

florida region



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The biggest impact on this report was made by Zellwood, the name of the huge environmental restoration initiative directed primarily toward revitalizing the fishing and other resources of Lake Apopka, which had been contaminated by runoff from intensive farming of the adjacent mucklands. The St. Johns River Water Management District acquired nearly 13,000 acres (20 square miles) of muck

farms on the lake's north shore near the town of Zellwood and shallow flooded many of the fields to control weeds. By autumn 1998 the Florida Audubon Society obtained verbal agreements for a 2000-acre "shorebird management area" managed specifically for shorebirds and providing habitat for other wetland-dependent species.

Fall and winter bird use of Zellwood was phenomenal, and the birders were close behind. Harry Robinson made 50 careful bird counts of a 6000-acre portion of this acquisition from August 15, 1998, to March 23, 1999, counting a peak of 41,000 birds December 8. The Christmas Bird Count there recorded 174 species, an all-time inland record. By March the Zellwood farms bird list numbered 252 species. The glowing reports from Harry and others who visited the site were quickly spread via the Internet and by word of mouth.

This is the first chapter of our story, represented by selected observations presented below. The second, unfortunate chapter deals with a die-off affecting large fish-eating birds ascribed to persistent pesticides (see SA). The final chapters will be written as resource managers struggle to cleanse the farms while protecting the avifauna in what promises eventually to become a mecca for birds and those who enjoy them.

SA Trouble at Zellwood Farms. In early November, even as populations of birds and birders were increasing at Zellwood, a few carcasses of White Pelicans were visible in the fields. By Dec. 12–13 an obvious problem existed; 30 carcasses were examined and tissue samples taken for analysis. The die-off continued into January and February with 25 new carcasses found some days until the toll reached 404 White Pelicans and 93 other, mainly piscivorous, birds. By the end of February the fields had been drained, but the die-off continued among the dispersed birds. About 350 White Pelican carcasses were found off-site, and mortality is expected to follow the flocks back to their Minnesota and North Dakota breeding colonies.

Zellwood farms was closed to the public February 17.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined by tissue analyses that the birds were killed by residues of chemically stable organochlorine insecticides which had been banned for 10–30 years. It is not known if these chemicals are pervasive throughout the site or are associated with previously unidentified "hot spots."

A task force of numerous agencies has been assembled to solve the remaining mysteries and to recommend a future course of research and management. Solutions to these problems can be applied to restoration of other agricultural lands in the Everglades and throughout the United States.

—Taken from a report of Bill Pranty and Gian Basili, Florida Audubon Society

Abbreviations: C.P. (County Park); E.N.P. (Everglades Nat'l. Park); F.O.S.R.C. (Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee); H.I.S.R.A. (Honeymoon Island S.R.A.); H.P.M. (Hamilton County phosphate mines); P.P.S.P. (Paynes Prairie State Preserve, Alachua); P.P.M. (Polk County phosphate mines); S&A 1994 (Stevenson and Anderson 1994); S.M.N.W.R. (St. Marks N.W.R., Wakulla); S.R.A. (State Recreation Area); S.R.C.A. (Seminole Ranch Conservation Area, Orange and/or Seminole Counties); S.T.F. (Sewage Treatment Facility); S.R.S.T.F. (Springhill Road S.T.F., Leon Co.); T.R.S.T.F. (Tram Road S.T.F., Leon Co.); Zellwood (flooded muck farms just north of Lake Apopka, Orange Co.).

GREBES THROUGH FLAMINGO

A concentration of 555 Pied-billed Grebes at Zellwood Dec. 3 (HR) may be a recent high count. Up to four Eared Grebes were found there through Feb. 10, the only Regional report. A Sooty Shearwater was identified at the S. Sunshine Skyway Fishing Pier, Manatee, Jan. 3 (LAT) and perhaps the same bird, "an all dark shearwater," was there Jan. 6 (LSn). A peak of 4370 White Pelicans was recorded at Zellwood Jan. 29 (HR). Two ad. Brown Pelicans, always scarce inland, were found near Mulberry, Polk, Feb. 19 (TP).

