



Steven W. Cardiff

In contrast to 2005, fall 2006 passed without any tropical cyclone activity in the Region. The first fall season since Hurricanes *Katrina* and *Rita* ravaged southern Louisiana saw increased access and services in impacted coastal areas, allowing ornithologists and birders to step up their assessments of short-term post-hurricane status of coastal habitats and resident and migrant bird species. As might be expected, the general consensus was that many resident species remained scarce or absent over wide areas. However, lots of disturbed ground and more opened-up vegetation combined with decent summer and early fall rains produced vast areas of tall, dense weeds, which in turn produced healthy numbers of many migrant species on the coast. Relatively frequent passage of cold fronts throughout the period helped reduce widespread rainfall deficits and also produced a fairly steady flow of migrants and a number of early arrival records. Substantial bird movements were noted 29 August and 16-18 September in Arkansas, and 19-22 & 27-28 October and 18-19 November (mainly arriving wintering species, e.g., Savannah Sparrow) on the Louisiana coast. The slow-moving front of 19-22 October caused a rare autumn "fallout" on the southwestern Louisiana coast, with Gray Catbirds (2000+ on 21 October) and Indigo Buntings (750 on 22 October) the most numerous species (D. P. Muth, P. A. Wallace, P. M. Benham et al.). It was a good fall for sev-

eral irruptive species, especially Brown Creepers and Golden-crowned Kinglets.

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Abbreviations: * = specimen to Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science. County/parish names are *italicized*; counties/parishes are indicated only for the initial mention of a specific locality, and states are indicated only for the initial mention of counties/parishes, except to avoid confusion. For records of "review list" species, documentation has been received and records have either been accepted by, or acceptance is pending by, the respective state bird records committee.

WATERFOWL THROUGH GREBES

A pair of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks with 8 young at Indian Creek Res., *Rapides*, LA 27 Sep (Jim Johnson) represented a new breeding locality and a late nesting. A late flock of 13 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at Cameron, *Cameron*, LA 1 Nov surprisingly included 3 half-grown young; later still were 75 mixed with 125 Black-bellieds at Lacassine N.W.R., *Cameron* 19 Nov (SWC, DLD). The status of Cackling Goose in Arkansas is still uncertain, so 3 seen at Fayetteville, *Washington* 6 Nov (MAM) were noteworthy. About 35 Mottled Ducks nw. of Arkansas City, *Desha* 1-4 Sep and 5 there 25 Nov (DB, SB) were thought to be lingering individuals from the rare and local e. Arkansas summer resident population. An ad. male Tufted Duck at L. Dardenelle, *Yell* 18 Nov+ (K&LN) constituted only the 3rd Arkansas record and was thought to be the same bird that had been present there in the previous winter. An estimated 500 Ring-necked Ducks at Lacassine N.W.R. 14 Oct and 5000 there 1 Nov (SWC, DLD) were impressive counts for so early. It was a mediocre fall for scoters: the only Surf Scoters reported were a female/imm. at L. Dardenelle 11 Nov (K&LN) and an imm. male at Grand Isle, *Jefferson*, LA 29 Oct (SWC, DLD); the only White-winged Scoter was an imm. at Bobb Kidd L., *Washington*, AR 5 Nov (JN, MAM, P&MM, JR); and the only Black Scoters (rarest species in Arkansas) were a female/imm. at L. Dardenelle 1-4 Nov (K&LN) and an ad. male at the Craig Fish Hatchery, *Benton* 10-12 Nov (MAM, ph. P&MM, ph. JN et al.).

Single juv. Red-throated Loons were reported at L. Dardenelle, *Yell/Pope* 1-19 Nov (K&LN) and at Millwood L., *Hempstead*, AR 23 & 26 Nov (CM). A Common Loon at the

Toledo Bend Res. dam, *Sabine*, LA 30 Sep (JB, DBo) was very early. Forty Common Loons at L. Dardenelle, *Pope* 1 Nov and 195 Pied-billed Grebes on the *Yell* side 20 Oct (K&LN) made impressive counts. Unusually early were an Eared Grebe in *Prairie*, AR 24 Aug (DB) and 2 Horned Grebes at Toledo Bend Res. dam 30 Sep (JB, DBo). Capping off the great season for loons and grebes at L. Dardenelle was a rare Western Grebe in *Pope/Yell* 1-11 Nov (K&LN); another was at Kincaid L., *Rapides*, LA 3-11 Nov (ph. John Pitre, JH et al.), apparently shot by duck hunters on the latter date (ph. JB).

