

siskin was reported from Black Mt., Harlan, KY 21 May (DR). A Pine Siskin nest with an egg on Roan Mt., Carter, TN 5-19 May (AT, RBi, NS) established the first nesting record in the state, although nesting has been assumed for many years. The Common Redpoll in Lewis, TN lingered through 9 Mar (BPu).

Cited contributors (subregional editors in boldface): Ken Allen, Michael Autin, David Ayer, Mary Ann Barnett, Brian Becker, Jane Bell (JBe), Pat Bell, Warren Bielenberg, Rob Biller (RBi), Clyde Blum, Kevin Bowden, Gary Brunvoll, Rhonda Bryant (RBr), Kevin Calhoun (KCa) (se. Tennessee), Phillip Casteel (middle Tennessee), Hap Chambers, Doug Chin, Mary Cleary, Kathy Cohen (KCo), Ed Conrad, Charlie Crawford, Rack Cross, Roseanna Denton, Gary Dorman, Kurt Dor-

man, Douglas Downs, Jim Eager, Melissa Easley, Tommy Edwards, Carol Fegarido (CFe), Frank Fekel, Scott Freidhof, Carol Friedman (CFr), Michael Hamm, Barry Hart, Keith Hawkins, Tim Houghton, Jenny Howard, Susan Hoyle (SHo), Susan Hubley (SHu), Daniel Jacobson, Kentucky Ornithological Society (KOS), David Kirschke, Rick Knight (e. Tennessee), Eugene Lacefield, Joe Lacefield, James & Nancy Layzer, Bill Lisowsky, Margaret Lowe, Bill Mahan, Scott Marsh, Joseph Mast, Lee McNeely, Memphis Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society (MTOS), Don Miller (DMi), Nancy Moore, Mike Morton, Daniel Moss (DMo), Phyllis Niemi, Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. (BPa), David Patterson (DPa), W. Rob Peeples (w. Tennessee), Rick Phillips (RPh), Brookie & Jean Potter, Dick Preston (DPPr), Bill Pulliam (BPu),

David Roemer, Stony Rolley, Dick Schier, Nora Schubert, Rick Seelhorst (RSe), Kirtley Settles, Jan Shaw, Richard Simmers (RSi), Michael Sledjeski, Fran and David Slezak (F&DS), Adam Smith, Brian Smith (BSm), Barbara H. Stedman (BHS), Stephen J. Stedman, Mike Todd, Allan Trently, Budd Veverka, Shawchyi Vorisek, Betty Wampler, Chris Welsh, Jeff R. Wilson, Libby Wolfe, Ben Yandell, Mary Yandell. Many thanks go to the numerous additional individuals who contributed information that was used in this report. 🌐

Chris Sloan, 224 Hicks Road
Nashville, Tennessee 37221, (chris.sloan@comcast.net)
Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.
Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission
801 Schenel Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
(brainard.palmer-ball@ky.gov)

Alabama & Mississippi



Steven W. McConnell

The general weather pattern over the Region during spring 2007 would best be described as warm and dry: temperatures averaged 3-6° C above normal, and rainfall totaled only 40 per cent of the normal amount. A vivid reminder that circumstances could be much worse came in the form of frequent, irritating smoke swept into our Region from widespread brush fires in Georgia and Florida. Despite all the heat, probably the most memorable weather event of the season was a cold one! Passage of a strong front 4 April allowed a large Arctic air mass to drift southward, almost reaching the latitude of Birmingham, Alabama and Starkeville, Mis-

issippi. A hard freeze followed on the nights of 7-8 April, with the mercury dipping around 14° C below normal. All-time record lows were set across the Region, and early spring vegetation and planted crops suffered mightily. The full extent of the damage was perhaps best seen in early May, when many forest canopies normally dressed in bright, spring green looked as though a defoliant spray had been applied.

“Excellent” migrant numbers were noted at many coastal locations 10-11 April, as a strong low-pressure system moved rapidly eastward, causing widespread rain and storms. Weaker fronts on 19 and 26 April produced more local events, although the latter did create classic fallout conditions at Fort Morgan, Alabama. Here, only a few coastal veterans had done their homework and witnessed a “dizzying” number of warblers. The Duncans ended the day with 49 Neotropical migrant land bird species, their highest ever!