A "Great White Heron" came N to visit H.I.S.R.A., Pinellas, Dec. 27 to the end of the period (WY et al.). The six or seven imm. Reddish Egrets wintering at S.M.N.W.R. lighthouse, Wakulla, Jan. 23 and Feb. 17 (BB, J. Dozier, F. Rutkovsky) raise the question of where they originate since the closest known breeding sites are more than 200 mi south. Notably large inland winter concentrations of a number of large waders were counted at Zellwood: 395 Great Blue Herons Dec. 3, 810 Great Egrets Feb. 5, 1010 Glossy Ibis Jan. 8, more than 800 Wood Storks Jan. 29 (all HR), and 200 Black-crowned Night-Herons Dec. 20 (BPr, GB et al.). The S.R.C.A. also supported large numbers of various waders: 1513 Snowy Egrets, 1512 Little Blue Herons, and 1037 Glossy Ibis all on Dec. 20, and 202 Tricolored Herons Jan. 16 (all *fide* LMal). A good count of 50 Glossy Ibis was made at H.P.M. Feb. 12 (BB). Two Roseate Spoonbills wandered up to Talbot Island S.P., Duval, Dec. 26 (H. Belcher). The

86 Wood Storks counted on the Tallahassee CBC Jan. 1 (GMe) helps mark them as regular year-round residents in *Leon*. An ad. Greater Flamingo loitered at the salt ponds, Key West, Dec. 18 through early January (*vide* D&HH); 40 more wintered at Snake Bight, E.N.P., *Monroe* (m.ob.).

WATERFOWL

As might be expected, Zellwood attracted large concentrations of several duck species: 12,565 Green-winged Teal Dec. 18, 6580 Blue-winged Teal Dec. 16, 645 N. Shovelers Dec. 16, 11,900 Ring-necked Ducks Dec. 3, and 517 Ruddy Ducks Dec. 8 (all counts by HR) Perhaps a reflection of less coverage, or a new refuge for ducks at Zellwood, the usual high numbers of ducks were not reported from P.P.M. except 1100 Lesser Scaup reported there Feb. 21 (CG, PT). Other waterfowl concentrations include 2200 N. Shovelers and 1800 Ruddies at H.P.M. Dec. 19 (MMa, GMcD, JA), 750 Redheads at H.I.S.R.A. Jan. 8–15 (WY), and 125 Hooded Mergansers at T.R.S.T.F., *Leon*, Dec. 4 (GMe).

A peak of 189 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks was counted at Zellwood Dec. 8 (HR). Two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks wintered at PPS P., *Alachua* (J. Weimer), and eight were in *Hillsborough* Dec. 6 (S. Gross). Rare anywhere in the Region, male Cinnamon Teal were found at 3 locations: one at Sarasota Dec. 19–Feb. 19 (JKo et al.), one at Myakka River S.P., *Sarasota*, Dec. 26 (CE, NP, W. Dirks), and three at Zellwood to Feb. 10 (HR, LMan). One teal at Zellwood was described as a possible Blue-winged x Cinnamon hybrid, colored like a Cinnamon but with the white facial crescent of a Blue-winged (HR).

Other rarely reported waterfowl include Greater White-fronted Geese—one in the peninsula at Zellwood Dec. 4–11 (HR), three at H.P.M. Dec. 19 (MMa, GMcD, JA), and one at T.R.S.T.F. Dec. 31 (GMe, ph. JCa, JL), two Ross's Geese at Zellwood Dec. 6–16 (HR) among 90 Snows; two Tundra Swans at S.M.N.W.R., *Wakulla*, Jan. 10 (P. Berry, *vide* MCo); a White-cheeked Pintail of unknown origin at Wakodahatchee Wetlands, *Palm Beach*, Dec. 19 (BrH); a Com. Eider at Port Canaveral, *Brevard*, Dec. 8 (*vide* D&HH); and an Oldsquaw at Port Orange, *Volusia*, Jan. 19 & 22 (*vide* D&HH). All three scoter species, irregular and usually rare along the peninsular coast, were reported. Black Scoters were in greatest numbers as usual: a flock of 216 migrating S along *Palm Beach* and *Broward* beaches Dec. 12 (W. George); 12 at Sanibel I., *Lee*, Dec. 24 (BPo et

al.); and four at Port Charlotte, *Charlotte*, Dec. 26 through the period (JBo, CE et al.). There were 13 Surf Scoters at Sanibel I., *Lee*, Dec. 23 (BPo et al.) and four White-winged Scoters at Madeira Beach, *Pinellas*, Dec. 13 (KN).

