

# THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 28, NO. 3 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY FALL 2008

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

FOUNDED 1952



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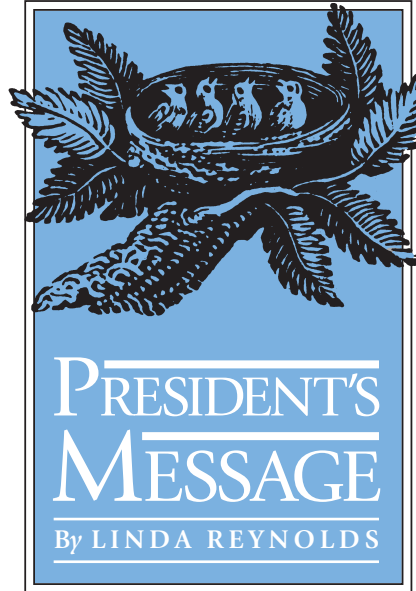
E HAVE REACHED THE HALFWAY point in my tenure as President of AOS. This is a good time to look back and see where we have been, and then forward to see where we can go in the future.

One of my goals was to spotlight Alabama's research projects, our natural resources, and the people who spend their careers working in Alabama. So far, we have done this.

Another goal that has a life of its own is the completion of the Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas. This project is in very capable hands. We can all be proud of everyone who is working on this, especially Rick West who headed up the field work and Dr. Tom Haggerty, our *Alabama Birdlife* editor. He and his committee are in the process of getting everything online, and putting in very long hours. Thanks to all of you.

Some things have changed from our usual way of doing things, such as meeting off-island in the spring and fall. This could not be helped, and we are grateful to Mary's Place for allowing us to meet there.

Now, to the future. We are planning to update our website and to put back issues of *Alabama Birdlife* online. Eric Soehren, Chris Price and Tom Siegwald are working on this. Also, we will continue to smooth out the glitches in our meetings, to solicit new members, and to do our part in this organization.



I commend all the people who are committed to making the Alabama Ornithological Society a progressive, viable body.

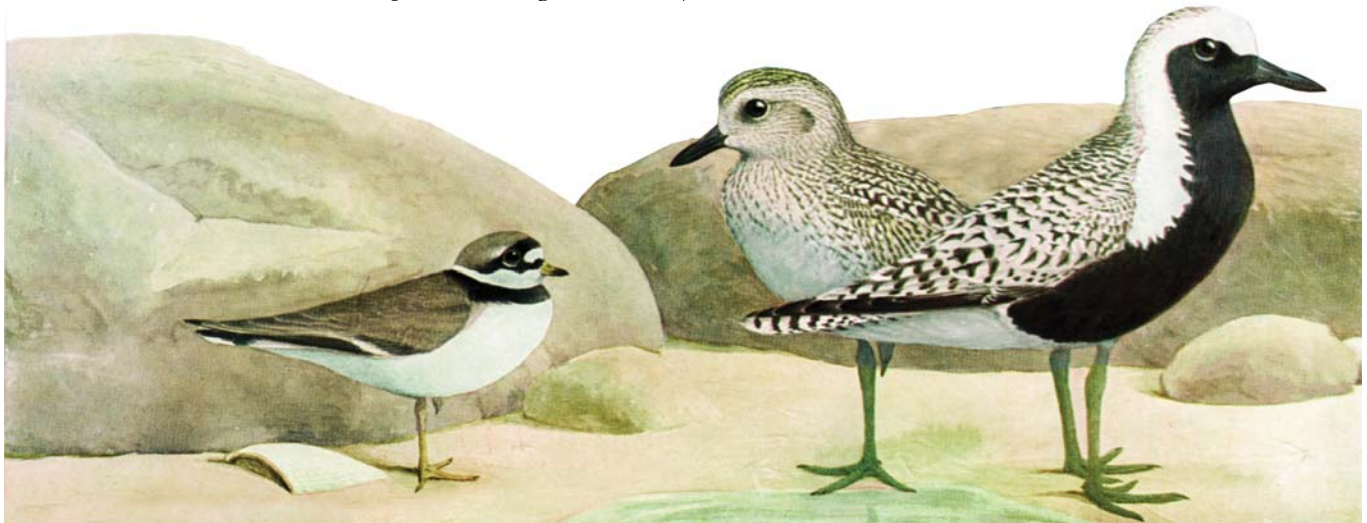
There has been a change in our officers: Frank Farrell has resigned as Treasurer and Mary Frances Stayton has agreed to take on this thankless task. Mary Frances is the "lady behind the camera" on all of our field trips. She lives in Leeds, and not only is she a fine photographer, she is a financial officer for the phone company. Our gratitude to Frank along with our best wishes in a new house and a new job. Mary Frances, welcome aboard.

