

## SPRING MEETING

Our annual meeting will be held at Monte Sano State Park near Huntsville on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 29-30, and May 1. Reservation information will be available later. Tentative program includes registration Friday evening, field trips for most of the daylight hours Saturday and Sunday morning, and for Saturday evening election of officers and a well-known out of state speaker. PLAN TO ATTEND.

## BANDERS' CORNER

This will be the title of another feature for Alabama Birdlife beginning with the next issue. Some interesting Savannah Sparrow data may then be presented. Proper material for this feature will be items of interest to all bird students, thus the results of banding activities rather than techniques should be presented. For suggestions and guidance see Dr. Dusi's papers on Little Blue Heron (Alabama Birdlife 6: 9-11, 1958) and White-throated Sparrow (Alabama Birdlife 3: 2-4, 1955) and Mrs. Laskey's Bluebird Recovery (Alabama Birdlife 3: 4, 1955). For the next issue we hereby solicit from all Alabama banders:

1. 1959 totals of individuals and species banded
2. The top 5 species in numbers banded
3. Any additional interesting species banded
4. Returns for the year 1959
5. Short notes on all recoveries not previously published

Your President  
Your Editor

## MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

In the last issue of Alabama Birdlife the minutes of the Fall meeting included a change in the by-laws of the constitution to make the fiscal year coincide with the calendar year. I wish to explain how this change affects the payment of dues.

To bring membership up to date from the middle to the end of the year, members must pay one-half year's dues. Active members paid up through June, 1960 may have the option of paying \$1.00 to extend membership to Jan. 1, 1961, or of paying \$3.00 to extend membership to Jan. 1, 1962.

Members more than \$5.00 in arrears as of Jan. 1, 1960 may be reinstated by the payment of \$5.00 and payment of dues for 1960.

It has been suggested that the different classes of membership be published should anyone like to raise his membership status. These classes are as follows: 1. Active Members—\$2.00 yearly; 2. Honorary Members—Exempt from dues; 3. Sustaining Members—\$5.00 yearly; 4. Student Members—\$1.00 yearly; 5. Life Members—\$50.00, which may be paid within a 2-year period.

I hope to have sent each member a dues notice before this issue is mailed, and I wish to thank those members who have already sent me their checks.

MARGARET L. ROBINSON, Treasurer

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Wild Flower Festival ..... Haleyville, April 9-10  
A.O.S. Spring Meeting ..... Monte Sano Park, April 29-30, May 1  
Wilson Club & T.O.S. Meeting ..... Gatlinburg, N. C., May 5-8

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We welcome:

Mr. Demett Smith, 2033 Delbrook Drive, Huntsville, Ala.  
Mr. Dan C. Holliman, Box 1927, Biology Dept., University, Ala.  
Mr. Winslow M. Shaughnessy, care of Ida Cason Calloway Gardens, Pine Mountain, Georgia.

Our thanks to Blanche E. Dean for use of the cover cut.

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS, ALABAMA, 1959

THOMAS A. IMHOF, J. L. DORN, S. J., and JULIAN L. DUSI

1. AUBURN (column A, center of circle is center of Auburn; pines and hardwoods 50%, pastures and crop fields 40%, ponds, streams, and swamps 10%).—Dec. 26. Clear changing to overcast; temp. 52 degrees to 62 degrees; wind ESE 5-10 mph. Five observers. Total party-hours, 13½; total party-miles, 60½, (6½ on foot, 54 by car).

2. BIRMINGHAM (column B, center of circle in New Merkle; woods borders 25%, oak-pine woods 17%, suburbs 15%, hardwoods 11%, lakes and ponds 11%, short grass 11%, tall grass 10%).—Dec. 26; 6:20 am to 5:20 pm. Cloudy to partly cloudy; temp. 53 degrees to 66 degrees; wind SE, 5-18 mph. Seventeen observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours, 62 (48 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 267 (40 on foot, 227 by car).

3. DAUPHIN ISLAND (column D, center of circle on southern tip of Mon Luis Isle; pine-hardwoods 37%, pine woods 16%, residential areas 14%, mud and shell flats 14%, sheltered salt water 8%, salt marsh 5%, fresh marsh 4%, farms 2%).—Jan 2; 6:00 am to 5:30 pm. Drizzle to rain and fog all day, visibility on land one mile, over water less than 100 yards; temp. 55 degrees to 65 degrees; wind SE, 5-15 mph. Nine observers in 5 parties. Total party-hours 37½ (23½ on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 217 (23 on foot, 194 by car).