SHEARWATERS THROUGH STORK

A Gulf of Mexico pelagic survey off the mouth of the Mississippi R. 3 Oct produced an Audubon's Shearwater about 53 km s. of South Pass and an imm. Brown Booby about 32 km sw. of Southwest Pass (DLD, SWC et al.). Puzzling in the absence of tropical weather systems was an imm. Brown Pelican at Cotile L., *Rapides*, LA 23 Oct (JH). An American Bittern near Kaplan, *Vermilion*, LA 13 Sep (SWC, DLD) was an exceptionally early migrant. Rare and local in Arkansas, a Least Bittern was found at 8 km nw. of Arkansas City 6 Aug (DB), and 6 were at Bois D'arc W.M.A., *Hempstead* 2 Sep (MB); 3 heard at Cameron, LA 1 Nov (SWC, DLD) were relatively late. Generally scarce in Arkansas in fall, 15 Tricolored Herons at roost near White River N.W.R., *Phillips* 12 Aug (NA) and singles near Rohwer, *Desha* 16 Aug (DB, MA) and at Bald Knob N.W.R., *White* 22 Aug (KN) were noteworthy. A color-marked imm. white-morph Reddish Egret at Holly Beach, *Cameron* 24-27 Sep (PEC, DLD) had been banded as a nestling earlier in the year at Laguna Madre near Port Mansfield, TX (*vide* Clay Green). Two late Black-crowned Night-Herons were found near Kelso, *Desha*, AR 26 Nov (DB, MA). White-faced Ibis, rare in Arkansas in fall, were reported from *Prairie* (DB), *Phillips* (NA), and *White* (KN) in early Aug, and 2 late individuals (plus an unidentified *Plegadis*) were in *Desha* 25 Nov (DB, SB); another *Plegadis* was in *Scott* 28 Aug (JN). Still rare, but reported with increasing frequency in Arkansas, are Roseate Spoonbills. This fall, there were four Aug reports in *Desha* (K&LN, DB), *Arkansas* (NA), and *Phillips* (NA, Joyce Sweeney), plus an amazing 104 imms. nw. of Arkansas City 1 Sep (DB). There were seven Arkansas reports of Wood Storks Aug-early Sep from *Arkansas* (K&LN), *Desha*, *Monroe* (Kathy & Adam Radomsky), *Phillips* (NA), *Prairie* (K&LN), and *White* (KN, DSc), including an impressive 1000 at Baxter Farms, nw. of

Arkansas City 13 Aug (DB, KN); 23 west-bound at Holly Beach 22 Oct (DBo, JB, PB) and one in Orleans, LA 29 Oct (PAW) were quite late.

HAWKS THROUGH RAILS

Very rare but possibly making a comeback in Arkansas, 2 Swallow-tailed Kites were an encouraging sight ne. of Jonesboro, *Craighead* 20 & 22 Aug (Tracy Meredith et al.). White-tailed Kites were widely reported from sw. Louisiana 14 Oct+; one at Bayou Cocodrie N.W.R., *Concordia* 14 Sep (Bob Strader et al.) was early and unusually far northeast. Four Mississippi Kites at Garner Ridge, *Cameron* 27 Sep (DLD, SWC) were late migrants, and a large downy chick in a nest in Gretna, *Jefferson* 13-14 Aug (GG) represented a remarkably late breeding attempt. It was an above-average fall for Swainson's Hawks in Louisiana, with 11 reports 13 Sep-5 Nov, mainly from the sw., but including singles farther e. at Reserve, *St. John the Baptist* 21 Sep (DBo) and Baton Rouge, *East Baton Rouge* 8 Oct (DBo, JB), plus 2 at Grand Isle 28 Oct (DBo, JB). Indicative that the species did not suffer serious setbacks from Hurricane Rita, there were five reports of Crested Caracara in sw. Louisiana: 2 ads. near Thornwell, *Jefferson Davis* 4 Sep (JB, DBo, James Maley), an ad. near Johnsons Bayou, *Cameron* 23 Sep (JB, DBo, Dan Lane), a subad. at Cameron Prairie N.W.R., *Cameron* 14 Oct (SWC, ph. DLD, PEC), 2 ads. near Holmwood, *Calcasieu* 19 Nov (SWC, ph. DLD), and 4 at Sweet L., *Cameron* 23 Nov (GG). A Prairie Falcon, rare in Arkansas, was at Craig Fish Hatchery 11 Nov (JN, MAM, Jason Luscier, AD), with the same or another there 12 Nov (David Chapman, Adam Green, *vide* MAM).