On a sad note, on July 14, Mary Agnes Brooks Holliman passed away after an extended illness. She was the wife of our

beloved Dan. His address in Birmingham is 3476 Birchtree Drive, Birmingham, AL 35226 in case you would like to send a card. Dan, we love you and offer our sincere condolences.

Our own Tom Rogers has become quite a photographer since his retirement as ornithology professor at the University of Alabama. He is now being honored with his own exhibit featuring black and white landscapes taken during his extensive travels. The exhibit will be in the Alabama Museum of Natural History, Smith Hall, on the University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa. It runs from August 28 until December 20.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the fall meeting. Be safe.



## Southwestern Canada

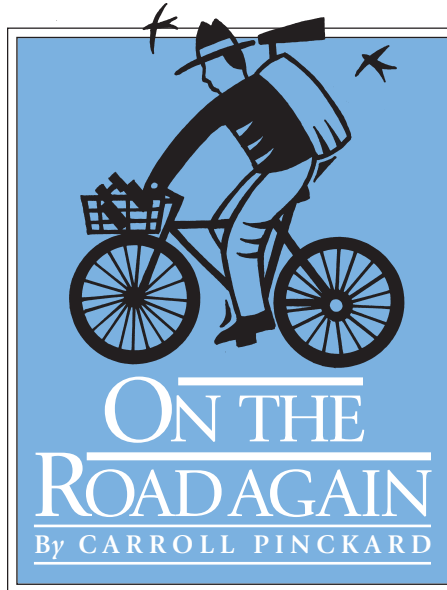


BETWEEN TWO ONE-WEEK birding tours within the state of Washington, my wife and I sandwiched a five-day trip in early June to the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia, Canada. In our rental car we drove on modern, multi-lane highways the 145 miles north from the Seattle area to Vancouver, B.C., stopping several places along the coast to birdwatch. Our entry into Canada and our return to the United States were uneventful since we both had U.S. passports and photo driving licenses. After spending the night in a comfortable motel in the Vancouver area, we departed eastward toward the town of Osoyoos (approximately 49°N, 119°30'W), located just north of the Washington border and the town of Oroville, Washington.

Our approximately 250-mile trip was along the Southern Trans-provincial Highway, routes number 1 and 3. The highways pass through cultivated fields, pastures, and beautiful mountain forests. We drove through a southern portion of the Manning Provincial Park, crossing the Cascade Mountains at Allison Pass, elevation 4,436 feet. Along the way we found Barrow's Goldeneyes, a Band-tailed Pigeon, Williamson's Sapsuckers, and Clark's Nutcrackers. Also seen were black bears, mule deer, and a mountain goat.

The southern Okanagan Valley lies in the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountains. It is an area of south central British Columbia that is unique among Canadian birding habitats. Numerous streams and valleys course through moderately high mountains with varied forest types, providing lakes and meadows and cultivated areas. The valley is cold in winter, but in summer the southern part of the valley has some of the hottest temperatures in the province.

