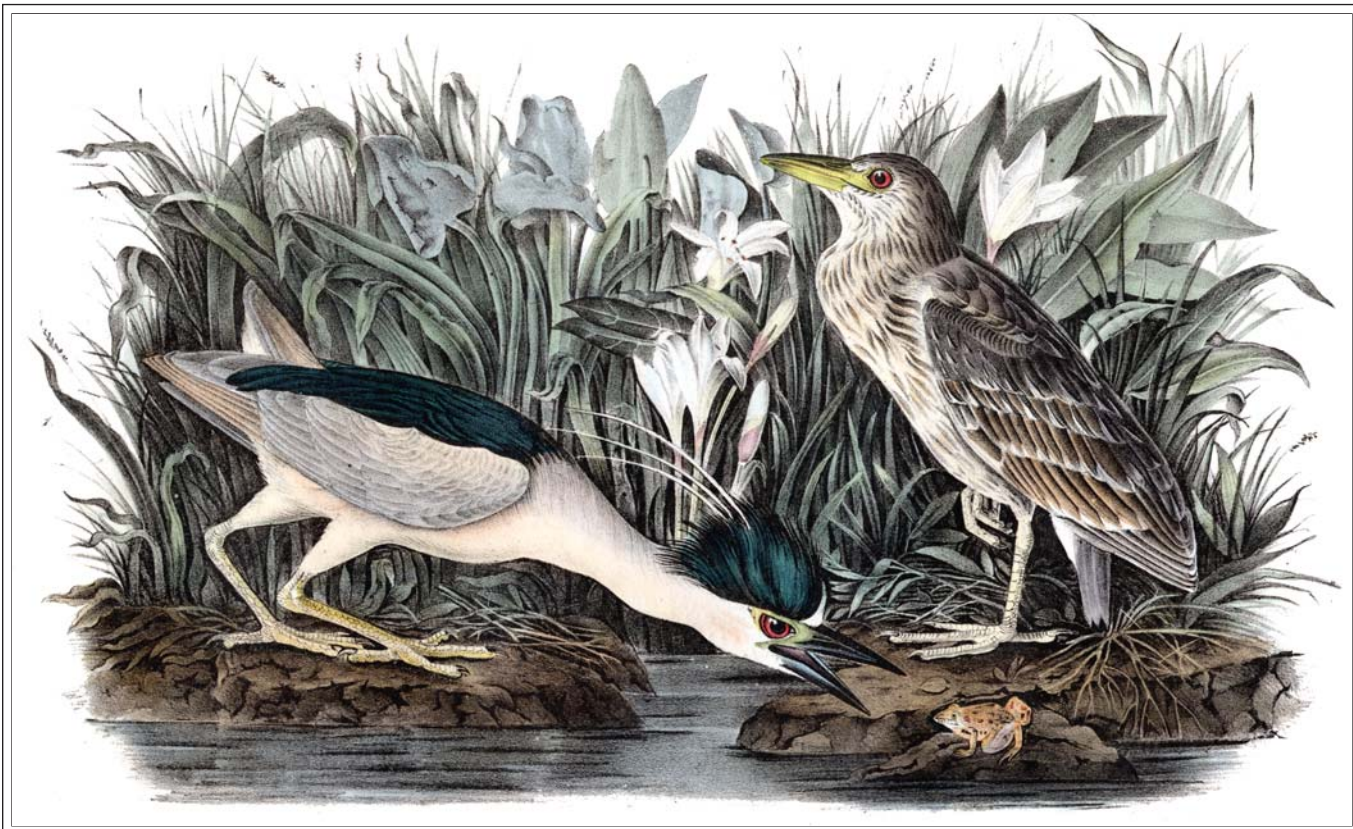


# THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 27, NO. 3 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY FALL 2007

...to foster a greater knowledge of birds and to promote conservation of all natural resources

FOUNDED 1952



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by Paul Lehman

## ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1325, DAUPHIN ISLAND, AL 36528-1325

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#### MEETINGS

Bianca J. Allen  
 Tom and Joan Siegwald, Mike Wilson, John Porter,  
 Laurie Bailey, Shelley Ducharme



YOU KNOW, BY NATURE, I'M just not one of those guys that tends to spend much time thinking back and asking myself "what have we accomplished?". Everyone's parents, teachers, preachers, bosses, etc., always tell you you're supposed to do that every now and again (I think it's supposed to improve you in some way or another), but it's always tended to make me yawn. As such, I was pretty startled to discover everything Alabama Ornithological Society has done over the last two years! You folks have been really busy!