Two Yellow Rails flushed by a tractor near Rayne, *Acadia* 11 Oct were relatively early; more typical were counts of 15 on 17 Nov and 10 on 27 Nov during late rice-harvesting activity near Thornwell (SWC, DLD). A mix of ad. and juv. Purple Gallinules at Moore Bayou, Arkansas Post, *Arkansas* 13 Aug (K&LN) and at Bois D'arc W.M.A. 2 Sep (MB) suggested rare breeding events in those areas; 4 ads. at Lacassine N.W.R. 14 Oct (PEC, DLD, SWC) and one there 5 Nov (DBo, JB, PB, EIJ, Jacob Saucier) were considered late. Nine Common Moorhens, including 5 "fledglings," in *Madison* 30 Aug (JH) furnished one of few breeding records for ne. Louisiana.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

A rare fall migrant, an American Golden-Plover near L. Arthur, *Jefferson Davis* 14 Oct (PEC, SWC, DLD) was the lone report. A Semipalmated Plover at Craig Fish Hatchery

10 Nov (MAM, P&MM) marked the 2nd latest Arkansas record, and 4 Black-necked Stilts nw. of Arkansas City 23 Nov (DB, SB) were the latest ever. Four Arkansas reports of the rare and endangered Piping Plover involved up to 3 individuals each in *Prairie, Desha*, and *White* 4-20 Aug (K&LN, DB). A Marbled Godwit near Kaplan 19 Aug (SWC, DLD, PEC, BMM) was unusual inland. Especially prized in fall in Arkansas was an alternate-plumaged Ruddy Turnstone in *Prairie* 4 Aug (K&LN). Pectoral Sandpipers were late at Holly Beach 4 Nov and in *Lafayette*, LA 7 Nov (ph. PEC). Counts of 66 and 104 Buff-breasted Sandpipers in *Caddo*, LA 13 & 20 Aug, respectively (Jim Ingold, TD), were among the highest ever for Louisiana in fall. Best shorebird of the season was an ad. female Ruff in *Prairie* 12 Aug (K&LN, DB, Robert Herron, DSc), the 10th Arkansas record and 3rd in fall. Late Wilson's Phalaropes were noted at Cameron Prairie N.W.R. 14 Oct (SWC, DLD, PEC) and near Thornwell 22 Oct (Kay Radlauer, ph. Dennis Demcheck). Additional 3 Oct pelagic highlights included a Red-necked Phalarope and 2 Pomarine Jaegers about 46 km and 19 km, respectively, sw. of Southwest Pass (SWC, DLD, DPM, BMM, CCS).

Becoming routine for the location, a Laughing Gull appeared at L. Dardenelle 13 Oct+ (K&LN). A Franklin's Gull at Cameron 19 Aug (PEC, BMM, SWC, DLD) provided one of few Regional Aug records. A probable first-year *kumlieni* Iceland Gull at Rutherford Beach, *Cameron* 19 Nov (*SWC, ph. DLD, DPM, BMM, RDP, PEC) would be the first well-documented Louisiana record if the identification is confirmed. Now routine, modest numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found in coastal *Cameron* 4 Sep-19 Nov. Still rare in Louisiana but now almost regular in the se., an ad. Great Black-backed Gull at Port Fourchon, *Lafourche*, LA 29 Oct (ph. DBo, JB) provided the only well-documented report. Most unusual were ad. Sabine's Gulls at L. Dardenelle, *Yell* 10 Sep (K&LN, WS, DSc), earliest ever for Arkansas, and at Catahoula L., *La Salle* 11 Oct (Bill Vermillion), which would furnish about the 8th Louisiana record. Additional Arkansas sightings included single juvs. at Millwood L. 18 Sep (CM) and L. Dardenelle, *Yell* 23 & 30 Sep (K&LN). Very encouraging were 350 Interior Least Terns, mostly imms., nw. of Arkansas City 16 Aug (DB, MA), the largest Arkansas flock ever reported. Unexpectedly late and numerous were 21 Black Terns at Cameron 1 Nov (SWC, DLD).