The valley is lush, with numerous farms, pastures, orchards, vineyards, and wineries. Nearby are areas of sagebrush, open ponderosa pine, and Douglas fir forests, areas of



western larch and lodgepole pine, and underbrush of a wide variety of species. Within one mile of the international border is an arid zone, so arid that the slopes contain prickly pear cactus. This is a truly unique area, the bird list of which exceeds 220 species.

We arrived in late afternoon at the town of Osoyoos. By pre-arrangement we met there a small group of Canadian birders with whom we shared a most enjoyable long weekend. Osoyoos was our home base for the weekend. Being a vacation town in season for Canadians, there are numerous comfortable motels and restaurants of

varying quality and expense.

We arose early our first day together and had a brief, light breakfast snack at a local all-night convenience store/gasoline station on the main highway at the edge of town. Our first birding stop was near the north end of Osoyoos Lake where we saw Bullock's Orioles, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and Wilson's Snipe. At a nearby grassy wetland and floodplain we saw Bobolinks, Long-billed Curlews, Marsh Wrens, Soras, Virginia Rails and several other species. The birds were in full song and exhibiting breeding behavior. The Virginia Rails already had tiny black chicks. Further north from town we found an impressive colony of Bank Swallows, perhaps 200 or more birds. Interestingly, a pair of Northern Flickers had taken over a swallow's burrow. Apparently this occurs frequently in the Okanagan area. We returned to town for brunch.

Birding that afternoon at a higher elevation in a mixed pine/fir forest, we found courting Townsend's Solitaires, Vesper Sparrows, Pygmy Nuthatches, a Cassin's Vireo, and a Dusky Flycatcher. At a meadow at an elevation of approximately 4,200 feet, we encountered Pine Siskins, Cassin's Finches, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Hammond's Flycatcher. We spotted a Merlin and two Golden Eagles here.

Heading back toward town, we stopped in a ponderosa pine zone where we found a Calliope Hummingbird. Driv-

ing on, we located singing Lazuli Buntings, more Bullock's Orioles, American Goldfinches, Cedar Waxwings, and Black-billed Magpies. At the end of a long day in pleasant weather, our day list totaled 81 species, most of which were seen by every member of our group.

Starting very early again the next day, we drove eastward. Along the way we found California bighorn sheep high on the rocks near the highway, as well as a colony of yellow-bellied marmots. Lark Sparrows were near the roadside, and we found a singing Gray Flycatcher. Also seen this morning were Western Tanagers, Swainson's Thrushes and a singing Winter Wren. North of the town of Oliver we found a singing Yellow-breasted Chat, and nearby were a Black-chinned Hummingbird and a Cassin's Vireo.

By now it was time for a late sit-down breakfast, after which we drove to an ecological reserve area where we found Lark Sparrows and Western Kingbirds. At the base of some cliffs we saw Rock Wrens and heard, but did not see, Canyon Wrens. Twenty or more White-throated Swifts flew high overhead.

Moving higher to a meadow at elevation 5,000 feet, we found singing Lincoln's Sparrows, Orange-crowned Warblers, Wilson's Warbler, and an Olive-sided Flycatcher calling for "three beers." It was a treat to hear birds calling and singing everywhere we went; these are birds that for the most part are silent when we encounter them in the southland. After a brief flurry of snow at box-lunch time, we found a Three-toed Woodpecker, close enough to count the toes, and Mountain Chickadees. On our way back to Osoyoos we added Veery, Yellow Warbler, and Red-necked Grebe to the list. The day list totaled 91 species, 26 of which were new to our trip list.

Our third morning, we again had a very early stand-up quick breakfast at the convenience store before setting out for sagebrush country near the Washington border. Our target birds were Brewer's Sparrow and Sage Thrasher. We saw three coyotes, but we did not find either target bird. We then drove a short distance westward to Richter Pass, elevation 2,237 feet, just north of the U.S. border. We found Ruddy Ducks, the males with their bright blue bills and a female with four tiny black ducklings.

