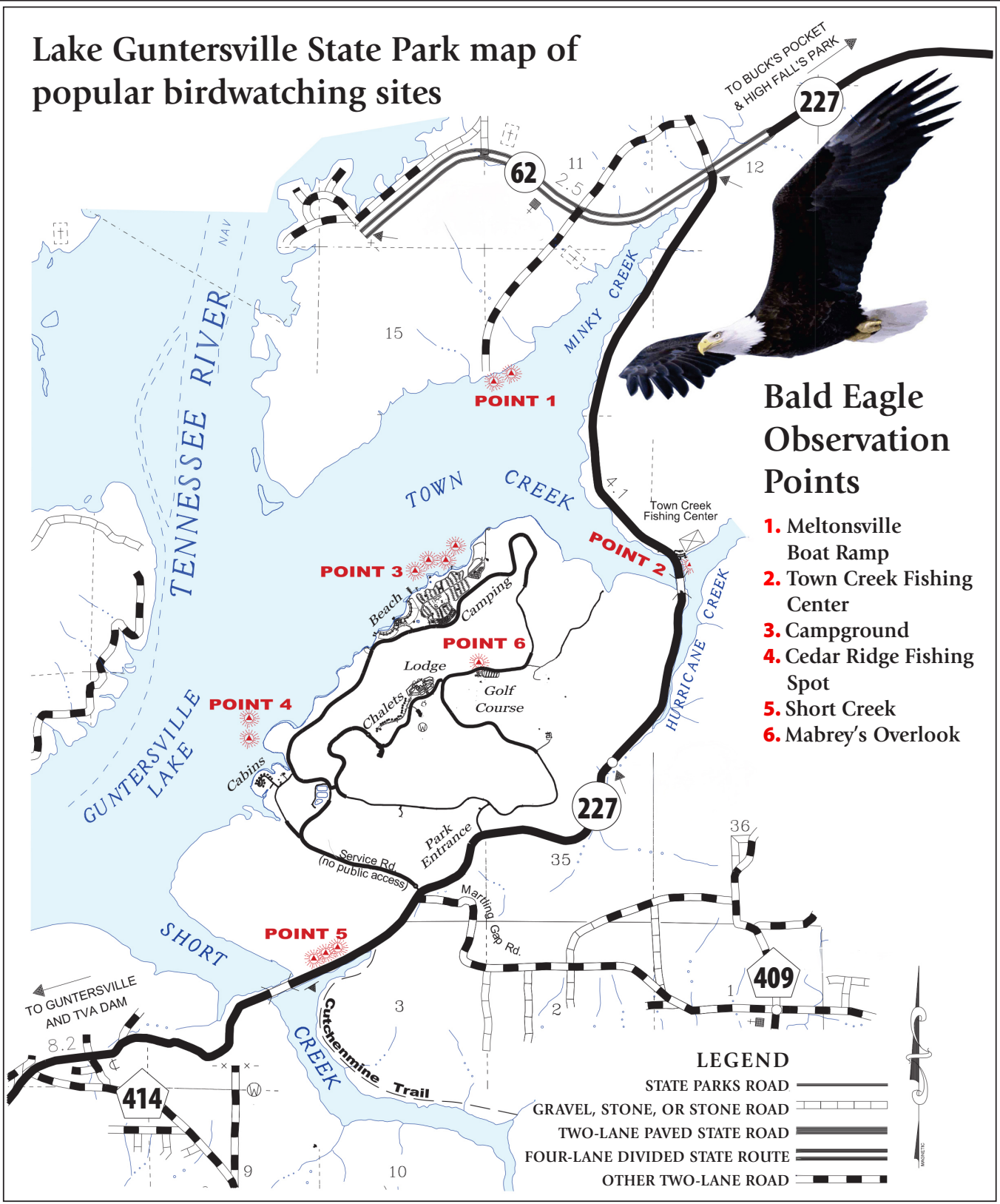
**Field Trip 2: Guntersville City Shores: Gulls and Divers  
Leader: Greg D. Jackson**

We will spend time at multiple sites along the shore in the city of Guntersville looking mostly for waterbirds (especially diving birds and gulls). This will include City Harbor (the starting point) and the northern and western shoreline of the town peninsula looking at Brown's Creek embayment and the junction with the Tennessee River. Other areas might be included based on time and known birds of interest. Carpooling is encouraged; bring a telescope if you have one, and plan for an invigorating breeze and a fun time!

*A Common Loon in winter plumage floats on Lake Guntersville, Alabama's largest lake. (Bob Reed)*



# Lake Guntersville State Park map of popular birdwatching sites



## Bald Eagle Observation Points

- 1.** Meltonville Boat Ramp
- 2.** Town Creek Fishing Center
- 3.** Campground
- 4.** Cedar Ridge Fishing Spot
- 5.** Short Creek
- 6.** Mabrey's Overlook

### LEGEND

- STATE PARKS ROAD
- GRAVEL, STONE, OR STONE ROAD
- TWO-LANE PAVED STATE ROAD
- FOUR-LANE DIVIDED STATE ROUTE
- OTHER TWO-LANE ROAD

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## Winter Meeting Special Presentations

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**Friday, 7:00 p.m., Goldenrod Room**  
**“Country, Coastal and City Shrikes: Loggerhead**  
**Shrikes of Alabama” with Michelle Reynolds**



The Loggerhead Shrike is fierce—a bird of prey trapped in songbird’s body, masked and dangerous with a hooked beak, and tough as nails! *Lanius ludovicianus*, also known as the Butcher Bird, is a grassland species of conservation concern, with declining num-

bers in many areas, and elusive where it is still fairly common. Sometimes, to find the bird, it’s more productive to begin the search by looking for the larder—the shrike pantry of impaled or wedged prey for later consumption.

