

## FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Florida Field Naturalist 27(1):25-30, 1999.

**Summer Report: June-July 1998.**—The observations listed here are based on rare or unusual species or significant numbers of birds reported to the Florida Ornithological Society (FOS) Field Observations Committee (FOC). As these reports are not reviewed formally, they may be considered tentative.

Significant reports are welcomed for inclusion in future issues of this section. Reports should include the following information: species, number of individuals, age and sex of the bird(s), color morph if applicable, location (including county), date, observer(s), and significance of the report. Reporting periods are winter (December-February), spring (March-May), summer (June-July), and fall (August-November). Submit reports to regional compilers within 2 weeks after the close of each period, or to the state compiler within 1 month. Reports may be E-mailed to the state compiler at billpranty@hotmail.com.

Following the examples set by *Florida Bird Species: An Annotated List* (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, FOS Spec. Publ. No. 6) and *The Birdlife of Florida* (Stevenson and Anderson 1994, Univ. Press of Florida), sight-only observations are considered "reports," while only those supported by verifiable evidence (photographs, video or audio tapes, or specimens) are called "records."

The FOS Records Committee (FOSRC) revised the list of birds for which they require documentation, in *FFN* 24(4):132-133, 1996. These species are marked in this report with an asterisk (\*) to alert the observers of their need to supply the FOSRC with details of their sightings. (Some reports that lack documentation may have been omitted from this report).

A county designation (in italics) accompanies the first-time listing of each site in this report; further listings of the same site lack the county name. Abbreviations used are as follows: CP = county park, EOS = end of season, FDCP = Fort DeSoto CP (*Pinellas*), PPM = *Polk* phosphate mines, R&W 1992 = Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, S&A 1994 = Stevenson and Anderson 1994, SP = state park, SRA = state recreation area, SRSTF = Springhill Road Sewage Treatment Facility (*Leon*), and N, S, E, W, etc. for compass directions. Bold-faced species, if any, denote birds newly reported or verified in Florida.

R&W 1992 and S&A 1994 were used to determine the regional and seasonal status of many species. Todd Engstrom assisted with the editing of the manuscript.

### SUMMARY OF THE SUMMER SEASON

Following one of the driest springs on record, Summer 1998 will be long remembered. The drought that began in April and continued through June combined with above-average temperatures and decades of fire suppression to create (from a human viewpoint) the worst wildfire season in 50 years. Over 200,000 ha of land burned in the state, with over 60,000 ha in Volusia County alone. *The entire human population of Flagler County* was forced to evacuate to other counties, and large areas of Brevard County also burned. One might predict local but temporary population *increases* of fire-dependent species such as the Hairy Woodpecker and Florida Scrub-Jay in these burned areas. It will be interesting to see whether the wildfires of 1998 make the public more willing to accept the use of prescribed fire as an ecological management tool, which benefits humans by reducing fuel loads to lessen the severity of wildfires.

Birdwise, the summer was somewhat quiet. Only two FOSRC rarities were reported: two Couch's Kingbirds at Gulf Breeze in July, and one (or more) Tropical Kingbirds at Fort DeSoto variably through the season. There also were two other reports of Couch's/

Tropical Kingbirds, indicating an unprecedented movement of these birds to the Gulf coast of Florida this season. Other interesting reports this summer were a large flock of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks that summered at Gainesville, the third and fourth breeding reports of Cooper's Hawks in the western Panhandle, and an apparently exceptional breeding year for American Robins at Pensacola.

#### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

PACIFIC LOON: 1 at Gulf Breeze (*Santa Rosa*) 1 Jun (D. Ballman).

COMMON LOON: 1 at SRSTF 4 Jun called one time (G. Menk); 3 at Anna Maria Island (*Manatee*) 11 Jun (B. Carlton).