It goes without saying that one of our greatest accomplishments has been the completion of the fieldwork for the Breeding Bird Atlas. This has been a tremendous effort by many of us and we can all be very proud of our contributions. Many thanks are due to all of you, particularly to the amazing and tireless leadership of Rick West, Greg Jackson, the Regional Coordinators, and those of you that spent days and days out atlasing in remote areas you'd never previously heard about, much less considered visiting (or had heard about and had previously been terrified to go near!). Work toward the design and manner of publishing the distribution maps is ongoing. Stay tuned.

Our new AOS T-shirts with Annabel Markel's fine graphic design have been so popular that we've already reordered more for the fall meeting. We've needed new T-shirts for several years now and I am particularly proud of these. Christmas can't be too far off and these will make fine presents for that nephew, uncle, grandmother, teacher, or postman that seem to already have everything. Thanks again, Annabel!

Thanks to the efforts of Annabel, Greg Harber, Bill Summerour, and Robin McDonald, we will soon have new AOS brochures for distribution. The design, color, and narrative are great and should serve us well for a number of years. Placement in areas birders frequent should help us to attract new members and promote support for habitat conservation.

We have new field checklists available for the fall meeting! We've needed these for several years to accurately reflect our current species list. Many thanks to John Porter, Greg



Jackson, Steve McConnell and the records committee for seeing this through.

Despite the sad loss of Bob Reid (an Alabama bird's best friend), our conservation efforts continue solidly in the capable hands of Greg Harber. Greg's tireless actions for the birds, birding, and habitat preservation would make Bob proud (and always did).

Shirley and Frank Farrell and Tommy Pratt continue to create new ideas for interesting ways to intrigue children with birds and birding. Perhaps their efforts and fresh ideas will help to inspire young people to develop an appreciation for birds and the environment.

One aspect of the last two years that has not developed quite as I'd hoped is the relative lack of folks willing to lend a hand and volunteer to assist with the business of AOS. Since we're all volunteers and no one really has the extra time, it's important that we all pitch in and do what we can. I encourage you all to consider volunteering to help with meetings or fieldtrips, conservation or education, wherever your interests lie. We can use your help!

There are many people that I want to thank for their efforts and help over the last two years and it never hurts to begin at home. If you're familiar with my limited computer skills, my natural inclination to disorganization, and general, well... okay, maybe a bit too relaxed approach to life, you know how important Dana has been to my last two years as president and to the BBA project as well. Her willingness to pitch in wherever needed, whether correcting my computer mess, helping lead trips and host speakers, or organizing all the fieldwork and data for our atlas region has made the last two years not only possible but pleasurable. As any spouse of a past president of AOS can tell you, it's substantially a family commitment. Thanks for everything, Dana.

Asking Frank Farrell to be treasurer and Linda Reynolds to be my vice president were certainly two of the best things I did over the last few years. I couldn't have done better; thanks for all you've done, above and beyond. Also, special thanks to Colonel Bob for his guidance and the exceptional job done by himself and Robin for *The Yellowhammer*, to Greg Harber for his friendship and willingness to help with

any and everything, to the Porters, the Wilsons, and Siegwalds for always being there for whatever AOS needs. Thanks to the Board of Directors for your, well, direction and cooperation. Special thanks to Annabel, BJ, Mary Frances, Charlotte and the entire meetings committee, Shirley Farrell, Chris Price, Tom Haggerty, Rick West (of

course), Greg Jackson, Dick Reynolds, the BBA Regional Coordinators, and to John Stowers and Terry Hartley for their generosity and ability to take something delightful and make it even better.

Folks, it's been a privilege to serve such a fine group of people. Happy trails and Good Birding!!

## Membership Directory Deadline is Here

By LARRY GARDELLA



THE DEADLINE TO HAVE YOUR NAME IN THE MEMBERSHIP directory is October 1, 2007.

Our original plan, as explained in recent *Yellowhammers*, had been to make directories available in CD form at the spring meeting. However, the membership was slow in getting me information to include in the directory. By the date of the spring meeting, we did not have nearly enough information to warrant burning a CD.

After the spring meeting, several more people sent information for a new directory. We still only have approximately 25 listings, however.

We are making two more efforts to solicit contact information for the directory CD. One is this follow-up article; the other will be an announcement on ALBirds.

We hope to get at least 50 listings and to distribute the CDs at the fall meeting.