South of their usual winter range and unusual inland, three Am. Black Ducks were at Zellwood to Jan. 12 (HR), a male Greater Scaup was at Driggers Road, *Highlands*, Dec. 2 (BPr et al.), and up to five Greater stayed to Feb. 5 at Zellwood (HR). Up to five Bufflehead remained at Zellwood to Feb. 5 (HR) while four were at the P.P.M. Feb. 20 (CG, PT). Common Goldeneyes were in *Leon* at S.R.S.T.F., *Leon*, Dec. 14 (GMe) and T.R.S.T.F. Jan. 29–Feb. 5 (HH, GMe, SB), and two were wintering at Gainesville (RR) with another at L. Weir, *Marion*, Feb. 4 (ES). Other goldeneyes were reported s. along the coast: a female in *Citrus* Dec. 31 (A&BH) and a male at Port Orange Jan. 25 (*vide* D&HH).

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES

Two early Swallow-tailed Kites were at S.R.C.A. Feb. 27 (*vide* LMal) and two near Loughman, *Polk* and/or *Osceola*, Feb. 28 (TP). White-tailed Kite reports include two at CR-832, *Hendry*, Dec. 18 (*vide* D&HH); one in *Lee* near the *Hendry* line Dec. 19 (NP); one in the St. Johns R. marsh in s. *Brevard* Feb. 2 (SR, JBr), and two there Feb. 3 (SR). A Snail Kite was w. of its usual range in *Lee* near the *Hendry* line Dec. 19 (NP). A concentration of 19 Bald Eagles was counted at Zellwood Dec. 16 (HR). Another Zellwood spectacle was the peak of 27 N. Harriers Dec. 20 (HR). A rare late Broad-winged Hawk was reported at Sarasota Dec. 26 (L. Saul, D. Wassmer). Winter Short-tailed Hawks include one dark morph seen near Tiger Cr., *Polk*, Jan. 2 (TP) and three dark morphs (two adults) wintering at Key West (JOn); a light morph at Saddle Creek C.P., *Polk*, Feb. 18 (M. Chakan, J. Rudd) and one at Lettuce L. Park, *Hillsborough*, Feb. 27 (R. Webb) were probably looking for breeding territories.

A Yellow Rail was seen at Echo Range, Avon Park Air Force Range, *Highlands*, Dec. 6 (D. Barber) and another (?) Dec. 20 (R. Harrison) within 500–1000 m of the first observation. A Black Rail was heard calling ca. 1.6 km s. of the turnoff to Mahogany Hammock, E.N.P., *Miami-Dade*, Dec. 31 (LMan). Purple Gallinules commonly winter on the Florida peninsula n. through *Polk*, so five seen on the Gainesville CBC Dec. 20 (*vide* BM) represents a northward extension. Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*)

should normally be relegated to the escaped exotics at the end of this list, but a breeding population at Pembroke Pines, *Broward*, has exploded to 134 individuals counted Feb. 21–22 (BPr, HL, K&K Schnitzius); another swamphen was found dead on a road there (*Archbold Biological Station). These big, bold cousins of the Purple Gallinule coexisted with their kin in Pembroke Pines, but one wonders if this can continue.

Two Sandhill Cranes flying ESE over Key West Feb. 23 (JOn) apparently did not know their wintering range stops in Florida Sandhill Cranes were seen in higher numbers and more frequently in the Big Bend region this winter, ranging from one at T.R.S.T.F. Nov. 20 (JCa) and 13 at S.R.S.T.F. Dec. 10 (GMe) to 30 at S.M.N.W.R. Dec. 28 (J&K Sunderlin) and nine there Dec. 29 (M. Reed).

SHOREBIRDS

THROUGH SKIMMER

Zellwood takes all honors in the shorebirds list: 346 Black-bellied Plovers Dec. 3, two Am. Golden-Plovers Dec. 12 (EK, KR et al) and one Dec. 16, 756 Killdeer Jan. 1, 75 Am Avocets Jan. 11–12, 415 Greater Yellowlegs and 1195 Lessers Dec. 16, 2450 Least Sandpipers Dec. 31, 145 Dunlin Dec. 31, 156 Stilt Sandpipers Jan. 19, 1890 Long-billed Dowitchers Dec. 12 (no Short-billed Dowitchers identified there after Nov. 25), and 898 Com. Snipe Dec. 28 (all HR except as noted). Zellwood rarities include single individuals of the following: Marbled Godwit Dec. 28 and Jan. 27–Feb. 10, Sanderling Dec. 12 (EK, KR et al.), Pectoral Sandpiper Feb. 9–10, Ruff to Jan. 19, and a Wilson's Phalarope Dec. 3 (all HR except as noted).