PELAGIC SPECIES: the table below shows the results of 3 pelagic trips SE of Marathon, including the "Marathon Hump" (*Monroe*) by P. Hess: 15 Jun: 20-45 km, winds S 9-18 km/h, seas 0.3-0.6 m, 17 Jun: 29-40 km, winds SE 9-27 km/h, seas 0.3-1.0 m, and 19 Jun: 20-45 km, winds SE 18-27 km/h, seas 0.6-1.0 m.

Species	15 Jun	17 Jun	19 Jun
Cory's Shearwater	3	3	0
Sooty Shearwater	1	0	0
Audubon's Shearwater	30	18	72
storm-petrel spp.	0	1	0
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	0	1	0
booby spp.	1	0	0
Brown Pelican	0	0	2
Magnificent Frigatebird	1	0	1
Laughing Gull	0	1	0
Royal Tern	0	1	1
Roseate Tern	0	0	12
Bridled Tern	14	15	28
Sooty Tern	280	220	205
Black Tern (first-summer)	1	0	0
Brown Noddy	10	6	77
Total species	9	9	8
Total individuals	341	266	398

CORY'S SHEARWATER: 1 bird ca. 16 km E of Mayport (*Duval*) 12 Jun (J. Krummrich).

BROWN PELICAN: 15 over Lake Arbuckle (*Polk*) 21 Jun (D. Leonard); 320 nests at Marco Island (*Collier*) apparently fledged few young because available food became scarce (T. Below).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: 3 at Lake Talquin (*Gadsden*) 10 Jun (G. Sprandel); 17 at Seminole Ranch Conservation Area (*Orange* and/or *Seminole*) 13 Jun (*vide* L. Malo)

SNOWY EGRET: 780 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer).

AMERICAN BITTERN: 1 on the Palmdale Breeding Bird Survey (*Glades*) 19 Jun (R. Bowman).

REDDISH EGRET: 1 red morph at Yankeetown (*Levy*) 25 Jul (C. Black); 1 immature at St. Marks NWR (*Wakulla*) 26 Jul (F. and P. Rutkovsky).

SCARLET IBIS: 1 at Lakes CP, Fort Myers (*Lee*) 18 Jun (K. Tracey, photos to FOC).

Roseate Spoonbill: 2 first-year birds at Zephyrhills (*Pasco*) 28 Jun (D. Robinson, P. Bowen); 3 or 4 at Gainesville (*Alachua*) 28 Jun-15 Jul (L. Badger et al.); 16 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 1 at Seminole Ranch Conservation Area 11 Jul (*vide* L. Malo).