Proving once again that the birding action up north may rival the coast, the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge spring count 28 April compiled impressive totals for both residents and migrants. Twenty-seven species had their previous Tennessee Valley spring or all-time record counts broken, and the 1076 Indigo Buntings amassed set a new Alabama one-day maximum. A sprinkling of rarities across the season included an inland American Oystercatcher, one or two Black Swifts, and the appearance of the largest Cave Swallow flock ever recorded in the Region.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the valuable, long-term contributions made by Robert and Lucy Duncan to the bird knowledge of our Region and to this publication in particular. I only hope to wisely use what they have taught me as I assume this role. We all look forward to hearing of their future travel and birding adventures and sharing those we can.

Abbreviations: Coldwater R. (Coldwater River N.W.R., Quitman/Tallahatchie, MS); Dauphin I. (Mobile, AL); FM.N.H. (Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, Gainesville); Ft. Morgan (Baldwin, AL); Noxubee (Noxubee N.W.R., Oktibbeha/Winston, MS); Wheeler (Wheeler N.W.R., Limestone/Morgan, AL).

WATERFOWL THROUGH STORKS

The 2 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks discovered at Dauphin I. 1 May provided Alabama's 4th record but only lingered for one day (BCG, ph. DD, m.ob.). A single bird 28 May furnished the 5th state record when it appeared much farther n. in Etowah, AL and stayed a few days (ph. EG). A Ross's Goose observed at Coldwater R. 7 Apr was quite late (G&SK). Also rather tardy was a Green-winged Teal found at Eufaula N.W.R., Barbour, AL 29 Apr (LW); a male Greater Scaup was tardy in Limestone, AL 15 Apr (GDJ, DGJ). By May, scoters have typically disappeared from our Region, and finding all three species on any day of the year is no mean feat. The ob-



These two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks discovered 1 May 2007 (here) were a one-day wonder on Dauphin Island, Mobile County. They provided only the fourth documented Alabama record for this expanding species and the first on the coast. All previously accepted records were from the Tennessee Valley. Photograph by David Dortch.

server on a boat trip near Isle aux Herbes and Cat I., s. of mainland Mobile, AL, was therefore very surprised to find a male Surf (ph.), a White-winged, and a female Black Scoter, along with 6 unidentified scoters 17 May (RC). A late male Black Scoter in Oktibbeha, MS 8 May was a rare inland find (MS, TLS). A female Red-breasted Merganser at Dauphin I. 30 May (JFP) was quite late.

Pacific Loons are regular but still rare finds for our Region, making two early spring reports noteworthy. The first was in the surf at Ft. Morgan 3 Mar (LFG) and the other inland at Bay Springs Lake, Tishomingo, MS 2 Mar (†WP). Good numbers of Anhinga were reported from two inland locations. Up to 8 were present 26 Apr–2 May near Columbus, Lowndes, MS (MS, TLS, D&JP), and up to 3 were seen 29 Apr–20 May in Shelby, AL (AH). American Bittern is rarely detected inland, making the observation of up to 4 at Coldwater R. 7–21 Apr unusual (G&SK). Careful exploration of a rookery near Picayune, Pearl River, MS 19 May reformed since Hurricane Katrina revealed 75–80 pairs of Cattle Egret, 60–70 pairs of Little Blue Heron, 50–60 pairs of White Ibis, 8–10 pairs of Snowy Egret, and 7–8 Anhingas. All but the last were on nests (NB, GF). Roseate Spoonbills are always rare treats whenever they wander into our Region. The imm. noted 30 Apr at the Gulf Shores W.T.P., Baldwin, AL furnished only a

3rd state spring record (ph. MF). Wood Storks are also rarely found in spring, so 3 at Noxubee 22 May (JB) and an imm. the same day near Conecuh N.E., Covington, AL (ph. MB) were noteworthy.