Please remember that we can only have a directory if you and others get your information to me either at:

tapaculo@knology.net or

Larry Gardella  
3549 Audubon Road,  
Montgomery, AL 36111

Please include your name, your mailing address (or N/A if you do not want people to contact you by mail), your phone number (or N/A if you do not want people to contact you by phone), your email address (or N/A if you do not want people to contact you by email), and "yes" if you are willing to show birding sites to other members.

### *"On the Road Again" Articles*

THANKS TO CARROLL PINCKARD, THE "ON THE ROAD" CUPBOARD is no longer bare. He has sent about two dozen contributions. If you, too, have articles you would like to submit, please send them to the Editor. Electronic versions are much easier to copy and paste, but send them by carrier pigeon if you have one. The addresses are on the back cover.

Please send other articles about your birding adventures, yard sightings, or just short vignettes that are interesting, different, or amusing.

### *Electronic Yellowhammer?*

IT COSTS OVER A DOLLAR AND A HALF TO PRINT AND MAIL *THE Yellowhammer*. We are delivering, on a totally voluntary basis, *The Yellowhammer* via the Internet. If you would like to receive *The Yellowhammer* in color, as a pdf file, please email the editor at Robert.Reed@psc.alabama.gov.

### *Important Dates*

**SECOND FRIDAY**—October 12–14, 2007

Fall Meeting, Dauphin Island, Alabama

**FOURTH FRIDAY**—January 25–27, 2008

Winter Meeting, Joe Wheeler State Park

**THIRD FRIDAY**—April 18–20, 2008

Spring Meeting, Dauphin Island, Alabama

### *Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions*

Winter 2007

November 15, 2007

Spring 2008

February 14, 2008

Summer 2008

June 1, 2008

JANUARY 1, 2007–JUNE 30, 2007

## AOS Financial Statement

**BEGINNING BALANCE JANUARY 1, 2007** \$23,869.99**INCOME**

AOS Dues	3,180.00
CBA Dues	335.00
DIBS Contributions	1,407.50
Book/T-shirt sales	2,251.00
Miscellaneous	14.00
Winter Meeting 2007	
Banquet	1,777.50
Registrations	1,245.00
Spring Meeting 2007	
Banquet	1,650.00
Registrations	2,180.00
Sea Lab	780.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$14,820.00</b>

**EXPENSES**

CBA Disbursement	335.00
DIBS Disbursement	1,407.50
Printing	2,752.78
Postage	367.74
Website	75.00
P.O. Box	59.66
Donation to G. Hill (IBWP Search)	1,000.00
Books	516.99
Reimbursements	12,741.12
Winter Meeting 2007	
Banquet	1,800.00
Speaker's Fee	500.00
Room Rental	86.11
Refunds	30.00
Spring Meeting 2007	
Chamber Hall Rental	350.00
Dauphin Island Sea Lab	780.00
Dick Russell's Barbeque	1,359.87
Speaker's Fee and Expenses	1,083.74
Sun Doctor (T-shirts)	1,777.20
Spring Meeting Supplies	85.21
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 27,107.92</b>
<b>ENDING BALANCE JUNE 30, 2007</b>	<b>\$11,777.73</b>

AOS FALL MEETING, OCTOBER 12-14, 2007

## Meet the Speaker: Migration and Vagrant Hot-Spots in North America

By PAUL LEHMAN



PAUL LEHMAN began birding at the age of 9 in New York. At 18 he moved to Santa Barbara, California, where he remained for 20 years before returning east in 1994 to live in Cape May, New Jersey. Given his interests in geography, bird distribution, and working on bird lists in every state and province, he has traveled extensively throughout virtually every nook and cranny of North America. He has written many articles and papers on avian distribution and identification. Formerly a lecturer in physical geography and environmental studies at the University of California in Santa Barbara, and past editor of *Birding* magazine for nine years, Paul continues to give talks on weather, bird distribution, migration, and vagrancy, topics that are of special interest to him.

Paul is an associate editor for *North American Birds* magazine and he has been a principal consultant on several popular field guides, including *The Sibley Field Guides to Birds of Eastern and Western North America*, *Roger Tory Peterson's A Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern and Central North America*, *the National Geographic Society's Field Guide to the Birds of North America* and *Complete Birds of North America*. He was also chief editor of the *ABA Lane* birdfinding guide to North America's major metropolitan regions, and was managing editor of the soon-to-be published book *Rare Birds of California*. His lengthy *Gambell, Alaska*, visits in autumn (where he has discovered five new North American records since 1999) are one example of his interests in exploring some of the lesser-known and under-appreciated birding destinations in the continent.