- WOOD STORK: 200 or more nestlings at the Tower Road (*Leon*) colony 27 Jun (G. Sprandel); 155 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer).
- BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK: 24 at Gainesville 6 Jun-EOS (B. Roberts, O. Fogle et al.); 1 at PPM 19 Jul (P. Timmer).
- MOTTLED DUCK: 1 at Gulf Breeze 24 Jun (L. Duncan) was accidental there (*vide* B. Duncan).
- MALLARD: 1 hybrid male at Zephyrhills 28 Jun (D. Robinson, P. Bowen).
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL: 1 male at Zephyrhills 9 and 28 Jun (B. Pranty, D. Robinson et al.); 2 drakes in Gainesville, 11 Jun-17 Jul (M. Manetz, R. Rowan); 1 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer).
- AMERICAN WIGEON: 1 at PPM 19 Jul (P. Timmer).
- RING-NECKED DUCK: 3 or more at Carr Lake (*Leon*) 6 Jun (J. Cox); 1 male "in full molt (no primaries)" at W Jacksonville (*Duval*) 28-31 Jul (H. Hooper, P. Powell et al.).
- LESSER SCAUP: 1 at Palm Harbor sewage treatment facility (*Pinellas*) 26 Jul (A. and R. Smith, B. Hoffman); 3 males summered at SHSTF (G. Menk et al.).
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: 1 at Shell Key (*Pinellas*) 7 Jun (P. Blair); 3 females at St. Andrew SRA (*Bay*) 21 and 28 Jun (H. Loftin, T. Menart).
- RUDDY DUCK: 1 female summered at SRSTF (J. Cavanagh, G. Menk et al.).
- OSPREY: 15 active nests around Blackwater Bay (*Santa Rosa*) 2 May (M. Clark) represents a "significant increase in recent years of a bird that was scarce 15-20 years ago" (B. Duncan); 34 nests from N of Rookery Bay to Coon Key (*Collier*) produced 0.8 fledglings per nest, with 15 nests failing (T. Below).
- COOPER'S HAWK: 1 nest near Lake Pierce (*Polk*) fledged at least 1 young in early Jun (T. Dellinger, J. Arnett); 2 emaciated young birds near Cantonment (*Escambia*) 9 Jun were brought to Wildlife Rescue; 1 later died (*vide* E. Case); a pair nested at Gulf Breeze in 1997 and 1998 (A. Robinson); 2 birds (1 a fledgling) at a nest ca. 12 m high at NE Cape Coral (*Lee*) 1 Jul— an adult and juvenile were observed here in Aug 1997 (C. Ewell, W. Winton); 1 at FDCP 28 Jul (K. Holland).
- SHORT-TAILED HAWK: 1 light morph adult at E Jacksonville 10 May (J. Arnett) was the first for *Duval*.
- AMERICAN KESTREL: 1 at FDCP 24 Jul (P. Fellers).
- PURPLE GALLINULE: 1 at Key West (*Monroe*) 6-7 Jun (J. Ondrejko).
- AMERICAN COOT: 6 at Lake Jackson (*Leon*) 6 Jun, and 3 others summered there (both G. Menk); 1 juvenile with an adult at Gainesville 20 Jun (J. Hintermister); 1 adult with 2 chicks at the *Hernando* landfill 25 Jul (C. Black).
- SANDHILL CRANE: 1 at N Jacksonville 6 Jul (R. Clark).
- WHOOPIING CRANE: 1 at a ranch near Pasco Trails (*Pasco*) 17-18 Jun (D. Robinson et al.).
- BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER: 1 in breeding plumage at PPM 3 Jun (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer).
- SNOWY PLOVER: 2 adults and 3 eggs at nest at Sanibel Island (*Lee*) 16 Jun (*vide* N. Pettis), and 3 chicks there 24 Jun (C. Ewell); 1 adult and 1 juvenile at Shell Key 1 Jul (P. Blair).
- WILSON'S PLOVER: a few nesting pairs are "barely hanging on" in vacant lots at *Hernando Beach* (*Hernando*) (C. Black).
- PIPING PLOVER: 1 at Carrabelle Beach (*Franklin*) 18 Jul (G. Sprandel).
- KILLDEER: 1 at Key West 7 Jun (J. Ondrejko).
- BLACK-NECKED STILT: 365 at PPM 3 Jun (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 12+ in *Alachua* 16 Jun-EOS including 1 juvenile at Kanapaha Prairie 24 Jul (S. Schwikert et al.) was only the second county breeding report (*vide* R. Rowan).
- AMERICAN AVOCET: 11 at N Jacksonville 6 Jul (R. Clark); 2 at Honeymoon Island SRA (*Pinellas*) 13 Jul (K. Walbot) and 1 there 17 Jul (P. Kelley); 185 at PPM 19 Jul (P. Timmer).
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS: 1 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 4 at SRSTF 7 Jul (J. Cavanagh).