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Impressive mid-spring counts for Swallow-tailed Kite were compiled 1 May in Pearl River, MS, with 5 on a roost near an old nesting area (JO&TDC) and 9 apparently late migrants 17 May moving straight northward into the wind over Waveland, Hancock, MS (NB). Golden Eagles are rarely seen in spring, so two Mississippi observations were noteworthy. The first was an imm. 5 Apr at Noxubee (TLS), surpassing the previous late area record by 42 days. The other was even later and rarer on the coast 3 May at Ansley, Hancock, where only a few previous county



This Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was observed 28 May 2007 and later (here 2 June) along the banks of the Coosa River near Southside, Etowah County. It furnished a fifth documented Alabama record. Photograph by Esther Guenther.

records exist (NB). The Yellow Rail seen 16 & 21 Apr at the Dauphin I. airport provided only the 3rd spring and 18th Alabama record (JLT, DC, BKF). Late Sandhill Cranes were observed at two locations. On 18 Apr, a single crane, furnishing a potential first Lee, MS record, was seen near Shannon Hwy. 45 (WP). Much later in the season, a calling

crane seen 16 May in flight over the Dauphin I. airport provided a very late Alabama record of a locally rare species (BH, BS, AL).

While it is not unusual to find multiple Semipalmated Plovers during spring migration, a count of 82 at Coldwater R. 21 Apr was quite high (G&SK). The discovery by fishermen of an American Oystercatcher 24 May on rocks in the Tennessee R. near Sheffield, Colbert, AL was astounding for this strictly coastal species (ph. SH, RM). Not only did the one-day appearance around 550 km from the Gulf of Mexico furnish the first inland Alabama record (and unconnected to passage of a tropical weather system), but it apparently provided one of only a few documented records ever for inland North America! Although it is not unusual to find American Avocets along the Alabama Gulf Coast, the flock of 55 seen 30 Apr from the Mobile Bay ferry, Mobile/Baldwin was a very good high count (PEL). Willet is a regular late-spring migrant through our Region; however, some surprisingly high counts were reported this season. The champion and new spring maximum for Alabama was the total of 153 seen on Pelican I. and nearby Dauphin I. 23 Apr (GDJ, DGJ). Rarer inland, 7 were found 29 Apr at Eufaula S.P., Barbour, AL (LW); a total of 33 was counted 4 May at Waterloo and Wilson Dam, Lauderdale, AL (SWM, DJS, JTG); and 3 were discovered 6 May at Bay Springs L., Tishomingo, MS (G&SK).

A migrant Whimbrel flock was recorded for the 3rd consecutive spring 18–23 Apr on a farm field s. of Grand Bay, Mobile, AL (RA&LBR, ph. BSu, m.ob.). This season a count of 100+ individuals 21 Apr established a new Alabama maximum. It could not be ascertained whether a flock of 41 Whimbrels seen 17 May at nearby Barton I., Mobile was part of the Grand Bay flock or was staging at a previously unknown location (RC). A lone Whimbrel 9–11 May at Speigner, Elmore provided only the 2nd spring Alabama record and the 16th inland state observation ever (ph. TRP). Marbled Godwits appeared at two locations this spring to furnish the 18th and 19th Alabama inland records. Five were discovered 11 Apr, with many other migrant shorebirds at Town Creek Marsh, Colbert (ph. DJS). Later in the season, one was seen 4 May traveling with a flock of 25 Willets at Waterloo, Lauderdale (SWM, DJS, JTG). Buff-breasted Sandpiper is a rarely found Regional spring migrant, so 5 at a turf farm near Oxford, Lafayette, MS 11 Apr were unexpected (G&SK). A very im-



This American Oystercatcher on rocks in the Tennessee River near Sheffield was documented 24 May 2007 by two alert fishermen. This Colbert County location—550 km from the Gulf of Mexico—was amazing for this strictly coastal species and represents not only the first inland Alabama record but also one of only a few documented in interior North America. Photograph by Steve Hacker.

pressive number of Long-billed Dowitchers was documented 17 Mar when 2200 were tallied at Coldwater R. (G&SK). A female Ruff made a brief appearance 11 Apr at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, furnishing a 7th Alabama record (†DJS).