4. MOBILE (column M, center of circle in downtown Mobile, Providence St. and Old Shell Road; river, bay, ponds 25%, marshlands and beaches 25%, upland deciduous and evergreen woods 25%, weedy pastures and roadsides 15%, cultivated fields, nursery fields, golf courses 10%).—December 28; 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Clear, temp. 40 degrees to 60 degrees, wind N, 5-10 mph. One observer. Total hours, 11 (5 on foot, 6 by car); total miles, 50 (5 on foot, 45 by car).

SPECIES	A	B	D	M
Common Loon	—	2	17	3
Horned Grebe	—	—	24	15
Pied-billed Grebe	3	27	6	5
White Pelican	—	—	—	1
Brown Pelican	—	—	1	—
Double-crested Cormorant	—	—	884	17
Great Blue Heron	1	—	13	17
Little Blue Heron	—	—	—	8
Reddish Egret	—	—	—	1
Common Egret	—	—	1	21
Snowy Egret	—	—	—	27
Black-crowned Night Heron	—	—	—	1
Am. Bittern	—	—	—	1
Blue Goose	—	—	13	2
Mallard	1	—	—	16
Black Duck	2	1	—	45
Mottled Duck	—	—	—	3
Gadwall	—	1	—	826
Pintail	—	—	—	412
Green-winged Teal	—	—	—	4
Blue-winged Teal	—	—	—	19
Am. Widgeon	—	—	2	—
Shoveller	—	—	1	—
Wood Duck	1	—	—	—
Redhead	—	5	—	2
Ring-necked Duck	25	24	—	25
Canvasback	—	25	—	374
Greater Scaup	—	—	—	3
Lesser Scaup	—	39	80	1511
Common Goldeneye	—	—	29	—
Bufflehead	—	—	—	3
Ruddy Duck	—	4	—	2
Hooded Merganser	—	—	—	23
Common Merganser	1	—	1	—
Red-breasted Merganser	—	—	17	12

## Christmas Bird Counts, Alabama, 1959 (continued)

SPECIES	A	B	D	M
Turkey Vulture	3	4	1	2
Black Vulture	24	—	3	9
Sharp-shinned Hawk	—	2	—	—
Cooper's Hawk	1	3	—	1
Red-tailed Hawk	2	2	1	2
Red-Shouldered Hawk	3	3	2	2
Broad-winged Hawk	—	—	1	—
Bald Eagle	—	—	—	1
Marsh Hawk	—	1	2	2
Peregrine Falcon	—	—	1	—
Pigeon Hawk	—	—	1	1
Sparrow Hawk	3	6	31	5
Bobwhite	6	34	10	16
King Rail	—	—	—	2
Clapper Rail	—	—	15	3
Virginia Rail	—	—	8	—
Sora	—	—	15	1
Common Gallinule	—	—	—	11
Am. Coot	1	575	—	1734
Am. Oystercatcher	—	—	2	—
Semipalmated Plover	—	—	48	47
Piping Plover	—	—	62	2
Snowy Plover	—	—	2	—
Killdeer	16	183	6	35
Black-bellied Plover	—	—	41	7
Ruddy Turnstone	—	—	63	—
Am. Woodcock	3	3	—	1
Common Snipe	15	26	—	4
Spotted Sandpiper	1	—	—	—
Willet	—	—	18	1
Greater Yellowlegs	—	—	10	—
Lesser Yellowlegs	—	—	2	—
Knot	—	—	6	—
Pectoral Sandpiper	—	—	1	—
Least Sandpiper	—	—	5	28
Dunlin	—	—	139	252
Dowitcher	—	—	45	2
Semipalmated Sandpiper	—	—	3	76
Western Sandpiper	—	—	51	29
Sanderling	—	—	42	39
Great Black-backed Gull	—	—	—	1
Herring Gull	—	1	61	196
Ring-billed Gull	—	—	174	962
Laughing Gull	—	—	48	1631
Bonaparte's Gull	—	—	10	3
Forster's Tern	—	—	8	257
Common Tern	—	—	—	3
Royal Tern	—	—	20	2
Caspian Tern	—	—	31	9
Black Skimmer	—	—	—	67
Morning Dove	31	191	13	104
Ground Dove	2	—	—	3
Barn Owl	—	—	4	2
Screech Owl	—	1	—	1
Great Horned Owl	1	—	—	—
Barred Owl	3	1	1	1
Chuck-will's-widow	—	—	1	—
Whip-poor-will	—	—	3	—
Belted Kingfisher	3	11	42	3

