

Siskins staged a modest flight, with one to 4 on only four Kentucky C.B.C.s; the only sizable flock in Kentucky all winter was 50+ in Elliott 11 Feb (EM, et al.). Siskins were barely reported in Tennessee. The only Evening Grosbeak reported was a female in Morgan, KY 4–5 Jan (ME).

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## Central Southern



### C. Dwight Cooley

In winter 2005–2006, the southeastern United States continued to assess, and suffer through, the effects of the terrible 2005 hurricane season. Those familiar with bird distribution in the Region will note the significant decline in records from traditional coastal sites such as Cameron, Hackberry, Grand Isle, Gulfport, Dauphin Island, and Gulf Shores, resulting not only from habitat loss but also coastal residents trying to pull their lives back together.

Abbreviations: B.S.N.W.R. (Bayou Sauvage N.W.R.), N.N.W.R. (Noxubee N.W.R.), W.N.W.R. (Wheeler N.W.R.).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH IBIS

The eastward surge of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks advanced strongly into se. Louisiana, where a peak of 1160 (plus 4 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks) was recorded in

Audubon Park, New Orleans, Orleans on 30 Jan (RDP). One wonders when coastal Mississippi and Alabama will begin seeing such numbers. Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks on Lacassine Pool, Cameron, LA, 28 Feb (SWC, DLD) were either wintering or early migrants. The largest reported concentration of Greater White-fronted Geese was of 70 at N.N.W.R., Noxubee MS 4 Jan (TLS). Ross's Goose continues to be widely reported, with 50 in Tunica, MS 1 Jan (GK, SK) the largest number reported. Only two Cackling Goose records were received, down from 15 last winter. In Arkansas, 52 were on the Univ. of Arkansas Farm, Washington 17 Dec (MM), while in Mississippi, 3 were seen 25 Jan on Lower L. Sardis (GK, SK). The number of Trumpeter Swan reports continues to increase, with some question as to their provenance. In Alabama, 2 imms. were near Marvyn, Lee 17 Feb+ (p.a., GEH, m.ob.). In Arkansas, 3 ads. were at Bald Knob N.W.R., White 1 Dec (KN, BA); 98 were on Magness L., Cleburne 2 Dec (RH); 2 were on Mill Pond, Newton, 15 Dec–4 Feb (JSt, TB, SC, m.ob.); and an ad. was in Pulaski 27 Dec (RH). Two ad. Tundra Swans were near Hope Hull, Montgomery, AL 30–31 Dec (CTS, PSn, LFG). In Arkansas, an imm. was on Magness L. 2 Dec and 3 Jan (RH, KN, LDN), and 5 ads. and an imm. were at Big Lake N.W.R., Mississippi 19 Dec (DB).

Mottled Ducks continued their expansion up the Mississippi R.: up to 13 were near Arkansas City, Desha, AR 23 Dec–25 Feb (DB, SDe). Cinnamon Teal is a rare winter visitor to the Region. In Louisiana, ad. males were recorded in Rapides, where 2 were seen 29 Jan (DLD, SWC), and at Lacassine N.W.R., where one was reported 12 Feb (JBo, DBo, JS). The bird of the season had to be Arkansas's 2nd

Tufted Duck, an ad. male on L. Dardanelle, Yell 20 Feb+ (p.a., KN, LDN, m.ob.). Inland scoter records are always of interest. Two female-type White-winged Scoters were on Oktibbeha County L., Oktibbeha, MS 14–15 Dec (TLS), while up to 2 female-type Black Scoters were at Guntersville, Marshall, AL 1–27 Dec (LBR, RAR, LW, m.ob.). In Arkansas, L. Dardanelle hosted a scoter triecta, with imm. Surf, White-winged, and Black Scoters 17–18 Dec, 29 Dec+, and 10 Dec+, respectively (KN, LDN, m.ob.). The only Long-tailed Duck reported was a first-year male at Avery I., Iberia, LA 7–25 Jan (EL, m.ob.). Common Mergansers, somewhat rare in the Region, were reported with some regularity. In Arkansas, 3 were on L. Sequoyah, Washington 11 Dec (MM, DC); 4 were seen on Mallard L., Mississippi 19 Dec (DB, JB, TJB); an ad. female was in Millwood S.P., Little River 25 Dec (DS); and up to 5 were on L. Dardanelle 26 Dec–25 Feb (KN, LDN). In Mississippi, a female was on Lower L. Sardis, Panola 17–25 Jan (GK, SK) Ruffed Grouse reaches the s. limits of its distribution along the Cumberland Plateau in ne. Alabama, where records are usually of drumming birds. One seen at Skyline W.M.A., Jackson, AL 26 Feb (AS) was noteworthy.

