

OCTOBER 12-14, 2007, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA

Fall Meeting Report

By GREGORY J. HARBER



THE PHRASE "SAME TIME NEXT YEAR" OFFERS A very good summary of this fall meeting when compared to last year. Beautiful weather—almost too perfect—resulted in fewer individual birds, but there were a good number of species to be found. The one new wrinkle this time was our meeting place: the Isle Dauphine Country Club, adjacent to the placid waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The meeting opened with our usual Friday night potluck dinner and members' slide show. I opted to share images of some memorable moments I have experienced while enjoying nature, accompanied by the song by Stevie Wonder, "Stay Gold," which itself is based on the poem "Nothing Gold Can Stay," by Robert Frost. I think everyone present would agree that the spectacular sunsets on Friday and Saturday nights—so readily enjoyed from the patio at the club—were golden moments in their own right. I invite more of our members to share their own special moments at our next meeting.

Saturday dawned clear and bright. The various field trips offered the chance to visit our regular hotspots and a trip to Sand Island, compliments of John Stowers. The word back from Fort Morgan, where the Hummer/Bird Study Group was banding, was that the mosquitoes were monsters with appetites to match! Needless to say, that trip was cut short. Some of the more unusual birds seen during the weekend were: Roseate Spoonbill, Swainson's Hawk, Lesser and Greater Black-backed and Franklin's Gulls, Black-billed Cuckoo, Rufous Hummingbird, Western Kingbird, Black-throated Blue Warbler and LeConte's Sparrow.

John Stowers and his wife Jennie graciously opened their home at lunchtime to the horde of hungry birders, feeding us the best seafood gumbo on the gulf coast. More than one set of eyes was glued to the Alabama football game on television. Unlike last year when Monarchs dominated the butterfly scene, Gulf Fritillaries, and to a lesser extent, Long-tailed Skippers, were the prevalent species winging their way past all weekend long.

Following our fine seafood and BBQ banquet on Saturday night, speaker Paul Lehman presented a program on notable migrant traps throughout North America, and what qualities and features make them good sites for finding birds. He began our journey in the frozen tendrils of the Aleutian Island chain in Alaska and followed the coastline south along the Pacific Ocean, skipped over to the Gulf Coast and on to Fort Jefferson off the Florida Keys (still haven't figured out why he didn't include Dauphin Island, though). Continuing north, we visited Cape May and Churchill and other sites before turning to migrant traps in the interior U.S. As Paul noted, wherever natural features like water and vegetation are found in an isolated setting, birds will be found also.

Prior to Paul's program we presented awards to two individuals for their outstanding contributions to birds and conservation. Congratulations are due to Bill Summerour for receiving the Tom Imhof Award in recognition of his many, many years of contributions to the Alabama birding community, for his generous spirit in sharing his artistic talents, mentoring students and dedicated work in the field. Congratulations also to Anne G. Miller, founder and Executive Director of The Alabama Wildlife Center at Oak Mountain State Park, who was presented with the AOS Conservation Award in recognition of her 30 years of caring for Alabama's native wildlife in peril. Begun in 1977 as an all-volunteer organization, the center now has a staff of 10 and 200 active volunteers. The center annually treats 3000 animals, across a spectrum of 100 species.

Sunday at noon Linda Reynolds officiated at the compilation, her first act as the new president of the AOS. Our final tally for the weekend was 186 species. My thanks to Stan Hamilton, who completed his term as president, and to his dedicated crew of helpers. I know I speak for many when I say we have enjoyed the delightful array of speakers and our meetings these past two years. I hope to see you all the Winter Meeting at Joe Wheeler State Park in January 2008.

2007 AOS Fall Meeting Compilation List Dauphin Island, Alabama, October 12-14

NOTEWORTHY BIRDS OF THE weekend included Great Black-backed Gull, Rufous Hummingbird, and Traill's Flycatcher.

Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Mallard
Mottled Duck
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Green-winged Teal
Redhead
Northern Bobwhite
Pied-billed Grebe
Northern Gannet
American White Pelican
Brown Pelican
Double-crested Cormorant
Magnificent Frigatebird
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Snowy Egret
Little Blue Heron
Tricolored Heron
Reddish Egret
Cattle Egret
Green Heron
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
White Ibis
Roseate Spoonbill
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Bald Eagle
Northern Harrier
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Broad-winged Hawk
Swainson's Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
American Kestrel
Merlin
Peregrine Falcon
Clapper Rail
Sora
Common Moorhen
American Coot
Black-bellied Plover
American Golden Plover

Snowy Plover
Wilson's Plover
Semipalmated Plover
Piping Plover
Killdeer
American Oystercatcher
Black-necked Stilt
American Avocet
Spotted Sandpiper
Greater Yellowlegs
Willet
Marbled Godwit
Ruddy Turnstone
Red Knot
Sanderling
Semipalmated Sandpiper
Western Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
Baird's Sandpiper
Dunlin
Stilt Sandpiper
Short-billed Dowitcher
Long-billed Dowitcher
Wilson's Phalarope
Laughing Gull
Franklin's Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Lesser Black-backed Gull
Great Black-backed Gull
Least Tern
Gull-billed Tern
Caspian Tern
Common Tern
Forster's Tern
Royal Tern
Sandwich Tern
Black Skimmer
Rock Pigeon
Eurasian Collared-Dove
White-winged Dove
Mourning Dove
Common Ground-Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Black-billed Cuckoo
Barn Owl
Great Horned Owl
Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Rufous Hummingbird
Belted Kingfisher

Red-bellied Woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Pileated Woodpecker
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
Traill's Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Western Kingbird
Loggerhead Shrike
White-eyed Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Blue-headed Vireo
Philadelphia Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Fish Crow
Tree Swallow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Barn Swallow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Brown-headed Nuthatch
Brown Creeper
Carolina Wren
House Wren
Sedge Wren
Marsh Wren
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Eastern Bluebird
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Swainson's Thrush
Wood Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Northern Mockingbird
Brown Thrasher
European Starling
American Pipit
Cedar Waxwing
Tennessee Warbler
Orange-crowned Warbler
Nashville Warbler
Northern Parula
Yellow Warbler
Magnolia Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler
Pine Warbler
Prairie Warbler

Palm Warbler
Bay-breasted Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
American Redstart
Prothonotary Warbler
Ovenbird
Northern Waterthrush
Common Yellowthroat
Hooded Warbler
Wilson's Warbler
Yellow-breasted Chat
Summer Tanager
Scarlet Tanager
Eastern Towhee
Chipping Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
LeConte's Sparrow
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Seaside Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Dickcissel
Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark
Boat-tailed Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
Baltimore Oriole
House Finch
House Sparrow

All reported sightings will be accepted and published in *The Yellowhammer*. However, the meeting compilation list in *The Yellowhammer* is not an official record. Species that are **boldfaced**, or listed in the Hypothetical section of the AOS Field Card, must be supported by complete written details and submitted to, and accepted by, the Records Committee to become an official AOS record. *Italicized species* usually need written details but these may be brief. Out of season and locally rare birds should also be documented. Refer to the front page of the AOS Field Card for additional details.