Returning to town for a quick breakfast and to check out of our motel, we drove south into Washington to the little town of Oroville, and from there eastward to high grasslands, searching all the while for Swainson's Hawk, which we found after studying many soaring Red-tailed Hawks. Horned Larks were nesting in this area. At a roadside shallow lake we found Red-necked Grebes on their floating nests, Eared Grebes, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Black Terns and a host of more common species.

We continued on to the historic town of Molson, Washington (yes, "that" Molson) where, at an old schoolhouse that had been converted to the local museum, we were educated and entertained as to pioneer history while enjoying home-made cookies and hot coffee.

The birding ended mid-afternoon back in Osoyoos with a day list of 72 species, 18 of which were new. Our personal total trip list was 121 birds; the group list totaled 125 species. That afternoon and evening we drove back to Vancouver where we spent the night, after which on the next day we returned to the United States and began the second week of our Washington birding tour.

## Black Rosy-Finch

By CARROLL PINCKARD



HERE ARE SEVERAL DISTINCTIVE POPULATIONS OF Rosy-Finches. They are isolated either on alpine peaks or in arctic regions near sea level, and each form has no contact with the other forms on breeding territory. The Black Rosy-Finch, *Leucosticte atrata*, summers in the high mountains of the Northern Great Basin region, from northeast Nevada to southwest Montana. It is an uncommon bird that is

adapted to the harsh conditions of alpine barrens and snowfields above tree line, foraging among barren tundra vegetation and rocky crags. Their migrations are almost exclusively altitudinal, arriving on snowfields by early April. Needless to say, most areas where the Black Rosy-Finches summer are not easily accessible to most birders. We have been fortunate to see Black Rosy-Finches four times at two locations.

We found our first Black Rosy-Finches in Wyoming, just south of the Montana border. We drove east from Silver Gate at the Yellowstone National Park on U.S. Highway 212 headed toward Red Lodge, Montana. After passing through Cooke City, Montana, the highway passes through the beautiful and birdy valley of the Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River. The highway climbs and reaches the summit of Beartooth Pass at elevation 10,947 feet. For about five miles either side of the highway crest is within the alpine zone, and by driving slowly in this zone (there is very little high-speed traffic here) we saw several of these beautiful birds. Seen against the white snow, the black and rose plumage of the males is striking. We located the birds another year when we returned to this area.

We also found Black Rosy-Finches in Utah in the Unita

Mountains south of Evanston, Wyoming, which is located in the extreme southwest corner of that state. Highway 150 (both in Utah and Wyoming) provides access to the Mirror Lake region of the Unitas, and at Mount Baldy Pass at an elevation of 11,000 feet we parked and scanned the snowy cliff face. We were rewarded with good sightings of the birds before being forced to depart in a spring snowstorm. Mount Baldy is in the alpine zone. Mirror Lake, at a lower elevation, is in the Hudsonian zone. We found three-toed Woodpeckers in the forest there. We located the Black Rosy-Finches during a return visit another year.

If you are at the right place at the right time—all of our sightings were the last week of May/first week of June—you might find the birds. Good luck and good birding.

## *Puerto Rico Breeding Bird Atlas*

By LARRY GARDELLA



ANY OF YOU PARTICIPATED IN ALABAMA'S Breeding Bird Atlas. Whether or not you did, you now have another chance to help on an important atlasing project. Where? In Puerto Rico, a wonderful tropical island that you can visit without a passport. Sixteen endemics, good populations of many of the Caribbean specialties, some very nice forests, shorebird sites and even some wonderful beaches. This is the first Atlas in the Caribbean, and it will finish next year.

Rick West was the coordinator (main man) for the Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas. Without him, it would not have happened. Across the state, many of us put in many miles and hours on the project. Still, our success was largely due to the experience Rick brought from leading the first Delaware atlas and working on the Florida and Georgia atlases, combined with his extensive and exhaustive work both out in the field and at the planning table.

In appreciation, AOS recognized Rick with the Tom Imhof Lifetime Achievement Award and gave an mp3 player and an mp3 of bird song. He is using both to play calls and songs of Puerto Rico's birds.