Traditional loon wintering sites continue to produce. As many as 4 Red-throated Loons were at Guntersville, AL 26 Dec–21 Jan (LBR, RAR, SH, DH, m.ob.), while one was noted 29 Jan on Bay Springs L., Tishomingo, MS (WP) Up to 2 Pacific Loons were recorded at Guntersville, AL 25 Dec–21 Jan (SWM, m.ob.), and one was at Bay Springs L., MS 26 Dec (WP). Always rare in the Region, single Red-necked Grebes were reported from Limestone Bay, W.N.W.R., Limestone, AL 19 Nov–10 Jan (DBo, m.ob.); from W.F. George Dam, Henry,

AL 19 Feb (EBE, MB); and from L. Pine Bluff, Jefferson, AR 4–8 Jan (p.a., DB, DM, DS). Continuing the trend of recent years, single Western Grebes were on L. Beaverfork, Faulkner, AR 17 Dec+ (MJ, HR, WS, DS, JH) and Bay Springs L., MS 29 Jan (WP).

Once rare inland during winter, American White Pelicans are now almost commonplace: 116 were found 17 Dec on the W.N.W.R. C.B.C., *Limestone/Morgan*, AL, while 17 were seen below Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, AL 26 Jan (GDJ, DGJ, m.ob.). Brown Pelicans, possibly hurricane-assisted, were found inland across the Region: an ad. was on L. Pine Bluff, AR 26 Dec–3 Jan (RDo, DM, WS, DS); 4 were in *Rapides*, LA 31 Dec (EVM, MG, DG); and a juv. was seen through-

out the reporting period on Choctaw L., Choctaw, MS (JO, TLS, MS, m.ob.). The only Anhingas reported were a female in Alabama at Montgomery 31 Dec (LFG) and ad. males in Mississippi at Oktibbeha County L. 1 Jan (TLS, MS) and N.N.W.R. 31 Jan (TLS).

The 6 Reddish Egrets on E. Timbalier/Grande Terre I., *Lafouche/Plaquemines*, LA 23 Jan (DLD, SWC, RD) was a good number for midwinter. An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron on the Birmingham C.B.C., *Jefferson*, AL 23 Dec (DPG, SSH) was unexpected. White Ibis wintered far inland, with one at Millwood L., *Howard*, AR 4 Feb (CM), 10 on Moore Bayou, *Desha*, AR 27 Feb (RH), and 73 on the Shreveport C.B.C. at Cross L., *Caddo*, LA 17 Dec (JI, CL, RG). Three Glossy Ibis were near Mamou, *Evangeline*, LA 30 Dec (MW), where they are decidedly uncommon.

## RAPTORS THROUGH SWIFTS

Osprey numbers continue to rebound, with an Alabama maximum of 29 on the Gulf Shores C.B.C., *Baldwin* and a good count of 15 near Venice, *Plaquemines*, LA (PAW, DPM, RS), both 30 Dec. White-tailed Kites continue to hold their own in Louisiana, where singles were seen in *Vermilion* 21 Dec–23 Feb (BV, LA, m.ob.) and *Evangeline* 14 Feb (BV, JP, LA, EB, WSY). Roosts of Northern Harriers in *Desha* and *Poinsett*, AR topped 26 birds on 7 Jan and 46 birds on 17 Feb, respectively (DB, m.ob.). An ad. Harris's Hawk, a common falconer's species that frequently escapes, was seen on Dauphin I., *Mobile*, AL 8 Jan+ (DMC, HD, SD, m.ob.). On the heels of last winter's sighting in the same general area, Mississippi's 3rd *Ferruginous Hawk* was a subad. in *Tunica* 1 Jan (p.a., GK, SK). Two Rough-legged Hawks, a

light and a dark morph, were at a traditional wintering site below Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, AL 21 Jan (RAR, m.ob.), where they have become rare in recent years. A dark morph was near Carlisle, *Lonoke*, AR 18 Dec (DS). The only Golden Eagle reported was an ad. along the Yocona R., *Lafayette*, MS 27 Dec (GK). Merlins were reported widely in Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi. In Alabama, 3