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT WHEN ONE PONDER'S MAKING A list of North America's best migrant and vagrant hot-spots—which are my favorite places to go birding—that

one immediately thinks of Dauphin Island and Fort Morgan, the homebase for our AOS meeting.

But what is it, exactly, that makes for a good migrant trap? (Given that “vagrants”—species that are well outside their normal range—are almost always migrants themselves, whatever makes for a good migrant site will often qualify as a good vagrant trap as well.) What one is looking for is a “habitat island” or “habitat oasis,” a small-to-medium-sized, birdable site that is attractive to a particular group of migrants and which is surrounded by a much larger amount of relatively inhospitable habitat. Examples include:

—smaller islands in the ocean or in very large lakes (e.g. the Great Lakes) that act as “life rafts” for over-flying land birds in need of a place to put down, feed, and drink (e.g. several Aleutian and Bering Sea islands and Middleton Island in Alaska, the Farallon Islands and several Channel Islands off California, Grande Isle in Louisiana, the Dry Tortugas in Florida, Block Island in Rhode Island, Monhegan Island in Maine, and Brier, Seal, and Sable Islands off Nova Scotia);

—peninsulas and barrier coastlines in these same areas, which act as “three-sided islands” (e.g. Point Reyes and Point Loma in California, many sites along the Gulf of Mexico shoreline from South Padre Island to High Island/Sabine Woods to the coastal cheniers in Cameron Parish Louisiana to the beloved Alabama sites to Fort Desoto in Florida), the Outer Banks in North Carolina, Cape Charles in Virginia, Cape May (my home) in New Jersey, the south shore of Long Island, Cape Cod, the Halifax area in Nova Scotia, the Avalon Peninsula in Newfoundland) and the Great Lakes region which has a particularly large number of great birding peninsulas—just look at a map;

—well-treed urban parks and cemeteries in the larger cities (e.g. Central and Prospect Parks in New York City, Mount Auburn Cemetery in Boston, several lakefront parks near downtown Chicago, Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, as well as lesser-known sites such as Mount Royal in Montreal, Forest Park in St Louis, Kennesaw Mountain Park near Atlanta, etc., etc.);

—isolated stands of trees in large arid areas such as the Desert Southwest, Great Basin, and western Great Plains, and scattered patches of willows, poplars, and cottonwoods found in small towns, along streams, and at ranch yards;

—for water birds, isolated water bodies in these same arid and semi-arid regions, such as lakes, reservoirs, and—everyone’s favorite—sewage treatment ponds.

Not only is it valuable to know where some of these places are located, it is often important to be able to recognize such habitat if you come across it on your own. It is also critical to know *when* to best visit these places. Most birders certainly know that there is not likely to be a warbler fallout at Dauphin Island in early February! But do they know that while April is characterized by the peak spring numbers of regular passerine migrants through the Gulf Coast migrant traps, the chances of finding many land bird rarities at these same sites may in fact be better in May?? Or that, although lots of southbound land birds pass through these areas in September and October, the latter part of October and most of November may be the best months for fall strays from the west?

And lastly, although you may have picked one of the best migrant traps to visit, and you have done so at just the right time of season, if the *weather* is not conducive for migration or the occurrence of avian strays, you just might not see all that much! We all, unfortunately, have had that experience more than once in our lives. And chance and observer luck play their own roles as well. Such is the nature, thrill, unpredictability, and fun of birding at our migrant and vagrant hot-spots!

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### *New Meeting Location*

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**M**ANY OF YOU MAY BE AWARE THAT THE CHAMBER HALL has been or is being sold. It will no longer be available for AOS meetings. The new meeting place will be the Isle Dauphin Golf Club House. This is the location of the famous trips to Sand Island. For those that may not be familiar with that trip, the directions are as follows:

Starting at the end of AL 193 where it intersects with Bienville Blvd, turn right or west. Go west on Bienville Blvd for about a half mile. Immediately after the sign to the airport and the little bridge, turn south onto Orleans Drive. Follow it to the Isle Dauphin Golf Club. For those that want to use the web, the address is 100 Orleans St., Dauphin Island, AL.

We will need to help set up and clean up. Everyone that can needs to gather at 4:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday to help. If we have enough we can make short work of it.