Elsewhere a count of 172 Piping Plovers on 8 barrier islands in *Pinellas* and s. *Pasco* Jan. 11–19, including 70 at Three Rooker Bar, *Pinellas*, Jan. 13 (PBL, WY), compares favorably with the 179 birds counted in January 1996. An Am. Oystercatcher at the Wakulla Springs S.P. dock, *Wakulla*, Dec. 30 (S. Stedman et al.) furnished only the 2nd inland Florida report (S&A 1994). Up to 35 Am. Avocets remained in n. *Duval* to Jan. 10 (RC). The 13 Whimbrels seen at H.I.S.R.A. Feb. 8 (GS) represented a good count as did the 100 Long-billed Dowitchers at the H.P.M. Feb. 12 (BB) and the 1200 Short-billed Dowitchers estimated at Cedar Key, *Levy*, Feb. 13 (GS). Two Purple Sandpipers remained at the Venice Jetty, *Sarasota*, Jan. 3–Feb. 15 (C. Sample, JKO et al.); up to 18 wintered at their more usual spot at Ft Clinch S.P., *Nassau* (RCl et al.). Unusual for

being too far north was a Solitary Sandpiper at Gainesville Feb. 28 (MMA). The only Am. Woodcock reported was at Brooker Cr. Preserve, *Pinellas*, Jan. 9 (DG et al.); a relatively mild early winter in the central Atlantic states probably induced most to winter n. of Florida this year.

Two Pomarine Jaegers (one dark, one light) and an imm. light-morph Parasitic Jaeger were at the St. Johns R. mouth Jan. 17 (RCI). A S. Polar Skua at Boynton Inlet, *Palm Beach*, Dec. 2–Jan. 23 (BrH et al.) provided the 3rd report of this species along the Florida Atlantic coast since last fall. Franklin's Gulls were reported more frequently: up to 21 at Zellwood to Dec. 28 (HR), and singles at H.P.M. Dec. 18 (RR, GMCD), Boynton Inlet Jan. 21 (BrH), Fernandina Beach, *Nassau*, Jan. 20–Feb. 13 (P. Leary et al.), L. Jackson, *Leon*, Jan. 1 (D&S Jue), and S.R.S.T.F., *Leon*, Jan. 14 (HH). A Black-headed Gull, rare in Florida, was seen in n. *Duval* Dec. 26–27 (RC, ph. to F.O.S.R.C.). A first-winter Iceland Gull was found at the St. Johns R. mouth Jan. 17 (RC), and one was also reported at Ft. Clinch S.P. Feb. 7 (J. Krummrich). A first-year Thayer's Gull was reported near the Pompano Beach Landfill, *Broward*, Jan. 10 (GMCC, MP). A Glaucous Gull remained at Ft. Clinch S.P. Dec. 21 to the end of the period (*vide* P. Powell). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake remained at the S. Sunshine Skyway Fishing Pier Dec. 29 to the end of the period (N. Gobris et al.); another was reported at Ft. Clinch S.P. Jan. 30 (A. Turner, SF et al.). A Sabine's Gull was seen near Merritt Island N.W.R., *Brevard*, Feb. 2 (*vide* D&HH).

With so many rare gulls reported, the Lesser Black-backed Gull becomes more routine: two adults at Zellwood to Feb. 17 (HR, BPr, et al.), two at Snake Bight, E.N.P. Jan. 7 (GMCC, MP), six (two adults) at Port Charlotte, *Charlotte*, Jan. 10 (JBo), eight (five adults) near the Pompano Beach Landfill Jan. 10 (GMCC, MP), and one adult at St. Cloud, *Osceola*, Feb. 26 (W. Biggs). Among the high counts of gulls, the more-than-a-thousand Bonaparte's Gulls at L. Weir Feb. 10 (ES) seemed most interesting. Zellwood held a peak of 208 Caspian Terns Feb. 10, 280 Forster's Terns Dec. 18, and 120 Black Skimmers Feb. 3; along with all these was an unexpected inland Royal Tern Dec. 16 (all HR).