Furnishing only a second state record, this Lark Bunting was found 24 (here 26) February 2006 near St. Charles, Arkansas County, Arkansas and remained into the spring season. Photograph by Jimmy McMorran.

Peregrine Falcons were found on the W.N.W.R. C.B.C. 17 Dec, and one was on the Birmingham C.B.C. 23 Dec. A Peregrine in downtown Little Rock, AR 9 Dec (TF, PP) furnished the only report for that state.

Two King Rails were at N.N.W.R., MS 17 Dec+ (TLS, MS), establishing the 6th area winter record. Virginia Rails were widely reported. In Arkansas, 2 were near Pine Bluff, *Jefferson* 28 Dec (RDo, WS, DS), and one was at Ned's L., *Crawford* 6 Jan (SB, RK). Four at the Starkville Sewage Pond South, *Oktibbeha*, MS established the 6th area winter record, while a Sora at the same location was the first area winter record, both species being recorded throughout the period (TLS). One indication of rail winter densities was established by Steve Cardiff and Donna Dittman in Louisiana. On 2 Dec, they counted rails flushed during an unusually late rice harvest operation near Crowley, *Acadia*, LA. During the operation, 30 Yellow Rails, 150 Virginia Rails, and 75 Soras were recorded. While these densities may be typical of the season, opportunities to document rail numbers are rare this late in the year.

The number of Sandhill Cranes wintering in the Region continues to increase. In Alabama, 1775 were at W.N.W.R. 3 Jan (CDC, SGS, FBI, DSM, KH), establishing a new state maximum. In Louisiana, 18 Snowy Plovers in *Cameron* 3–5 Feb (BV) and 24 Wilson's Plovers in *Lafourche/Jefferson/Plaquemines* 23–24 Jan (DLD, SWC, RD) were good numbers. Also in Louisiana, 35 Piping Plovers were reported from *Lafourche/Jefferson/Plaquemines* 23–24 Jan (DLD, SWC, RD, BV), while 35 were in *Cameron* 4–5 Feb (BV). A Long-billed Curlew, rare in se. Louisiana, was on Grand I. 6–22 Jan (SWC, DLD, RDP), and 2 were in Gulfport, *Harrison*, MS 27 Jan (CG, CE).

Alabama's 2nd and 3rd inland Pomarine Jaegers were at W.F. George Dam 10 Dec (SWM, PEL) and W.N.W.R. 16–17 Dec (CAB, SWM, m.ob.), respectively. Franklin's Gulls usually move through the Region well before Dec, so an imm. near Magnolia Springs, Bald-

win, AL 9 Jan (RAD, BMM) and an ad. at Oktibbeha County L., MS 23 Dec–14 Jan (TLS, MS, DJS) were noteworthy. The only Little Gulls reported were an ad. and an imm. on Millwood L., *Little River/Hempstead*, AR 10 & 23 Dec, respectively (CM). *California Gulls* are rare but increasingly regular in the Region. In Arkansas, an ad. was at L. Dardanelle 3 Dec–28 Feb+ and an imm. was near Russellville, *Pope* 17 Dec (p.a., KN, LDN), while in Louisiana, an imm. was near Maurice, *Vermilion* 31 Dec–1 Jan (PC) and an ad. was on L. Pontchartrain, *Orleans* 18 Feb (DBo, JBo). Up to 5 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, in various plumages, were near Magnolia Springs, AL, 29 Dec–19 Feb (GDJ, RAD, BMM, m.ob.), and an ad. was on E. Timbalier I. West, *Lafourche*, LA 23 Jan (DLD, RD, SWC). In Alabama, an imm. Glaucous Gull near Southside, *Etowah* 11–27 Dec (LW, NC) established the first record for the mt. region; and an imm. was seen at several locations in *Colbert/Lauderdale/Lawrence* 7 Jan–4 Feb (DJS, m.ob.). Rare inland, an imm. Great Black-backed Gull was in Guntersville, AL 1 Jan (SM).