GULLS THROUGH PIPITS

Lesser Black-backed Gull sightings continue to become more expected; however, spring records are still only occasional, making two reports from Ft. Morgan interesting. A first-cycle bird was found 22 Apr (ph. GDJ, DGJ), and three weeks later a third-cycle individual was described at the same location (BH, BS, AL). Caspian Terns are regular spring migrants through our Region; however, the 133 found 16 Apr at Town Creek, *Colbert* established a new inland maximum for Alabama (DJS). White-winged Doves are rarely found away from the Alabama coast, making the observations of lone birds 17 Apr and 29 May near Valley, *Chambers* quite interesting (R&JMc). A late morning squall line at Ft. Morgan 26 Apr resulted in an impressive afternoon migrant fallout: at least 150 Yellow-billed and 3 Black-billed Cuckoos arrived at one point, impressive counts of both species (LRD, RAD). Another Black-billed Cuckoo heard 6 May at St. Florian, *Lauderdale*, AL was a rare inland find (DJS). A Chuck-will's-widow seen 4 Mar at Ft. Morgan was quite early for a migrant and may have been a wintering bird (MJJ). Another calling 2 Apr at Birmingham, *Jefferson* was definitely early for the Mountain Region of Alabama (RSH).

A bird described as a Black Swift 11-12 Apr at Ft. Morgan would represent a first state

record, if accepted by the Alabama B.R.C. The bird appeared as a front approached the coast from the w. and strong southeasterly winds swept through the area (†LRD, †MT, †CH, †MR et al.). Another Black Swift was reported 11 Apr over nearby Dauphin I., at about the same time of day the Ft. Morgan bird was also being observed (†PB). The male Black-chinned Hummingbird observed 4 Apr at the Shell Mounds on Dauphin I. provided one of only a few non-banding records for the species (BL). The singing Willow Flycatcher at Ansley, *Hancock* 5 May was a first for spring in coastal Mississippi (NB). A Western Kingbird at the Tuscaloosa Airport, *Tuscaloosa* 5 Mar represented only a 5th inland spring record for Alabama (KGB, JH). Gray Kingbirds continue their slow return to the Alabama coast. The single bird banded 7 Apr at Ft. Morgan was a little early (b., ph. DBE, RRS). Two pairs at Gulf S.P., *Baldwin*, AL returned to nest again 5-7 May (RAD, LRD, BM). The Yellow-throated Vireo in *Limestone*, AL 30 Mar was carrying nest material, setting a new early mark (JTG, TMH). A Red-eyed Vireo on Dauphin I. 17 Mar (DD, CD), a Wood Thrush 17 Mar at Ft. Morgan, and 3 Swainson's Thrushes at Dauphin I. the same day were all likewise early (RS&DCH). The American Pipit in *Tuscaloosa* 1 May was unusually late for the Inner Coastal Plain region of Alabama (HHK, MSh et al.).

SA The 100+ Cave Swallows that appeared 7 Apr at Ft. Morgan followed behind passage of a strong cold front (HEH, BSu, ph. TS, m.ob.) and far exceeded the previous Regional high count of around 6! The flock dissipated quickly over the next few days, with the last report 12 Apr. A dead bird found 11 Apr was later determined to be of the *pallida* (*pelodoma*) subspecies (RAD, LRD, TW, *F.M.N.H.). The Hummer/Bird Study Group banding operation managed to capture and examine 3 individuals, all of which were also *pallida* (DBE, FB, RRS). A single Cave Swallow 11 Apr at nearby Dauphin I. was likely part of this same influx (LW).

WARBLERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

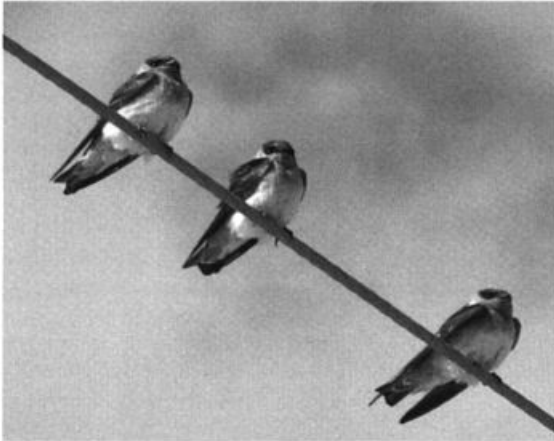
The male Lawrence's Warbler 22 Apr on Dauphin I. represented only the 9th Alabama record for this rare backcross (SF, DB, RAD, m.ob.). If a migrant, a Northern Parula 1 Mar at Dauphin I. was early (DD, CD); another 10 Mar in *Jefferson* furnished a new early record for the Mountain Region of Alabama (RR&MBS). Black-throated Blue Warblers are uncommon migrants through our area, making three reports noteworthy: males were discovered at Henleyfield, *Pearl River*, MS 28 Apr

(NB), inland at Monte Sano S.P., *Madison*, AL 28 Apr (GDJ, DGJ), and at Talladega N.E., *Cleburne*, AL 5 May (GDJ, DGJ). Cerulean Warbler has become an uncommon migrant and rare breeder in our Region, making reports from eight different locations encouraging. A female Cerulean at Opelika, *Lee*, AL 31 Mar was early (LW). A singing male in *Montgomery* 19 Apr was rare for the Inner Coastal Plain region of Alabama (LFG). A survey 21-30 Apr in *Choctaw/Lowndes/Oktibbeha*, MS found 1-2 Ceruleans at five different sites (TLS, MS, MC). Nests are rarely located, so finding a Cerulean pair with large young 25 May at Bankhead N.F., *Lawrence*, AL was exciting (ECS, JT). If migrants, 2 Black-and-white Warblers on Dauphin I. 1 Mar furnished a new Alabama early record (DD, CD). A singing Swainson's Warbler 4 May near Key Cave N.W.R., *Lauderdale* was a rare find for the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama, where the species is an occasional breeder (SWM, DJS, JTG). An impressive total of 21 Swainson's was found at 13 cen. Mississippi locations in *Choctaw/Lowndes/Oktibbeha/Noxubee* 21 Apr+, with up to 5 at one location (TLS, MS). Early Hooded Warblers were found at Noxubee 24 Mar (TLS, MS) and at Tannehill S.P., *Jefferson*, AL 30 Mar (HHK, RDK). A Kentucky Warbler 22 Mar at Birmingham, *Jefferson*, AL continued the early pattern (RR).

The singing Connecticut Warbler at Indian Creek Greenway, *Madison*, *Madison*, AL 19 May provided a noteworthy observation of this rarely detected migrant (GDJ, DGJ). Up to 3 Mourning Warblers were found at the same site 13-18 May for a new Alabama maximum (KW, HD, BM). While Summer Tanagers are not unusual in our Region, the 99 totaled during the Wheeler spring count 28

Apr furnished a new maximum for Alabama's Tennessee Valley region (CDC, m.ob.). A Le Conte's Sparrow 24 Apr on the Mississippi coast at Waveland, *Hancock* (NB) was rather late. A Dark-eyed Junco 11 Apr at Ft. Morgan provided a new late record for the Gulf Coast region of Alabama (RAD, LRD, LC).

The 54 Baltimore Orioles totaled during the Wheeler spring count 28 Apr established a new maximum for the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama (CDC, m.ob.). At least 150 Blue Grosbeaks 22 Apr at Ft. Morgan fur-



These three Cave Swallows at Fort Morgan, Baldwin County, Alabama were part of the 100+ that appeared 7 April 2007—easily the highest documented Regional count ever. During their brief stay, three flock members were banded and one dead specimen was recovered. Examination determined all to be of the southwestern subspecies *pallida* (*pelodoma*). Photograph by Tom Siegwald.

nished a new maximum spring count for Alabama (GDJ, DGJ). The male Shiny Cowbird

21 Apr on Dauphin I. was the only spring report received for this occasional species (LRD). Up to 5 Bronzed Cowbirds were observed 5 May+ at Ansley, Hancock, MS, with some observed in courtship (NB). Impressive Bobolink numbers were noted 24 Apr–17 May at Waveland, Hancock, MS, with 300-400 early in the period falling to 60 by mid-May (NB).