Join Michelle Reynolds (AOS member and self-described obsessed shrikaholic) for a slideshow and stories about this unique grassland species. She will entertain you with her observations of shrike predatory methods, perching places, caching habits, interesting nesting behavior, and their overall adaptability to man-made structures and altered landscapes across Alabama.

**Saturday, 4:00 p.m., Goldenrod Room**  
**“Raptors of Alabama” with Raptor Ridge**  
**and Valerie Costanza**



Raptor Ridge Wildlife Education is an award-winning interactive outreach program that focuses on the vital role raptors play in the natural world. We strive to teach the importance of environmental stewardship and develop a passion for protecting our natural resources. Join Val-

erie Costanza and the team of amazing “creature teachers” to learn about some of the beautiful raptors that call Alabama home.

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## New Members

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Angelia Baggett  
 Liam Berigan  
 Phillip Brackin  
 Raymond Cavender  
 Kathryn Firsching  
 Susan Grantham  
 Anne Hoos  
 Kathryn Jenkel  
 L. Winn LeVert  
 John Michael  
 Scott Morris  
 Lucia Plant  
 Will & Carolyn Ratliff  
 Mark Vosel

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## Honoraria and Acknowledgements

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### AOS DONATIONS

Frank Randall  
 Jean Golden

### DAUPHIN ISLAND BIRD SANCTUARY DONATIONS

Bob & Lucy Duncan  
 Mark Vosel • Kathy Hicks  
 Jean Golden • Frank Randall  
 Tom & Joan Siegwald

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## Upcoming Meetings

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**—Friday,  
 January 16, 6:00 p.m.

**WINTER MEETING**—January 23–25, 2026  
 Lake Guntersville State Park Lodge

**SPRING MEETING**—April 17–19, 2026  
 Dauphin Island, Alabama

**FALL MEETING**—October 9–11, 2026  
 Dauphin Island, Alabama

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A O S W I N T E R M E E T I N G , G U N T E R S V I L L E S T A T E P A R K , J A N U A R Y 2 3 - 2 5 , 2 0 2 6

## Meet the Speaker: Bonner Black

### *Beyond the Birds*

**A**WARD-WINNING SINGER-SONGWRITER AND viral birder Bonner Black has captivated audiences worldwide—garnering over 20 million views across Instagram and TikTok, and leading bird walks before her shows on tour.

Bonner Black, was raised and homeschooled in the unincorporated town of Hot Rock, Tennessee. She fell in love with music through her one social outlet: classical ballet classes. At seventeen, Black moved to Nashville, embarked on her first regional tour, and received the Artist Entrepreneur Award from the Oxford Center of Entrepreneurs at The Times Center in New York City. The now 12-year Music City veteran has accumulated 900k+ streams and 131k social media followers. Bonner gained momentum in 2024, releasing her highly awaited debut album, “Hopeless RomANTICS,” landing coveted playlists such as Spotify’s “Fresh Finds Pop” and Apple Music’s “Breaking Singer-Songwriter,” and playing a sold-out Nashville album release show. In the same year she completed her headlining US “Fall Migration Tour” and opened five sold-out shows in the UK.

As an avid birder, her birdwatching videos have gained 15+ million views and she has collaborated with The Audubon Society in the US and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in the UK. This year she was a keynote speaker in Spain at the Delta Birding Festival and appeared on birding podcasts like “Life List” and Tommy Seigel’s, “Extremely Accurate Birds.” She is also an ambassador for Zeiss Nature and, by integrating her enthusiasm for birds and songwriting, she has cultivated a unique and devout community and hosts bird walks called, “Birding With The Bands” before shows on her tours.

While science focuses on bird species and environmental threats, Bonner’s unique perspective as an entertainer shines a light on the people behind the binoculars; the birding community—passionate individuals of all ages and backgrounds



who are a powerful force in conservation. In this thought-provoking talk, Bonner goes “Beyond the Birds” (the title of her upcoming podcast launching in 2025) to explore the human side of birding and how this community can help change the world. How do we make nonbirders care about declining bird populations? How do we engage the next generation of birders? How do we each find our unique place in environmentalism? Bonner shares lessons from her whirlwind journey—offering fresh insight, heartfelt stories, and perhaps even a new song or two.

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

AOS DONATION \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Communicating with our members online saves the earth's resources, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and also saves much-needed funds for AOS. *The Yellowhammer* is published only in digital format. Your digital subscription to *Alabama Birdlife* will automatically be sent to the email address listed below unless you opt for a printed edition by checking here . Mail your completed form and check, payable to AOS, to:

**Hal Smith, 3590 Eagle Nest, Opelika, AL 36801 (thru 1/26). After 1/26 mail Lori Oswald (see next page).**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU CAN ALSO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE AT [WWW.AOSBIRDS.ORG](http://WWW.AOSBIRDS.ORG)  
PLEASE ADD 4% TO PAYPAL TRANSACTIONS**

## AOS WINTER MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

*Complete and return to:*

**Hal Smith, AOS Treasurer, 3590 Eagle Nest, Opelika, AL 36801**

Telephone: (334) 329-8272 • Email: [aosbirdstreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:aosbirdstreasurer@gmail.com)

*Please make checks payable to AOS. Checks must be received by January 12, 2026*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**AOS DUES** Student: \$10 • Individual: \$25 • Family: \$40 • Sustaining: \$50 • Life (individual): \$350 • Life (family): \$550

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Registration @ \$25 per person	\$
Banquet Buffet @ \$30 per person	\$
<b>2026 DUES</b>	\$
DIBS Land Purchase Fund Contribution	\$
AOS Donation	\$
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	\$

ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
 88838 TALLASSEE HIGHWAY  
 TALLASSEE, ALABAMA 36078

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