DOVES THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

Reports of Inca Dove, which continues to

spread northward and eastward, included 2 near Texarkana, *Miller* 26 Aug (CM), 3 at Ft. Smith, *Sebastian* 11 Nov (Sandy Berger), and one in New Orleans 3 Nov (DPM). Both reports of the declining Burrowing Owl were relatively early, at Bossier City, *Bossier*, LA 5 Oct (TD) and on a drilling ship at Green Canyon block 610 in the Gulf of Mexico 8-9 Oct (ph. BM). Even more exciting was a flyby Long-eared Owl in the Gulf of Mexico about 80 km s. of Southwest Pass 25 Oct (ph. BM). A Common Nighthawk at Kenner, *Jefferson* 23 Nov (CCS) was exceptionally late. A very late (ad. female) Ruby-throated Hummingbird was at Weiner, *Poinsett*, AR 23 Nov (b. H&MP). Notably early were female Black-chinned Hummingbirds in New Orleans 9 Sep (DPM) and near St. Gabriel, *Iberville*, LA 7 Oct (b. returnee; SWC, DLD), an ad. male Calliope in West Monroe, *Ouachita*, LA 2-5 Sep (Stephen L. Pagans, ph. Joan Brown), and a female Calliope near St. Gabriel 30 Sep-6 Oct (ph. DLD, SWC). The Parkers banded 5 Rufous Hummingbirds Oct-30 Nov, including 3 in *Pulaski* and one each in *Cross* and *Saline*; the species is a rare but annual fall migrant in Arkansas.

Surprisingly late were up to 5 Least Flycatchers detected almost daily in *Bossier* during Nov, with 2-3 remaining through the period (TD et al.). Say's Phoebe were found in both states; one at Millwood L., *Howard* 17 Sep (Mike Dillon, CM) was Arkansas's 8th, and one near Ramah, *Iberville* 4-8 Nov (ph. Suzanne Broussard, EIJ) was about Louisiana's 10th. At least 3 eastward-straying Ash-throated Flycatchers in *Cameron* included one at Garner Ridge 21 Oct (DPM, vt. PAW, RDP), possibly the same bird there 11 Nov (J. V. Remsen et al.), one at nearby Hackberry Ridge 22 Oct (PB, DBo, JB), and one w. of Holly Beach 4 Nov (PEC); one at Grand Isle 28 Oct (SWC, vt. DLD et al.) was apparently a first for this well-covered locale. With fewer than 10 Louisiana records for each species, 2 Great Kiskadees n. of White L., *Vermilion* 17 Nov (EIJ) and a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher at Hackberry Ridge 10 Sep (North C. Dobbs) were both excellent finds. Northwestern Louisiana's 2nd Couch's Kingbird within a year was in Bossier City 12 Oct+ (TD, ph. Ron Martin). East of their usual range were a Western Kingbird in N. Little Rock 4-5 Sep (Mike Satterfield) and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher s. of Jonesboro 1 Aug (DB), another Scissor-tailed at Cook's Landing, *Pulaski* 7 Nov (DBr) was late.