Initialed observers (subregional editors in boldface): Mark Bailey, Peggy Baker, Fred Bassett, Duane Berger, Kevin G. Boles, Ned Boyajian, Johnny Bradford, Dick Bruer, Laura Catterton, Roger Clay, C.D. Cooley, Margaret Copeland, J. O. & T. D. Coulson, Drew Cowherd, Harry Dean, Carrie Dortch, David Dortch, Lucy R. Duncan, Robert A. Duncan, Shirley Farrell, Mike Fe-

duke, Barry K. Fleming, Glenn Ford, Lawrence F. Gardella, Ben C. Garmon, Jeff T. Garner, Esther Guenther, Steve Hacker, Andrew Halfenden, Tom M. Haggerty, Dana C. Hamilton, R. Stan Hamilton, Bert Harris, Carolyn Henning, Jerry Hoffman, Howard E. Horne, Debra G. Jackson, Greg D. Jackson (Alabama), Michael J. Jordan, Ty Keith, Helen H. Kittinger, Ronald D. Kittinger, Paul D. Kittle, Gene & Shannon Knight, Angie Langevin, Paul E. Lehman, Betty Lemley, Rodney & Jeannie McCollum, Steven W. McConnell, Bailey McKay, Ray Miller, Diane & Jim Patterson, Wayne Patterson, John F. Porter, Tommy R. Pratt, Rick Remy, Merilu Rose, Martha B. Sargent, Robert R. Sargent, Brett Scheffers, Marion Schiefer, Terence L. Schiefer (Mississippi), Maureen Shaffer, Tom Siegwald, Damien J. Simbeck, Eric C. Soehren, Bill Summerour, Marlin Tagatz, Jack L. Throp, John Trent, Ken Ward, Tom Webber, Lorna West. 📍

Steven W. McConnell, 29 Village Drive NE Hartselle, Alabama 35640, (swmavocet@aol.com)

Arkansas & Louisiana



Steven W. Cardiff

Passage of a strong cold front through the region 3-5 April allowed a cold air mass to penetrate unusually far south, resulting in a late freeze affecting the Ozarks region

of Arkansas on 7-8 April. The freeze caused widespread damage to buds, foliage, and flowers on many bird-important species of trees. Although some recovery and re-leafing was apparent later in the season, the timing of this event undoubtedly impacted northbound migrants and early nesting species. This same front, backing up as a warm front and then interacting with a second cold front on 9-12 April, precipitated fair numbers of trans-Gulf migrants on the Louisiana coast 10-11 April. Birding activity in southwestern Louisiana surged during late April and early May, fortunately in association with the joint American Birding Association–Louisiana Ornithological Society convention in Lafayette.

Abbreviations: 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. Significance for Arkansas records is based on James and Neal (1986) plus the Arkansas Audubon Society online bird record database, and, for

Louisiana, on the Louisiana bird record database at the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science (LSUMNS).

WATERFOWL

Although Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks are spreading in Arkansas, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks are still considered rare, so one near Arkansas City, Desha 25-26 May (ph. DB) and 11 at Bald Knob N.W.R., White (KN) were of interest. A Greater White-fronted Goose was a strange sight heading southwestward over Lacassine, Jefferson Davis, LA on the late date of 28 Apr (DLD, SWC). Breeding Mottled Ducks continued to thrive in Desha, with 20 ads. and 15 young counted 28 May (DB); a dozen Blue-winged Teal and 2 male Northern Shovelers there 26 May (DB) were most likely late migrants. An ad. male Cinnamon Teal in extreme sw. Cameron 8 May (PEL) established a new late spring record for Louisiana, and a female Greater Scaup at Craig Fish Hatchery, Benton 12 May (MAM, DC) was the 2nd latest all-time for Arkansas. The wintering male Tufted Duck on L. Dardanelle, Yell/Pope, AR (K&LN, m.ob.) was last seen 18 Mar. Late scoters included 4 Surfs at New Orleans 17 Mar (vt. PAW), one Surf at L. Fayetteville, Washington, AR 14 Apr (DC), an imm. male White-winged near Little Rock, Pulaski, AR