Puerto Rican ornithologists invited Rick to help with the project. They do it part time around their jobs. Rick is out

in the field eight or more hours a day and then back at his computer entering data and planning the next day.

Take a look at the Puerto Rico Breeding Bird Atlas map on the AOS website. You will see lots of hexagons (instead of the quads we used) with little coverage. Some of the limited data is from coastal edges, where there just isn't much land. Some of it is waiting to be filled in with the data from the work done this year. But much of it represents work that still needs to be done, work that you can do.

In 2004, Bailey McKay went down and helped get the atlas started. His skill, youthful eyes and energy set a standard for thorough coverage that has been hard to match. He encountered so many Gray Kingbirds that he became an expert—and then found some of the first of that species to return to Alabama after Katrina.

In 2007, Don and Carol Ware flew to Puerto Rico and spent ten days working out of Rick's apartment in Ponce. Don added 29 species to his life list, including all of the endemics except the parrot and the Yellow-shouldered Blackbird. Rick did all of the map preparation for them, and they took those maps and traveled throughout much of southern Puerto Rico adding species to bunches of hexagons. They reported the roads good and the people friendly.

Like Don, I cashed in some frequent flyer miles to fly down. I spent nine days in early June this year. Don and Carol and other helpers who arrived in pairs rented a car and went on their own (with Rick's maps) after going with him one day. Instead, I mainly birded with Rick. He picked me up at the airport. Instead of renting a car, I got added as an extra driver of Rick's Charlie Cars compact. In addition to extensive pre-birding preparation, he navigated on the fly, helping us to follow a carefully mapped-out route to record Puerto Rican Screech-Owls in several hexagons before dawn. We even managed to get a probable breeding mark for the species (seven heard on territory) in two different hexagons that we hit after recording singles in several other hexes.

Rick spent much of two mornings out on a kayak while I covered the land birding. Kayaking is very helpful for observing heron colonies—though we found one in a town that had both Cattle and Snowy Egret. Other days, we spent some time walking together, with me better at finding hummers and Rick more attuned to many of the bird songs—and the two of us more than twice as likely to get confirmations as one of us would have been. One of my first birds was a confirmation of late breeding of a Puerto Rican Tanager. We also did some tag-team birding, one of us dropping off the other and then driving half a mile or so, parking the car and walking ahead and then repeating the process, allowing us to cover more ground without having to back-track to a parked car.

Next year, Rick would like to have someone come down and bird with him as he and I did this year. There will be no new hexagons to go into, but if someone drives and Rick navigates, it is possible to put serious dents in a hit list of missed species in a series of hexagons each day. At the same time, Rick can also easily include logging all the endemic species. I had a little more success than Don with endemics, getting the Yellow-shouldered Blackbird—though I, too, missed the parrot, and my Puerto Rican Nightjar was heard only. I also recorded most of the non-endemic birds on the island that were lifers for me.

This will not be a "tour." Getting up at 3 AM is normal, and some walking is involved. You will be ready to stop by noon because it will be hot, and you will be tired. Ten days or so during the period from mid-April to mid-June is the time to come.

Although Rick is eager to have someone to spend some time working with him, he can also accommodate pairs.

If you decide to go, please study all the bird songs—concentrate on flycatchers (including the two kingbirds—Rick has a good ear for Loggerheads), doves and the differences between Mangrove and Puerto Rican Lizard Cuckoo and between Black-whiskered Vireo (which usually seems to have a nightjar aspect) and Puerto Rican Vireo (which is more musical.) And do get used to the *ji-dit* call of the Antillean Euphonia and the crude call of the beautiful Puerto Rican Tody (a new family for anyone who has not birded the Caribbean.) I have books and a CD with the bird songs that you are welcome to use. Rick particularly needs you to listen for the high-pitched songs and the whirl of hummers—he has difficulty with these.

Get your bid in early so Rick can be sure to have a bed for you. And be ready for a great time for a great cause.

