

**RING-BILLED GULLS AND CHINESE TALLOW**

Andy Bell - 103 Claiborne St., Madison, MS 39110.

In mid-December 2018, I observed Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) feeding on the seeds of Chinese tallow trees (*Triadica sebifera*) on Ross Barnett Reservoir in Madison County (Figure 1). Chinese tallow, also known as popcorn tree, is an invasive species frequently found along lake banks and in wetlands. In late fall and winter the fruit capsules open up revealing a waxy white seed. The flock of Ring-billed Gulls consisted of approximately 15-20 birds, and they would hover over the trees picking the seeds off. I also observed a few landing on top of the trees to feed. This behavior of feeding on Chinese tallow was observed on cloudy days. I am not sure if their feeding in the water was impeded by the overcast conditions. This behavior continued the next few weeks until they had removed all of the seeds.



**Figure 1.** Ring-billed Gulls feeding on Chinese tallow seeds, mid-December 2018, Madison County, Mississippi.