VIREOS THROUGH WAXWINGS

A lingering White-eyed Vireo at Two Rivers Park, *Pulaski* 23 Nov (DBr) was most unusu-

al A Bell's Vireo at Hackberry Ridge 27 Sep (SWC, DLD) and another well described at Shreveport, *Caddo* 9 Oct (TD) provided the only reports. A rash of s. Louisiana Cave Swallow sightings included 2-3 at Johnsons Bayou 21 Oct (DPM, PAW), one near Thornwell 21 Oct (PEC, Dave Patton), and 2 at Grand Isle 28 & 29 Oct, respectively (DBo, JB); the species is still considered casual except for the small breeding colony in extreme sw *Cameron*. It was a poor fall for Red-breasted Nuthatches, with only three reports from Arkansas in *Scott*, *Washington*, and *White* Oct–Nov (K&LN, MAM, JN) and none from Louisiana. Three of the rare (but nearly annual in Arkansas) Rock Wren were all found at different parts of Millwood L.: in *Hempstead* 15 Oct, *Howard* 10 Nov, and *Little River* 2 & 11 Nov (CM). Only four reports of the increasingly rare Bewick's Wren included 3 from nw. Arkansas 18 Sep–14 Oct (MAM, KN) and one from *Bossier* 2 Oct (TD). Amazingly early was a Sedge Wren in *Bossier* 20 Sep (TD). The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher seen at Dardenelle S.P. 28 Nov (WS, DSc) was very late. Less unusual but still late were single Gray Catbirds at Two Rivers Park 23 Nov (DBr) and nw. of Arkansas City 25 Nov (DB, SB). A Cedar Waxwing along the Illinois R. in *Benton* 5 Aug (MB) was suggestive of local breeding; the species is a rare nester in the state.

WARBLERS

Six Golden-winged Warblers in Arkansas (all n, and one record early 29 Aug [DB, MAM]) and 7 in Louisiana (5 in *Caddo*, 24 Sep–5 Oct [TD]) made a decent showing for this increasingly rare migrant. Always an interesting find, a Brewster's Warbler was at Johnsons Bayou 22 Oct (DBo, JB). Unusually early Tennessee Warblers were at Craighead Forest Park, *Craighead*, AR 31 Aug (DB) and near St. Gabriel 4 Sep (DLD, SWC). Nashville Warblers were early at L. Atalanta, *Rogers*, AR 2 Sep (MAM, JN, JR) and late in Louisiana near St. Gabriel 3 Nov (SWC), in *Bossier* through 4 Nov (TD), and at Garner Ridge 18 Nov (PAW, DPM, RDP). A lingering imm. Yellow Warbler was at Lacassine N.W.R. 1 Nov (SWC, DLD), and an ad. male was record late at Fayetteville 4 Nov (JN). A Chestnut-sided Warbler in *Caddo* 27 Aug (TD) was relatively early, and 25 at Craighead Forest Park 31 Aug (DB) made an all-time fall high count for Arkansas. Also relatively early was a Magnolia Warbler near St. Gabriel 1 Sep (DLD, SWC). A female Black-throated Blue Warbler at Grand Isle 28 Oct (SWC, DLD et al.) furnished the only report of the species. A Yellow-rumped Warbler in *Yell* 6 Sep (K&LN) provided a new early record for Arkansas. Ap-

parently only about the 2nd for well-worked Grand Isle was a Black-throated Gray Warbler 28 Oct (DBo, JB, vt. Jane Patterson et al.). A Blackburnian Warbler in *Caddo* 3 Aug (TD) was a record three weeks early for Louisiana; one at Craighead Forest Park 30 Aug (DB) was also record early for Arkansas. A Prairie Warbler in *Searcy*, *White* 30 Sep (Larry Lunday) constituted a record-late date for Arkansas. A Palm Warbler at Johnsons Bayou 19 Sep (JBe) was near record early for the coast. A Blackpoll Warbler near St. Gabriel 15 Oct (*; SWC, DLD) was only the 2nd Baton Rouge area fall record and one of few well-documented state fall records. Now bordering on rare in fall, Cerulean Warblers were at L. Atalanta 19 Aug (MAM, JN), Mount Magazine S.P., *Logan*, AR 27 Aug (Don Simons), Shreveport 28 Aug (TD), and near St. Gabriel 13 Sep (DLD, SWC). A late Black-and-white Warbler was at Spring Hill, *Faulkner*, AR 14 Nov (Mike La Bombard). Northern Waterthrushes were late at L. Martin, *St. Martinville*, LA 5 Nov (JB, PB, EIJ) and near Johnsons Bayou 18 Nov (SWC), as was an Ovenbird near St. Gabriel 6 Nov (SWC). Rounding out the new early warbler records for Arkansas was a Mourning Warbler at L. Atalanta 19 Aug (MAM, JN). Rounding out the relatively late Regional warblers were a Hooded Warbler at New Orleans 9 Nov (Bryan Lenz) and a Yellow-breasted Chat at Garner Ridge 18 Nov (DLD, SWC).