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

One Eur. Collared-Dove was incubating, another pair nest-building, and other birds courting at Hudson Beach C.P., *Pasco*, Feb. 6 (K. Tracey, BPr); several years ago one had

been found incubating in *Leon* in December (GMe), perhaps leaving only January as the non-breeding season? Eleven White-winged Doves were counted at Cedar Key Jan. 2 (*vide* D. Henderson), and another was farther south at Tierra Verde, *Pinellas*, Dec. 2 (LAT).

A rare winter Mangrove Cuckoo was seen and heard on SR-92 ca. 3 km s. of US-41, *Collier*, Jan. 21 (LMan). A Short-eared Owl wintered at Zellwood Dec. 3 (HR) to Jan. 25 (A&T Mason et al.). A Lesser Nighthawk was identified at Zellwood Dec. 16 (HR), and one was found dead at P.P.S.P. Jan. 11 (HA, R. Ozmore, * Florida Museum of Natural History).

It seems that more wintering Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are staying around: one wintered at Palm Bay, *Brevard* (DN); two (male and immature) wintered at Oviedo, *Seminole* (L. Orr); one male in Tallahassee mid-December–Jan. 23 (M. Lidell, PC); and one immature at Tallahassee Jan. 11 (N. Fichter, JCa). A Black-chinned Hummingbird wintered at Gainesville (DBe et al.), and another was found in Tallahassee mid-December–Jan. 31 (J. O'Malley, PC). Rufous-like hummers, reported as *Selasphorus* sp., were found in several parts of the peninsula: Orlando Dec. 21 (BHA), Lakes Park, Ft. Myers, Dec. 24–31 (LAT, CE et al.), Gainesville Jan. 4 and Feb. 27–28 (both BR), and wintering at Kanapaha Prairie, *Alachua* (EP).

FLYCATCHERS

A peak of 49 E. Phoebes was reported at Zellwood Feb. 9 (HR). An ad. male Vermilion Flycatcher was photographed at Hickory Mound Impoundment, *Taylor*, Dec. 8 (JCa); others found were an imm. male at Micanopy, *Alachua*, Dec. 13 through the period (C. Lanciani et al.); an individual at P.P.S.P. Dec. 20–Jan. 8 (GMCD, RR); a female at Merritt Island N.W.R. Feb. 12 (M&R Sampere); and another female at Goodwin Waterfowl Management Area, *Brevard*, Feb. 19 (DN). A few Great Crested Flycatchers winter in the c. peninsula as indicated by two calling at Venus Flatwoods Preserve, *Highlands*, Jan. 15 (JG, BPr et al.) and one at P.P.S.P. Feb. 7 (RR, D. Wahl). A smattering of W. Kingbirds was reported—two at Banana L. Park, *Polk*, Dec. 14 (TP), four at CR-833, *Hendry*, Jan. 3 (*vide* DH)—but most (up to 20) wintered at Zellwood (BPr, CPi, HR et al.). The first wintering E. Kingbirds found in *Leon* were seen at s. L. Jackson where one–five were found on 12 trips Dec. 2–Jan. 3 (+GMe, PC et al.); three were there for the Jan. 1 CBC. Single Scissor-tailed Flycatchers

were reported at L. Alfred, *Polk*, Jan. 18 (PT) and Okeechobee, *Okeechobee*, Feb. 19 (C&M Tucker) while three wintered at Zellwood (HR).

VIREOS THROUGH PIPITS

The best vireo was a Bell's on the Tallahassee CBC Jan. 1 (JL, †JCa et al.). Probably the only place in Florida where Fish Crows are counted (other than on CBCs) is at Key West where a peak of 16 wintered (JOn) The annual early Purple Martin race was won by three at Spring Hill, *Hernando*, Jan. 24 (A&BH) and two at Gainesville Jan. 26 (B Dowling, H. Dowling). Good news on Cave Swallows: 25 were at the Cutler Ridge breeding site, *Miami-Dade*, Jan. 6 (GMCC, MP) Late Barn Swallows were reported in *Leon* Dec. 1 (GMe, D&KM, B. Henderson) and Dec. 4 (Gme); one was in Zellwood Dec. 16, and two were there Dec. 31–Jan. 1 (HR).