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### *Codex on the Flight of Birds by Leonardo da Vinci*

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THE BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM OF ART'S UPCOMING EXHIBIT of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings from the Biblioteca Reale in Turin will open September 28 and run through November 11. Of special interest to birders, one of da Vinci's most celebrated notebooks, the Codex on the Flight of Birds, will be featured in the exhibit along with eleven other important drawings. These drawings have never traveled as a group nor been made available in their entirety outside of Italy. The Codex is filled with observations on the movement of birds as well as ideas to reproduce these natural motions by use of a human-powered machine. Da Vinci focused on birds' ability to take advantage of the wind and the construction of their wings. Richard O. Prum, Ph.D., William Roberts Coe Professor of Ornithology, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Peabody Natural History Museum, Yale University will speak on the Codex at the Museum on October 12 at 2:00 p.m. He will compare da Vinci's views on the mechanism of flight to our modern perceptions. Admission is free.

The Birmingham Museum of Art is located in downtown Birmingham at 2000 8th Avenue North. For further details, you may call 205-254-2565 or go to [www.artsbama.org](http://www.artsbama.org).

—B. J. Allen

### *AOS Website Update*

WITHIN THE PAST NINE MONTHS OR SO, THERE HAS BEEN considerable discussion regarding the AOS website. Although it still facilitates the needs of the society, it's time to overhaul it to better reflect our growing organization. New internet software is available, and AOS Board members are currently considering possible avenues for rebuilding the website for the primary purpose of adding more useable resources for the membership, while making it easier to navigate through.

New additions being considered include making all volumes of *Alabama Birdlife*, and *The Yellowhammer*, and the 50-year History available as PDFs in a searchable database and something similar to an electronic version of *A Birder's Guide to Alabama*, with detailed online maps, directions, and updateable descriptions of birding hot spots throughout the state. These new features would not only serve our membership better, but also accommodate anyone with a general interest in Alabama birds. More information will be forthcoming as AOS moves forward with this project.

If you would like to provide input or offer suggestions about the development of a new AOS website, please contact Eric Soehren at [esoehren@netzero.com](mailto:esoehren@netzero.com). —Eric Soehren

### *Membership Correspondence*

Address correspondence concerning membership to:  
Mary Frances Stayton, Treasurer  
952 Mockingbird Lane, Leeds, Alabama, 35094  
[lovingcats@alltel.net](mailto:lovingcats@alltel.net)

#### *Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions*

Winter 2008	November 10, 2008
Spring 2009	February 10, 2009
Summer 2009	June 1, 2009
Fall 2009	August 10, 2009

### *Electronic Yellowhammer?*

IT COSTS WELL 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 your *Yellowhammer* in color, electronically, as a PDF file, please email the editor at [Robert.Reed@psc.alabama.gov](mailto:Robert.Reed@psc.alabama.gov).

### *Thanks for the Stories*

IF YOU HAVE AN ARTICLE, STORY, OR AMUSING INCIDENT YOU would like to share, please send it 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 were interesting, different, or amusing.

### *Membership Dues*

PLEASE LOOK AT YOUR MAILING LABEL; IF THERE IS A 7 IN THE upper right hand corner, that means you haven't paid your dues for 2008. Please do so real soon. If there is an 8 in the upper right hand corner, that means you are current through 2008; please consider getting a head start on 2009. If there is a higher number, or LIFE, please stop reading. Remember, dues are for a calendar year and are due each January.

#### *Important Dates*

**SECOND FRIDAY**—October 10-12, 2008  
Fall Meeting, Dauphin Island, Alabama  
**FOURTH FRIDAY**—January 23-25, 2009  
Winter Meeting, 5 Rivers, Spanish Fort, Alabama  
**THIRD FRIDAY**—April 17-19, 2009  
Spring Meeting, Dauphin Island, Alabama

A O S F A L L M E E T I N G , O C T O B E R 1 0 - 1 2 , 2 0 0 8

## Meet the Speaker: Pete Conroy

PETE CONROY is the Director of Jacksonville State University's Environmental Policy and Information Center (EPIC). He received his Bachelor's in Biology from Furman University and his Master's in Zoology from the University of Georgia and moved to Alabama in 1985 to work as the curator of the Anniston Museum of Natural History.