TANAGERS THROUGH ORIOLES

Tardy Summer Tanagers were at Baton Rouge 21 Nov (JB) and New Orleans 23 Nov (PAW). The Spotted Towhee at L. Fayetteville, *Washington* 12 Oct–11 Nov (MAM, AD) was record early for Arkansas, and one near Ft. Jackson, *Plaquemines* 26 Nov (RDP) may be the first for se. Louisiana. Farther e. than usual was a Clay-colored Sparrow at Two Rivers Park 22 Oct (DSc), which was also the only Arkansas report this season. In Louisiana, Clay-colored were seen almost daily in *Bossier* 19 Sep–27 Oct, with amazing highs of 15 on 25 Sep and 12 on 2 Oct (TD), but most remarkable of all was one in the Gulf of Mexico about 80 km s. of Southwest Pass and also exceptionally early on 3 Sep (ph. BM). Also rare as fall transients in Arkansas were Lark Sparrows near Chesney Prairie, *Benton* 26 Aug (JN, MAM) and at L. Fayetteville 29 Aug (MAM) and Grasshopper Sparrows at two locations in *Benton*, 19 & 28 Oct (JN, MAM). Seven Grasshoppers made a nice total in *Bossier* 28 Oct (TD). A Henslow's Sparrow 23 Oct, and 2-3 on 2 Nov, were out of typical habitat in *Bossier* (TD). There were three Arkansas reports of the rare Nelson's Sharp-

tailed Sparrow, all of single birds: w. of Dardanelle, *Yell* 14 Oct (K&LN), at Two Rivers Park 22 Oct (DSc), and at Craig Fish Hatchery 28 Oct (JN, MAM). In Louisiana, one was in *Bossier* 28 Sep, 2 were there 19 Oct (TD), and one was at Baton Rouge 30 Sep (DLD, SWC). Rarely found on the immediate coast, a Harris's Sparrow was at Oak Grove, *Cameron* 19 Nov (DPM, PAW, RDP). A Song Sparrow was remarkably early in *Bossier* 24 Sep (TD)

A late Painted Bunting was at Garner Ridge 18 Nov (SWC). Reports of Bobolinks, rare in the Region in fall, included 5 at Fayetteville 3 Sep (MAM) and one near Gilliam, *Caddo* 24 Sep (TD). Two Western Meadowlarks, rare in e. Arkansas, were discovered 5 km ne. of Kellso 26 Nov (DB). Rare transients, spring or fall, up to 4 Yellow-headed Blackbirds (mainly males) were seen at Craig Fish Hatchery 11-19 Oct (P&MM, JN, MAM, Amy Edie); in Louisiana, there were six reports of one or 2 individuals, including an early ad. male in *St. Mary* 20 Aug (ph. EIJ). An ad. male Bullock's Oriole was a nice yard bird in *Metairie*, *Jefferson* 29 Nov (ph. Beth Wiggins).

Initialed observers (subregional editors boldfaced): Nick Anich, Marcus Asher, Dick Baxter, Sarah Baxter, James Beck (JBe), Phred Benham, Devin Bosler (DBo), Justin Bosler, Dennis Braddy (DBr), Michael Budd, **Steven W. Cardiff** (Louisiana), Paul E. Conover, Abby Darrah, Terry Davis, Donna L. Dittmann, Gay Gomez, Jay Huner, Erik I. Johnson, Brad Martin, Charles Mills, Michael A. Mlodinow, Paige & Mary Bess Mulhollan, David P. Muth, B. Mac Myers, Joe Neal, Keny Nichols, LaDonna Nichols, **Max & Helen Parker** (Arkansas), R. D. Purrington, JoAnne Rife, Dan Scheiman, William Shepherd, Curtis C. Sorrells, Phillip A. Wallace. 🌐

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