The only Brown Creeper reported was at Black Swamp, *Leon*, Jan. 11 (MCo) A Winter Wren was found in Black Swamp Jan. 4 & 8 (GMe, SB) and at Swift Cr., *Hamilton*, Dec. 19 (MMA). In contrast to last winter, Golden-crowned Kinglets were widespread throughout the period in *Leon* (GMe); farther south only one was at San Felasco Hammock S.P., *Alachua*, Dec. 6 (MMA) and another at S.R.C.A. Dec. 20 (*vide* LMal). A Veery was netted, banded, and carefully examined in hand in Tallahassee Jan. 17 (P. Homann, †S. Jue), its rarity was well appreciated, but no working camera was available, so no photograph was taken; no physical evidence yet exists of Veery in Florida during winter (S&A 1994) Two Com. Mynas had moved to Rolling Oaks, Pembroke Pines, Feb. 22 (BPr, K Schnitzius, HL). American Pipits peaked at Zellwood Dec. 8 at 570 (HR).

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Nashville Warbler was again found in *Leon*, at L. Jackson Dec. 15 (GMe); also one was at H.I.S.R.A. Dec. 27 (EK), and one reported as the western race at Zellwood Jan. 11–Feb. 10 (HR et al.). Northern Parulas, rare in winter in the n. part of the state, were fairly common and singing at Gainesville by the first week of February (A Kratter, HA et al.). Some may have wintered nearby: one was at Kanapaha Prairie Dec. 20 (RR, S. Cimbaro) and one at P.P.S.P. Jan. 6 (BM et al.). Chestnut-sided Warblers are occasionally reported in winter; one remained at s. Jacksonville Dec. 3 to the end of the period (JCo). Black-throated Green Warblers are sometimes recorded on CBCs, but these stayed longer: one at s. Jacksonville

Dec 14–Feb. 8 (JCo), one at Kanapaha Prairie in mid-January (M. Meisenburg), and four at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, *Collier*, Feb. 17 (B&L Cooper).

By this point we are not surprised to report 370 Palm Warblers recorded at Zellwood Dec. 8 (HR). Interestingly, an ad. male Am. Redstart wintered at Gainesville in the same yard where an imm. male wintered last year (MMA); up to two remained at Zellwood to Dec. 28 (HR), and a female was seen at Loxahatchee N.W.R. Jan. 3 (NP). We should carefully search for other warblers the winter following apparently successful overwintering. A N. Waterthrush remained at Zellwood Dec. 31–Jan. 30 (HR, P Fellers et al.), and others were at P.P.S.P. Dec. 8 (C. Parenteau), Weedon I. Preserve Feb. 7 (RSm), and S.R.C.A. Feb. 27 (*vide* LMal). A Louisiana Waterthrush was reported at Newnans L., *Alachua*, Dec. 20 (JBr). Florida's 2nd **MacGillivray's Warbler** remained at Turkey L. Park, *Orange*, to Dec. 1 (NS, DN). Single male Wilson's Warblers were reported at Rainbow Springs S.P., *Marion*, Dec. 26 (BR) and near Oviedo, *Seminole*, Jan. 2 (BHA). Another Wilson's was at Bivens Arm, *Alachua*, Jan. 16 (S. Duncan). A late Yellow-breasted Chat was reported in *Hillsborough* Dec. 20 (Rsm).

Along with a scattering of tanager reports is one of a W. Tanager at Lakes Park, Ft Myers, Jan. 30–Feb. 25 (R. Miller JG et al.) A vagrant male Stripe-headed Tanager was on the Gumbo Limbo Trail, E.N.P., *Miami-Dade*, Feb. 1 (LMAN).

Sparrows were well represented in the peninsula. Single Clay-colored Sparrows were reported from L. Wales, *Polk* (PT), and Mims, *Brevard* (K. LaBorde), with a record number of 46 at Zellwood Feb. 3 (HR). Single Lark Sparrows were seen at Auburn-dale, *Polk*, Dec. 16 (PT), Talbot Island S.P. Dec. 26–Jan. 4 (M. Dolan), and Zellwood Feb. 9–17 (HR). Henslow's Sparrows were reported from 2 counties: one at Zellwood Jan. 7–19 (HR et al.) and a record number of 11 in *Alachua* Dec. 18–Feb. 12 (*vide* RR), including seven at P.P.S.P. Dec. 20–22 (AKe et al.) Very rarely observed in the peninsula, single Le Conte's Sparrows were at Zellwood (up to three individuals may have been present) Dec. 6–20 (RSm, T. Rogers et al.), P.P.S.P. Dec. 20 (AKe et al.), and Brooker Cr. Preserve Dec. 27 (ASm, RSm, PB). While Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow is the species expected along the Gulf coast, Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow does occur there apparently in lesser numbers; one of the latter was identified at Gulfport, *Pinellas*, Dec. 5–18 (RSm et al.) Two Fox Sparrows were