Since then, he has received assignments from five Alabama governors and others from Washington, including a White House appointment by President Bill Clinton in 1999 to serve as Alternate U.S. Federal Commissioner of the Tri-State (ACT/ACF) Water Compacts.

Pete leads a number of projects related to conservation and economic development. Examples include the establishment of a National Park unit, a National Wilderness Area and a National Wildlife Refuge. Currently he leads the establishment of the Little River Canyon Center, the reuse of former Fort McClellan, the Chief Ladiga Rail-Trail, and other initiatives promoting smart growth, sustainable development, civil rights, education, arts, technology, health, and ecotourism.

Born in Pennsylvania, Pete moved to Asheville, North Carolina with his family in 1970. He now lives in Jacksonville, Alabama, with his wife Roxana and daughter Haley.

## "From the Deepest Canyon to the Highest Mountains"

By PETE CONROY



FROM THE DEEPEST CANYON TO THE HIGHEST mountains" is the phrase we use to try and capture it all. You might get the idea, but for most, it's like a bumper sticker that needs some additional explanation.

Since the mid-1980s, I've been wildly fortunate to have worked with ambitious organizations and talented individuals. Now looking back, I can say that together we've established several protected areas and special projects throughout northeast Alabama.

Starting after I came to know about this area's biological diversity, avian flyways, and spectacular beauty, it just made sense to try and protect some big areas and then maybe link them as some sort of connected eco-region. Being from Asheville, North Carolina, I knew what tourism could do for a region's economy. Being from out of state and not knowing anything about Alabama politics was probably the best thing I had going for me.

The first project came in 1987 after the Audubon Society, Alabama Conservancy, Sierra Club, and Nature Conservancy

had allowed me to represent them at some Congressional hearings in Washington, DC. The topic was the creation of a National Park unit to protect and promote the Little River Canyon in DeKalb County. With Senator Richard Shelby and Congressman Tom Bevill championing the cause, President George Bush signed the bill into law in October 1992, creating the 14,000-acre National Preserve.

The next project, beginning in 1992, was to protect Dugger Mountain. This ridge, the second highest in Alabama, became the focus of Senator Jeff Sessions and Congressman Bob Riley. After years of planning and negotiation, President Bill Clinton signed the Dugger Mountain Wilderness Act into law in December 1999. The effort, which John Randolph describes in great detail in his book *The Battle for Alabama's Wilderness*, protected 9,220 acres.

The most recent designation involved the closure of the former Fort McClellan in 1999. About half of the old military installation is a mountain, which wrapped around the cantonment area. The terrain had created a perfect backdrop for artillery practice where fires burned on a regular basis.

Surprising to some, the fire created the perfect habitat for the propagation of Longleaf Pine trees. As a result, an ecosystem had been protected. Through a "lateral transfer" from the Department of Defense to the Department of Interior's National Wildlife Refuge system, it too could be protected. With leadership from Senator Sessions and my better understanding of politics, this project went relatively fast. By December 2002, the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge had become a 9,200-acre reality when it was signed into law by President George W. Bush.

Because, years earlier in 1983, the Cheaha Wilderness and Alabama's highest ridge had been established, the corridor "from the deepest canyon to the highest mountain" would be complete. Collectively, around 30,000 acres were protected, making what I like to call the "highest concentration of nationally protected natural areas anywhere in the United States." If this isn't true, I'd like to know, but so far all who have studied the claim agree.

In any case, that's just the start of the overall effort. Protecting these areas through national designations provided the foundation for other projects and ecotourism development. Described here from North to South, additional partnerships have resulted in additional attractions.