- LESSER YELLOWLEGS: 4 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 5 at SRSTF 7 Jul (J. Cavanagh).
- SOLITARY SANDPIPER: 1 at SRSTF 7 Jul (J. Cavanagh); 1 at Gainesville 9 Jul (R. Rowan); 1 E of Avon Park (*Highlands*) 18 Jul (B. Pranty, H. Lovell).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER: 1 at Seminole Ranch Conservation Area 11 Jul (*vide* L. Malo); 1 at Gainesville 12 Jul (M. Manetz); 4 at SRSTF 20 Jul (G. Menk).
- UPLAND SANDPIPER: 1 at Zellwood (*Orange*) 31 Jul (M. Manetz, J. Hintermister, A. Kent).
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW: 1 at Shell Key 19 Jul (S. Pulling, J. King).
- MARbled GODWIT: 1 at Carrabelle Beach 18 Jul (G. Sprandel).
- RUDDY TURNSTONE: 1 at PPM 3 Jun (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer).
- SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER: 130 at SRSTF 4 Jun (G. Menk); 2 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 2 at Hague Dairy (*Alachua*) 18 Jul (M. Manetz, R. Rowan); 4 at SRSTF 20 Jul (G. Menk).
- WESTERN SANDPIPER: 2 at Hague Dairy 18 Jul (M. Manetz, R. Rowan).
- LEAST SANDPIPER: 30 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 6 at SRSTF 7 Jul (J. Cavanagh).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER: 2 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 235 at N Jacksonville 6 Jul (R. Clark); 1 at Honeymoon Island SRA 18 Jul (S. Pulling); 3 at Hague Dairy 24 Jul (P. Burns).
- AMERICAN WOODCOCK: 1 at Pensacola (*Escambia*) 17 Jun (P. Tetlow); 1 in central *Pasco* 17 Jun (D. Robinson).
- WILSON'S PHALAROPE: 1 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 1 at N Jacksonville 6 Jul (R. Clark).
- LAUGHING GULL: 1 nest with 1 chick at Big Marco Pass (*Collier*) was the first breeding report for the area (T. Below).
- RING-BILLED GULL: 1 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer), and 2 there 19 Jul (P. Timmer); 1 at Gainesville in mid-Jul (R. Rowan).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: 1 immature at Shell Key 1 Jul (P. Blair).
- GULL-BILLED TERN: 11 at PPM 5 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer), and 13 (including juveniles) there 19 Jul (P. Timmer).
- COMMON TERN: 2 at Shell Key 7 Jun and 1 Jul (P. Blair); 1 at Zellwood 31 Jul (M. Manetz, J. Hintermister, A. Kent).
- LEAST TERN: no reports of successful nesting at Anastasia Island (*St. Johns*) or Guana River SP (*St. Johns*), but 157 nests at FCCJ campus, Jacksonville (all P. Powell); about 250 pairs in *Volusia*, all colonies but one were on rooftops (D. Hartgrove); 307 nests at Big Marco Pass 6 May had declined to 69 by 31 May, then built up at a nearby site to 165 nests 3 Jun, but all birds were gone 1 Jul. There was "lots of evidence" of human disturbance at the sites. At Morgan Point, Cape Romano, 200 nests produced at least 1 fledgling each (all T. Below); 28 (4 juveniles) at Banana Lake Park (*Polk*) 2 Jul (T. Palmer); 225 at PPM 19 Jul (P. Timmer).
- BLACK TERN: 1 at Yent Bayou (*Franklin*) 6 Jun (G. Sprandel); 12 at Sanibel causeway (*Lee*) 30 Jun (C. Ewell, W. Dirks); 35 near the Courtney Campbell Causeway (*Pinellas*) 16 Jul (L. Snyder); 2 at St. Marks NWR 26 Jul (M. Hill); 4 near Guana River SP 31 Jul (P. Powell).
- BLACK SKIMMER: a locally high count of 255 nests at Big Marco Pass fledged many young, but a die-off caused the deaths of more than 50 birds (T. Below).
- WHITE-WINGED DOVE: 1 at Cape Coral 26-29 Jun (C. Ewell); 1 at Gulf Breeze 7 Jul (B. and L. Duncan).
- COCKATIEL: 1 at Cape Coral throughout the period (K. Lawrence, J. Van Tine).
- MONK PARAKEET: over 40 birds at 25 nests at Cape Coral, a site active for at least 3 years (C. Ewell).
- ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET: 4 at a nest tree at Cape Coral 11 Jun (C. Ewell).

- YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO: 1 migrant at FDCP 19 Jul, and 2 there 20 Jul (both L. Atherton).
- SMOOTH-BILLED ANI: 1 at the Zephyrhills Airport 11 Jun (D. Robinson), 1 along SR-60 (*Osceola*) 23 Jun (P. Hess).
- BELTED KINGFISHER: 1 at Lake Alfred (*Polk*) 8 Jul (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); 4 at Paynes Prairie State Preserve (*Alachua*) 23 Jun (M. Manetz).
- \*COUCH'S/TROPICAL KINGBIRD: singles at St. Marks NWR 20 Jun (B. Ridenour, photos to FOSRC) and Gulf Breeze 14 Jul (B. Duncan).
- \*COUCH'S KINGBIRD: 2 "very vocal birds" at Gulf Breeze 7 Jul (B. and L. Duncan, E. Case, P. Tetlow).
- \*TROPICAL KINGBIRD: singles (possibly different birds) at FDCP 7 Jun, 13 Jul, and 20 Jul (all L. Atherton et al.).
- EASTERN KINGBIRD: 2 at FDCP 7 Jun (B. and L. Atherton).
- GRAY KINGBIRD: only a single report from the Fort Pickens area (*Escambia*) and the adjacent mainland this season (*vide* B. Duncan).
- PURPLE MARTIN: 4000-6000 birds roosted nightly under the bridge at I-10 and Scenic Highway (*Escambia*) (B. and L. Duncan et al.).
- TREE SWALLOW: 3 at PPM 3 Jun (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer).
- NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW: adults and juveniles at Tierra Verde (*Pinellas*) 13 Jun (B. and L. Atherton); 109 at PPM 3 Jun (C. Geanangel, P. Timmer); unprecedented widespread breeding in *Pasco* this year (D. Robinson et al.).
- BANK SWALLOW: 1 at Zellwood 31 Jul (M. Manetz, J. Hintermister, A. Kent).
- CLIFF SWALLOW: 1 at Zellwood 31 Jul (M. Manetz, J. Hintermister, A. Kent).
- FLORIDA SCRUB-JAY: successful breeding from the first locally-produced female at Rookery Bay Research Reserve (*Collier*) was recorded this year (T. Below).
- AMERICAN ROBIN: 1 pair in a residential neighborhood at N Pensacola May-10 Jun (D. Timmons), and 24 birds (about half of these juveniles) feeding on the ground there 22 Jul (C. and D. Timmons et al.) were called "a major increase" in the local population (B. Duncan); 1 in N *Okaloosa* 16 Jun (B. Duncan, P. Tetlow); 1 juvenile brought to Wildlife Rescue from near Ensley (*Escambia*) 3 Jul (*vide* B. Duncan).
- GRAY CATBIRD: 1 migrant (?) at McKay Bay 26 Jul (A. Smith, L. Snyder).
- AMERICAN PIPIT: 1 at Fort Walton Beach Landfill (*Okaloosa*) 29 Jul (D. Ware).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO: singles in *Polk* at Peace River Park 24 Jun (T. Palmer) and Saddle Creek CP 11 Jul (P. Fellers).
- BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO: 1 male singing at FDCP to 14 Jul (L. Atherton et al.).
- NORTHERN PARULA: 1 migrant at Bonner Park, Largo (*Pinellas*) 6 Jul (K. Nelson); 21 (13 juveniles) at Saddle Creek CP 11 Jul (P. Fellers).
- YELLOW WARBLER: 1 at Bonner Park 6 Jul (K. Nelson); 1 at Palm Point 24 Jul (D. Beatty).
- PRAIRIE WARBLER: 1 at Lake Jackson 20 Jul (K. MacVicar); 1 at Newnans Lake 26 Jul (M. Manetz); 1 at Saddle Creek CP 27 Jul (P. Fellers).
- PROTHONOTARY WARBLER: 2 at Saddle Creek CP 27 Jul (P. Fellers).
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: 1 at Palm Point 11 Jul (D. Beatty); 1 at Saddle Creek CP 27 Jul (P. Fellers); 1 female at FDCP 28 Jul (L. Atherton).
- AMERICAN REDSTART: 1 at Palm Point 25 Jul (M. Manetz); 1 at Saddle Creek CP 27 Jul (P. Fellers); 1 at Winter Haven (*Polk*) 31 Jul (P. Fellers).
- LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH: 1 at Newnans Lake (*Alachua*) 5 Jul (R. Rowan); 2 at Seminole Ranch Conservation Area 11 Jul (*vide* L. Malo); 1 at Saddle Creek CP 11 Jul (P. Fellers); 1 at Lower Wekiva River State Preserve (*Lake* or *Seminole*) 11 Jul (L. Cooper); 1 at Black Swamp (*Leon*) 15 Jul (K. MacVicar); 1 at Mabry Park (*Leon*) 18 Jul (G. Menk).
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: 1 at Crystal River State Buffer Preserve (*Citrus*) through 26 Jun (A. and B. Hansen).