The movement of White-winged Doves into the Region has been nothing short of amazing. In Alabama, where they now occur year-round, 161 in *Baldwin* 30 Dec (HEH) established a new state maximum. One was in *Monroe*, AR 3 Jan (WS, CR, AM), while 200 near Crowley, LA 2 Dec (DLS, SWC) was a good number away from the coast. The only Inca Doves reported were 3 near Texarkana, *Miller*, AR 4 Feb (CM). Short-eared Owls were scarce in many traditional areas, with the exception of the Mississippi R. Valley in Arkansas, where 4–8 were seen near Arkansas City 28 Jan–26 Feb (DB, SDe) and near Jonesboro, *Poinsett*, where 16 on 17 Feb (NA, DB, SDe, EM) established a new state maximum. The only lingering Common Nighthawk was one in Hoover, *Jefferson*, AL 4 Dec (PHF). Vaux's Swifts were in *Baton Rouge*, *East Baton Rouge*, LA for the 5th consecutive Feb: 7–8 were reported there 20–24 Feb (DL, PB, DBo, JBo).

## HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH ORIOLES

Arkansas's first *Broad-billed Hummingbird* was in White Hall, *Jefferson* through the period (BW, CB, MBr, m.ob.), and a first-year male was in New Iberia, *Iberia*, LA 13 Dec (MJM, m.ob.). Eleven Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were banded in *Baldwin/Mobile*, AL 6 Dec–25 Jan (FB); another was banded in Roland, *Pulaski*, AR 26 Dec (VM, MP, HP). Anna's Hummingbirds were reported in Louisiana at New Iberia 13 Dec–2 Jan (JVH, MJM) and in Slidell, *St. Tammany* 28 Dec–2 Jan (LB, PS); another was in Bay St. Louis, *Hancock*, MS 22 Dec (JBi, DBi, MMJ, CMY).

Alabama's first **Costa's Hummingbird**—and the first for the eastern United States—was an imm. male in Montgomery late Nov–17 Feb (FB, m.ob.). An imm. male **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** was in Mobile, AL 15 Dec (FB), while an ad. female was near Beebe, White, AR 7 Jan (p.a., JBe, WB).

A lingering Least Flycatcher was at B.S.N.W.R., Orleans, LA 4 Dec (PAW), while one on Grand I., LA 7 Jan (SWC, DLD) undoubtedly wintered. An ad. Say's Phoebe was at the Fayetteville W.T.P., AR 25 Feb+ (GM, GMA, m.ob.), and an ad. male Vermilion Flycatcher was at W.N.W.R. 19 Nov–10 Feb (DBr, m.ob.), a first for the Tennessee Valley of Alabama. An Ash-throated Flycatcher at Eufaula N.W.R. 12 Dec (SWM, PEL) was the 4th inland for Alabama, while one at the Gulf Shores C.B.C. 30 Dec (WJB, GB, m.ob.) was more expected. A **Couch's Kingbird**, seen and heard in Red River, LA 2 Jan (PD, m.ob.), was a local first and quite unexpected.

Rock Wren is recorded in the Region most years, usually in Arkansas. In keeping with that trend, one was at Millwood L. 27 Dec–8 Feb (CM, DoH, DHA, MD, m.ob.). Bewick's Wren, increasingly scarce in the e. United States, was seen at Craighead Forest Park, Craighead, AR 20 Jan (NA). A Sedge Wren was at the Stuttgart Airport, Prairie, AR 16 Feb (WS, MR), where rare in winter. A phenomenal 200 Marsh Wrens were recorded during an unusually late rice harvest operation near Crowley, LA 2 Dec (SWC, DLD). Two Townsend's Solitaires were at Mount Magazine S.P., Logan, AR 18 Dec–23 Jan and possibly later (DS, KN, LDN). Providing Alabama's 2nd winter record was a Swainson's Thrush at Ft. Morgan, Baldwin 10 Dec (BKF). A Wood Thrush was at St. Catherine Creek N.W.R., Adams, MS 19 Feb (WM). Sprague's Pipit probably occurs more often than reported. One was at the Stuttgart Airport, AR 3 Dec–16 Feb (DS, WS, EF, TF), and 3 were in Caddo, LA 19 Feb (TD, JI).