In the fall of 2008, my employer, Jacksonville State University, will open its doors to one of Alabama's largest Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) registered facilities. To be called the JSU Canyon Center, it will house a museum, store, auditorium, classrooms and the 15 employees of the National Park Service at Little River Canyon National Preserve. A series of trails for bird watchers are now being planned around the Canyon Center as is another one that's closer to Centre, Alabama, along the banks of Weiss Lake.

Starting at the Alabama-Georgia state line, two more trails are now prominently featured assets. They are the 33-mile-long Chief Ladiga Trail in Alabama and the 63-mile-long



Silver Comet Trail in Georgia. Together, they make up the longest, continuous paved pathway in the United States and on September 27, 2008, they will be linked in a grand ceremony.

That trail is bisected by another, which enjoyed its own ceremony on March 16, 2008. The Pinhoti Trail celebrated its completion on that day and serves as another major asset connecting the region. Starting near Cheaha Mountain and connecting with the Benton Mackay Trail in Georgia, and later the Appalachian Trail, it is now part of a 2,504-mile-long system offering some of America's greatest hiking.

Other assets might include some unusual reuses of the former Fort McClellan. In addition to the Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge, McClellan is now poised to become an epicenter for tourism in northeast Alabama. Once filled with soldiers, over 3000 new jobs have been created since 1999. As an example, in addition to other jobs associated with technology, engineering, education, medicine, and homeland security, McClellan is now the summer home of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. It is also the site of the world's largest manufacturer of violins, basses and cellos (Howard Core Company) and, as of late autumn, it will also be home to the one of the nation's most important sites for civil rights. The renovation of the historic Monteith Amphitheater began in mid-August 2008. Between 1937 and 1942, this facility hosted sermons by a young Billy Graham, demonstration fights by Joe Lewis, jazz concerts by Percy Granger, and, most significantly, in August 1942, possibly the nation's first act of integration took place on the Monteith stage where the Buffalo Soldiers and 200 white soldiers formed the 92nd Infantry.

Alabama is the "state of surprises," but in our northeast corner, we may have more than our fair share. So now, with this explanation, "from the deepest canyon to the highest mountain," all are invited to come and experience our region. Someday we may even have a real bumper sticker.

## AOS FALL MEETING 2008

*Dauphin Island, Alabama, October 10–12, 2008*

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10**

- 4:30 p.m. Sea Lab Registration at Mary's Place
- 6:00 p.m. Check-in begins at Mary's Place  
Open Bar Social at Mary's Place
- 7:30 p.m. Members Slide Show

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11**

- 6:00 a.m. Complimentary Danish and coffee at the Sea Lab
- 7:00 a.m. Field trips—Meet at Sea Lab parking lot
- 3:30 p.m. Board meeting—Galathea Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Open bar social at Mary's Place
- 6:45 p.m. Seafood banquet at Mary's Place
- 7:45 p.m. Program—Pete Conroy

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12**

- 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**

There will be no pot luck suppers until further notice. Please consider eating Friday evening at Mary's Place.

### AOS FALL MEETING 2008 REGISTRATION FORM

*Complete and return to:*

Mary Frances Stayton, 952 Mockingbird Lane, Leeds, Alabama, 35094

Telephone: (205) 640-4502 • E-mail: [lovingcats@alltel.net](mailto:lovingcats@alltel.net)

*Please make checks payable to AOS. Checks must be received by October 1, 2008. After October 1, registration fee is \$50.*

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

**AOS DUES** Student: \$10 • Individual: \$25 • Family: \$40 • Sustaining: \$50  
 Life (individual): \$350 • Life (family): \$550

**SEA LAB**

*(See Box Opposite)*

Friday Night

How Many \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Night

How Many \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Registration @ \$25 per person (\$50 after Oct. 1)	\$
Banquet @ \$20 per person	\$
Sea Lab @ \$15 per person per night	\$
AOS 2009 Dues	\$
DIBS Land Purchase Fund Contribution	\$
Coastal Birding Association 2009 Dues (\$5)	\$
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	<b>\$</b>

**THE YELLOWHAMMER**

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