CHIPPING SPARROW: 1 male singing at Key West 28 Jun-26 Jul (J. Ondrejko).

SHINY COWBIRD: 1 male at Seminole (*Pinellas*) 17 Jun (K. Nelson); 1 male at FDCP 14 Jul (L. Atherton); up to 12 (8 males, 4 females) at Key West through the season (J. Ondrejko).

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH: 1 female at a Gulf Breeze feeder 20 Jun (B. and C. Kahn).

Contributors: John Arnett, Brooks Atherton, Lyn Atherton, Lynn Badger, Dick Ballman, Clay Black, David Beatty, Paul Blair, Pam Bowen, Reed Bowman, Pat Burns, Bob Carlton, Ed Case, Jim Cavanagh, Morris Clark, Roger Clark, Julie Cocke, Linda Cooper, Jim Cox, Tim Dellinger, Wes Dirks, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Charlie Ewell, Paul Fellers, Orin Fogle, Chuck Geanangel, Al Hansen, Bev Hansen, David Hartgrove, Paul Hess, Michael Hill, John Hintermister, Brett Hoffman, Kelley Holland, Harry Hooper, Betty Kahn, Charles Kahn, Paul Kelley, Adam Kent, Joyce King, Jerry Krummrich, Karen Lawrence, Dave Leonard, Horace Loftin, Holly Lovell, Lorne Malo, Keith MacVicar, Mike Manetz, Tony Menart, Gail Menk, Kris Nelson, Joe Ondrejko, Tom Palmer, Neil Pettis, Peggy Powell, Bill Pranty, Susan Pulling, Bob Ridenour, Bryant Roberts, Ariel Robinson, Don Robinson, Rex Rowan, Fran Rutkovsky, Paul Rutkovsky, Steve Schwikert, Parks Small, Austin Smith, Ron Smith, Lee Snyder, Gary Sprandel, Phil Tetlow, Pete Timmer, Camey Timmons, Dana Timmons, Ken Tracey, Joann Van Tine, Keith Walbot, Don Ware, and Walt Winton.

Report prepared by **Bill Pranty**, state compiler (8515 Village Mill Row, Bayonet Point, Florida 34667-2662; email billpranty@hotmail.com). Other committee members are **Linda Cooper** (115 Lameroux Road, Winter Haven, Florida 33884; email lcooper298@aol.com), **Bob Duncan** (614 Fairpoint Drive, Gulf Breeze, Florida 32561, email duncan44@juno.com), **Gail Menk** (2725 Peachtree Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32304), **Peggy Powell** (2965 Forest Circle, Jacksonville, Florida 32257), **Rex Rowan** (2041 NE 15<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Gainesville, Florida 32609, email afn49272@afn.org), and **Ron Smith** (1767 Colorado Avenue NE, St. Petersburg, Florida 33703, email smithowl21@aol.com).