Yellow Warblers are exceedingly rare anywhere in the Region during winter. Singles, all in Louisiana, were in Acadia 14 Dec (PH, MRi, AT), Baton Rouge 27 Dec–24 Jan (JS, m.ob.), and B.S.N.W.R. 16 Jan (PAW). Black-and-white Warblers become rare in the winter away from the coast. Arkansas had reports of a female at Cache River N.W.R., Prairie 15 Dec (JM) and at White River N.W.R.: a male 15 Dec (NB) in Desha, a female in Desha 25 Jan (JR), and a male in Arkansas 2 Feb (JM). In Louisiana, single Northern Waterthrushes were found at B.S.N.W.R. 10 Dec (PAW) and Lafayette 12 Jan (JWB, BF). Rare in Alabama in winter, female Summer Tanagers were recorded in Anniston 13 Dec–11 Feb (DeM),

Mobile 1 Feb (LF), and Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa 19 Feb+ (JCH). A female Scarlet Tanager was at Bon Secour, Baldwin, AL early Dec–early Feb (JD, KD et al.). A male Western Tanager, rare during any season, was in New Orleans, LA 30 Dec (PAW).

Two American Tree Sparrows in Clay, AR 19 Feb (DB, NA) were the only ones reported. The 20 Lark Sparrows in Caddo, LA 19 Feb (TD, JI) made one of the largest concentrations recorded in the Region. Arkansas's 2nd Lark Bunting, an ad. male, was near St. Charles, Arkansas 24 Feb+ (p.a., JM, SW, m.ob.). The only Henslow's Sparrows reported, all in Arkansas, were 8 in Drew 20 Dec (EK) and one at the Stuttgart Airport 1 Feb (WS, DS). Harris's Sparrow records, both in Arkansas, were of 35 in Maysville, Benton 14 Jan (JN, MM) and 4 near Harrison, Boone 19 Feb (SR). Sixteen Smith's Longspurs were at the Stuttgart Airport 3 Dec (DS, WS, EF, TF), a normal number there for winter, and one was at Ft. Chaffee, Sebastian, AR 8 Dec (WS). Arkansas's 4th Snow Bunting was a male at Mount Magazine S.P. 17 Dec (p.a., DS).

An ad. male Black-headed Grosbeak was in Lafayette, LA 29 Nov–6 Dec+ (SS), and a first-year male was in Reserve, St. John, LA 10 Jan (RJS). Rare inland in winter, single male Indigo Buntings were in Anniston, AL 11 Dec (DeM) and Parkway Village, Pulaski, AR 5 Jan (HP, MP, LY). A Dickcissel was in Mobile, AL 18 Feb (CH). Alabama's 2nd confirmed **Western Meadowlark** in 30 years was on Dauphin I. 24 Feb (p.a., BG, m.ob.), while 7 were in Maysville, AR 14 Jan (JN, MM). In Louisiana, male Orchard Orioles were in Reserve 28 Dec+ (RJS, NLN) and New Orleans 18 Feb (DBo, JBo). Up to 2 Bullock's Orioles were in New Orleans, LA Oct–27 Jan (IC, PAW), and an imm. male was in Kaplan, Vermilion, LA 26 Dec (MMo, KM, RM, ED). Baltimore Orioles were widely reported. In Alabama, a male was in Silverhill, Baldwin 21 Dec (BS); an ad. female was in Galion, Marengo 11 Jan (JSe, DSe); and an ad. male was in Montgomery 27 Jan (CHA). In Louisiana, an imm. female was in Batture, Jefferson 22 Jan (PAW); 3–4 were in New Orleans 4–5 Feb (PAW); and 5 were at a different location in New Orleans 18 Feb (DBo, JBo).

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