## Christmas Bird Counts, Alabama, 1959 (continued)

SPECIES	A	B	D	M
Yellow-shafted Flicker	11	71	35	21
Pileated Woodpecker	2	26	—	—
Red-bellied Woodpecker	7	39	35	8
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	12	—	2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	23	14	3
Hairy Woodpecker	2	9	2	—
Downy Woodpecker	1	54	7	5
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	—	3	—	—
Eastern Phoebe	8	9	19	3
Horned Lark	—	10	—	—
Tree Swallow	—	—	716	25
Rough-winged Swallow	—	—	2	—
Blue Jay	8	142	102	37
Common Crow	35	99	6	114
Fish Crow	—	—	81	22
Carolina Chickadee	13	160	26	3
Tufted Titmouse	7	125	40	25
White-breasted Nuthatch	—	49	—	—
Red-breasted Nuthatch	—	3	6	—
Brown-headed Nuthatch	15	34	37	—
Brown Creeper	6	13	2	1
House Wren	—	2	18	2
Winter Wren	—	11	6	—
Bewick's Wren	—	2	—	1
Carolina Wren	13	93	47	16
Long-billed Marsh Wren	—	—	33	4
Short-billed Marsh Wren	—	6	38	2
Mockingbird	20	233	94	22
Catbird	—	1	3	1
Brown Thrasher	10	36	60	19
Am. Robin	145	344	950	516
Hermit Thrush	—	13	3	2
Eastern Bluebird	8	76	62	3
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	—	—	20	5
Golden-crowned Kinglet	14	85	54	24
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	16	56	54	52
Water Pipit	3	46	—	30
Cedar Waxwing	3	90	2	11
Loggerhead Shrike	6	23	24	5
Starling	20,312	5,114	20	809
White-eyed Vireo	—	—	—	2
Solitary Vireo	—	—	2	6
Orange-crowned Warbler	—	—	25	17
Parula Warbler	—	—	1	—
Myrtle Warbler	2	20	500	75
Pine Warbler	6	31	19	51
Palm Warbler	—	1	—	6
Common Yellowthroat	—	1	10	3
Yellow-breasted Chat	—	—	—	1
House Sparrow	41	402	30	135
Eastern Meadowlark	25	489	43	41
Western Meadowlark	—	1	—	—
Red-winged Blackbird	25,150	861	875	—
Rusty Blackbird	10,000	163	10	27
Brewer's Blackbird	—	—	45	36
Boat-tailed Grackle	—	—	—	52
Common Grackle	5,300	162	1,000	1,127
Brown-headed Cowbird	50,000	336	27	61
Cardinal	32	270	120	24
Purple Finch	—	49	1	4
Am. Goldfinch	78	400	50	21

## Christmas Bird Counts, Alabama, 1959 (continued)

SPECIES	A	B	D	M
Rufous-sided Towhee .....	25	275	165	29
Savannah Sparrow .....	25	101	5	210
Grasshopper Sparrow .....	—	1	—	—
Le Conte's Sparrow .....	—	2	—	—
Sharp-tailed Sparrow .....	—	—	34	3
Seaside Sparrow .....	—	—	12	2
Vesper Sparrow .....	—	11	—	34
Bachman's Sparrow .....	—	2	2	1
Slate-colored Junco .....	13	668	4	2
Chipping Sparrow .....	30	86	—	114
Field Sparrow .....	50	733	8	62
White-throated Sparrow .....	40	778	379	878
Fox Sparrow .....	2	34	—	—
Swamp Sparrow .....	9	181	122	3
Song Sparrow .....	6	195	4	6
Lapland Longspur .....	—	25	—	—
TOTAL SPECIES .....	68	89	117	134
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS .....	111,658	14,566	8,253	13,835
TOTAL SPECIES, ALL FOUR COUNTS:—171				