found at P.P.S.P. Dec. 18–22 (AKe, JH), and one appeared at Jacksonville 26 Dec. (RR).

Rare in winter, single Lincoln's Sparrows were observed at L. Placid Scrub Wildlife and Environmental Area, *Highlands*, Jan. 8 (GMCC, MP), and at P.P.S.P. Jan. 31–Feb. 2 (B. Ahern et al.); first reported last fall, up to four were seen at Zellwood through Feb. 17 (HR). While the numbers of White-throated Sparrows wintering in Florida have declined since the 1980s, those of White-crowned Sparrow have increased. The latter species was reported at 5 locations from *Nassau* s. to *Hillsborough* with a record high of 51 at Zellwood Feb. 3 (HR).

Rare and irregular in most of the Region, two Dark-eyed Juncos wintered at Gainesville (DBe, EP), and another was along the Tiger Hammock Rd., *Wakulla*, Jan. 31 (J. Epler). At the same Canaveral National Seashore, *Brevard*, site where one appeared last winter, a female Snow Bunting was found Dec. 8 (NS, DN).

It is unknown whether 2 *Alachua* Rose-breasted Grosbeak reports represented the same individual; this very rare winter visitor was seen at both Newnans L. Jan. 2 (C. Reno, IF) and at Gainesville from Jan. 22–Feb. 14 (S. Hellard). Rare in winter, up to three Blue Grosbeaks, first reported last fall, were observed at Zellwood through Feb. 5 (HR). Indigo Buntings and Painted Buntings wintered n. in the peninsula to Jacksonville (RR, JCo), Zellwood (HR), and *Hillsborough* (BA, Lat, ASm, RSm). One Painted Bunting was seen at Cross Cr., *Alachua*, Dec. 28–Jan. 9 (IF). Also reported last fall, as many as four Dickcissels remained at Zellwood through Feb. 17 (HR), the only report received.

A female Yellow-headed Blackbird was found at H.I.S.R.A. Jan. 30 (D. Woodard, EK); up to five were seen throughout the season at Zellwood (HR). Rusty Blackbirds were generally scarce and local in the peninsula, being reported s. to Zellwood (HR) and Lakeland (EK). Irregular in the peninsula in winter, one Brewer's Blackbird was found at L. Seminole, *Pinellas*, Dec. 9 (KN) and another at Micanopy, *Alachua*, Dec. 19 (G. Kiltie). Farther north, a Brewer's was studied along the *Wakulla* R., *Wakulla*, Feb. 14 (†JCa). A female Boat-tailed Grackle with pale irises, presumably of the race *Q. m. torreyi* that occasionally wanders S from its coastal breeding range n. of the St. Johns R., was reported inland at Gainesville Feb. 21 (RR).

Along the s.w. coast where the Shiny Cowbird is consistently reported in winter, 18 were seen at Briggs Nature Center, *Collier*, Jan. 16 (LMAN, BPr et al.), as was a

lone male at Captiva I., *Lee*, Jan. 26 (V McGrath). Regular but rare in the winter, one Bronzed Cowbird was observed at Lassing Park, *Pinellas*, Dec. 19 (D. Wassmer); a maximum of six was reported throughout the season at Lakeland (*vide* DH).

It was not a good season for winter finches. The only report of Pine Siskin was one at Holiday, *Pasco*, Dec. 31 (P. Young), and the only Evening Grosbeak was reported from Havana, *Gadsden*, Dec. 24 (L. Herring, *vide* GMe).

EXOTICS

Escapes reported include Abdim's Stork (*Ciconia abdimii*), Dusky Lory (*Pseudeos fuscata*), Rosy-faced [Peach-faced] Lovebird (*Agapornis roseicollis*) (with a yellow face), and African Gray Hornbill (*Tockus nasutus*)

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