## AOS FALL MEETING 2007

*Dauphin Island, Alabama, October 12-14, 2007*

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12**

- 3:00 p.m. Sea Lab Registration at the Golf Club House  
 6:00 p.m. Check-in begins at the Golf Club House  
 6:00 p.m. Pot Luck snack and open bar  
 (Bring your favorite snack or dessert)  
 7:00 p.m. Members Slide Show

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13**

- 6:00 a.m. Complimentary Danish and coffee at  
 the Sea Lab  
 7:00 a.m. Field trips—Meet at Sea Lab parking lot  
 2:00 p.m. Board meeting—Galathea Hall  
 6:00 p.m. Open bar social  
 6:45 p.m. Seafood banquet  
 8:00 p.m. Program—Paul Lehman

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14**

- 6:00 a.m. Complimentary Danish and coffee at  
 the Sea Lab  
 7:00 a.m. Field trips—Meet at Sea Lab parking lot  
 12:00 p.m. Compilation—Goat Tree

**ACCOMMODATIONS AND INFORMATION**

**Sea Lab**—Double occupancy rooms with bath on hall available for 42. (First come, first served.) Bring your own linens, blankets, and towels. Available at 5 p.m. Friday, October 12. See registration form.

**Motels**—Gulf Breeze and Harbor Lights Motel:  
 (800) 286-0296

**Rentals**—Boardwalk Realty, Inc: (877) 861-3992; Dauphin Island Real Estate: (888) 707-6444; Tyson Real Estate: (251) 861-8312; Pickett Real Estate: (800) 861-3646; Island Realty Corp.: (877) 219-7392; Angel Realty: (888) 473-5534

**Websites**—[www.gulfinfo.com](http://www.gulfinfo.com) and [www.dauphinisland.cc](http://www.dauphinisland.cc)

**FRIDAY NIGHT POT LUCK**

Don't forget to bring your favorite appetizer, snack, dessert, etc. for the social hour.

### AOS FALL MEETING 2007 REGISTRATION FORM

*Complete and return to:*

Frank Farrell, 2744 Darlene Circle, Birmingham, Alabama 35235  
 Telephone: (205) 815-3554 • E-mail: [frank\\_far@msn.com](mailto:frank_far@msn.com)

*Please make checks payable to AOS. Checks must be received by October 2, 2007. After October 2, registration fee is \$20.*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**AOS DUES** Student: \$10 • Individual: \$20 • Family: \$30 • Sustaining: \$40  
 Life (individual): \$300 • Life (family): \$500

**SEA LAB**

*(See Box Opposite)*

- Friday Night  
 How Many \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Saturday Night  
 How Many \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Registration @ \$15 per person (\$20 after Oct. 2)	\$
Banquet @ \$15 per person	\$
Sea Lab @ \$15 per person per night	\$
AOS 2008 Dues	\$
DIBS Land Purchase Fund Contribution	\$
Coastal Birding Association 2008 Dues (\$5)	\$
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	\$

# THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 27, NO. 3 • FALL 2007

EDITOR.....Bob Reed  
DESIGN.....Robin McDonald  
ILLUSTRATIONS.....Annabel Markle

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Greg Harber  
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*Annual Membership:*  
Student: \$10 • Individual: \$20 • Family: \$30  
Sustaining: \$40 • Life (individual): \$300  
Life (family): \$500



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<http://www.bham.net/aos/>  
**AOS RARE BIRD ALERT**  
**TELEPHONE HOTLINE:**  
**(256) 751-4788**

**THE NEW AOS ONLINE RETAIL STORE**  
<http://www.withoutbricks.com/aosstore>

**ALABAMA WILDLIFE REHAB CENTER**  
<http://www.alawildliferehab.org>

**BIRMINGHAM AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
<http://www.birminghamaudubon.org>

**DAUPHIN ISLAND BIRD SANCTUARIES**  
<http://www.coastalbirding.org>

**FRANCIS M. WESTON AUDUBON SOCIETY (PENSACOLA)**  
<http://www.fmwaudubon.org>

**THE HUMMER/BIRD STUDY GROUP**  
<http://www.hummingbirdsplus.org>

**MOBILE BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
<http://www.mobilebayaudubon.org>

**SOUTH ALABAMA BIRDING ASSOCIATION**  
<http://www.bamabirds.com>

**SOUTHEASTERN RAPTOR REHAB CENTER**  
<http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu/raptor>

**TENNESSEE VALLEY AUDUBON**  
<http://www.tvas.org>

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