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\* Comments on the more unusual species recorded.—Reddish Egret: second winter record for Alabama (Dorn). Mottled Duck: 9th definite record for state (Dorn). Common Merganser: 3rd record for the Piedmont (Dusi), and 5th record for the Gulf Coast (Imhof), (one of the 5 latter records consists of a flock present from December to April 1959 on Dauphin Island). Spotted Sandpiper: 6th winter record for the state and the first one inland (Dusi). Knot: 2nd winter record for Alabama (Imhof). Pectoral Sandpiper: 2nd January record for Alabama (Tabor). Great Black-backed Gull: 2nd winter record for Alabama (Dorn). Chuck-will's-widow: 2nd winter record for Alabama, both on Dauphin Island (Holliman and Tabor). Whip-poor-will: now over 12 records in December, January, and February for the 2 coastal counties (Dorn and Gaillard). Rough-winged Swallow: 5th December or January record for Mobile County (Imhof and Imhof). Red-breasted Nuthatch: recorded in Alabama in 14 of the last 17 winters (since fall of 1943) and on the coast in 5 of the last 6 winters (since fall of 1954). Catbird: 4th winter record for Birmingham (Harden and Walker). Parula Warbler: 2nd winter record for Alabama, both males in live oaks in Bellingrath Gardens (Imhof). Yellow-breasted Chat: 3rd definite winter record for Alabama, 2nd for Mobile County (Dorn). Western Meadowlark: 1st record for the Birmingham area (Imhof and Crutcher), now definitely established as regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley, the Black Belt, and on the Gulf Coast. Grasshopper Sparrow: netting has helped to establish that species is regular in winter at Birmingham (Imhof). Le Conte's Sparrow: 4th winter recorded at Birmingham (Imhof). Lapland Longspur: 1st record for Birmingham Christmas Count, but established now as regular in winter south to the Black Belt.

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## LATE NEWS FROM THE FIRE ANT FRONT

(Excerpts from a paper presented at the National Audubon Convention, Nov. 10, 1959)

A full year has passed since our report on "The Hazards of Broadcasting Toxic Pesticides", summarized the dangers from the unwise scattering of toxic chemicals for pest control. It documented how the imported fire ant "eradication" program in the southeastern states was ill-conceived, unnecessary, poorly handled and extremely destructive to wildlife. Nothing that we have learned during the past year has caused us to modify these statements. Unfortunately, the fire ant program is still being conducted, and one and a quarter million acres have now been deluged with heptachlor or dieldrin, by federal and state control agencies.

No one can foresee the total harm which may result from this careless use of strong chlorinated hydro-carbon insecticides. We now know the seriousness of the more immediate results, but the residue of the chemical will remain in the soil for three to six, or more, years! What will happen to the insect larvae, the worms, the reptiles and amphibians, the rodents, and other life in the soil which form important food-chains that are essential to the ecology of the Southeast?

It seems probable that irreparable harm may result to the economy of the affected states, from Florida and Georgia westward to eastern Texas, where the fire ant program is centered. When this chemical is broadcast over hundreds of thousands of acres, a very serious mortality factor is added to the many other adverse factors facing most wild and domestic forms of animal life. Many species may not be able to persist under this added burden. When part of the vital foodchain of life is broken or weakened, a whole complex of related forms must suffer.

This disturbs all thinking conservationists and impels them, and us, to demand that the unwise broadcasting of toxic chemicals for control of the imported fire ant (and many other pests) be stopped. We favor local treatments to known infestations of pests as contrasted to the broadcast application.

The public has been alerted on the damage done to wildlife, to livestock, and to other organisms by reports and published results of the studies of biologists and other investigators. As a consequence many farmers and cattlemen are loath to sign up their lands for treatment, and communities are protesting the program in their areas. They should continue to do so, and particularly in the light of a new regulation of the Food and Drug Administration announced on October 27, 1959. This reduces the spray-residue tolerance for heptachlor and heptachlor epoxide on 34 fruits and vegetables from 0.1 part per million to ZERO. Included in this list of 34 is alfalfa, clover, and grass! How, then, can USDA and state agencies continue broadcasting of heptachlor on pasture and crop lands? For granules containing heptachlor (at 10% strength) do lodge upon alfalfa, clover, and grass where they may be eaten by grazing animals. Residue cannot be washed off fruits and vegetables, so they should not be subjected to heptachlor. The USDA knew this when they distributed a sheet of precautions and directions to persons whose properties are to be treated. These sheets contain a number of precautions, among which is, "Leafy vegetables in your garden, such as lettuce, cabbage, turnips, etc., should be covered prior to application of insecticides and then washed before eating."

Since the residue in the soil may wash into streams, ponds and even into public water supplies, medical and public health authorities are increasingly disturbed at the hazard to people. For heptachlor accumulates in the bodies of people as it does in the bodies of wild or domestic animals, birds, and other organisms. There is mounting evidence that these chemicals cause an increased incidence of various kinds of cancer, of some heart disease, and mental disturbances.

(Continued on Next Page)