

REGIONAL WINGBEATS

Livingston — On February 27, 1962 my feeding tray was visited by a new bird. I first identified the bird as a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak, but two things worried me; first the time of year and secondly, the fact that it was clear breasted. It did not occur to me that it might be a western bird until several days later. I then secured a copy of Peterson's "Guide to Western Birds" from the College Library and immediately found the picture of the bird that had visited my yard, —it was the female Black-headed Grosbeak.

On July 15, 1962 a pair of Barn Swallows in migration stopped on the south side of town and are still hanging around. On the same day, an estimated thousand Martins stopped on the northside of town and spent a few days. These are the earliest fall migration dates that I have ever observed for these two species.

Jenkins Jackson, 7/23/62

Grove Hill — We are busy preparing to leave on a trip to California so our report is brief. There were two reports of Robins nesting in Grove Hill this year. There seems to be a good hatch of Turkeys—one bunch had ten young.

George Carleton

Birmingham — February 26, 1962 a partial albino male Purple Finch (*Carpolacus purpureus purpureus*) appeared at the feeder. The white head, back and breast were covered with a pinkish wash. The tail and primaries were brown. The eye was dark, the bill and legs were flesh colored.

By July 18 Yellow-crowned Night Herons and Little Blue Herons could be seen at Lake Purdy. On July 22, the count was 2 adult Yellow crowned Night Herons, 2 immature Yellow-crown Night Herons, 16 immature and 4 adult Little Blue Herons and 10 Green Herons.

Harriett Wright

The Eastern Bluebirds appear to have had a very successful breeding season in Alabama, those breeding in the northern states are still below normal. Red-headed Woodpeckers were especially numerous as a breeder this year. This is probably due, in part, to more dead limbs and tree tops killed by our unusual cold winter.

White-throat Sparrows were last seen by me May 18. A pair of Screech Owls in our neighborhood produced at least two young.

Tom Imhof

Mobile — On June 29 5 immature White Ibis were found at the edge of a stream in Pinecrest Cemetery. On July 18 a flight of 8 settled in a marsh next to our Dog River home. They were seen frequently around our wharf feeding on fiddlers and Neritina, a glossy, olive-colored brackish-water snail. Last seen August 2, 1962.

Kathleen Y. Johnstone

Our Spring migration laster longer than usual this year. In mid-May there were still Hudson Curlew, Stilt-Sandpipers and many Bobolinks around Dauphin Island. Sighted on July 30 were approximately 100 Common Egrets, 185 Yellow-crowned Night Herons, 22 Black-crowned Herons, 35 White Pelicans and 150 White Ibis. On the same day a rookery of Least Terns and Black-Skimmers had eggs and young of all ages.

J. L. Dorn, S.J.

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge --

In sharp contrast with the nearly-dry conditions of 1961, Wheeler reservoir was overfilled by four flood stages during winter and early spring and remained bankful through late spring and summer. No rain fell from mid-April to Memorial Day, and May set a new record for high temperatures. June was mild with many showers, but July and August were hot and dry with thermometer readings sometimes soaring about the hundred degree mark, once to a 104-degree reading.

One of the most interesting experiences of this period came on a Saturday morning in early April when a wing-injured immature bald Eagle arrived in our front yard via State Conservation Officers Jack Tanner and Gordon Esslinger. The regal Eagle, though grounded, was far from subdued. It cackled defiantly, chased our beagle pup across the yard, ate greedily a canful of dog food offered it by young Tommy and finally arrived safely at the Birmingham Zoo through the good offices of Paul Robinson.

The spring shorebird flight brought some interesting records to Wheeler Refuge. There were Willets here on April 26, Black-bellied Plovers on May 22, and Ruddy Sandstones and White-rumped Sandpipers on May 24.

The most interesting observation of the period came on May 12 when David Hulse found two pair of Cattle Egrets nesting in a mixed Heron colony on the Swam Creek Public Hunting Area, a colony that also included 25 pairs of nesting Little Blue Herons, 12 pairs of Black-crowned Night Herons and 5 pairs of Snowy Egrets. The Cattle Egrets have spent the summer here in force with David Hulse and Paul Bryan reporting them in flocks up to 17 individuals from as far to the west as the Finley Island vicinity and

as far to the east as the Belle Mina vicinity. They remained at least until July 26 and never lost the reddish wash from heads and backs.

Jim, Keeler, Buddy English and Jack Tanner, visiting Wheeler Refuge on August 2, spotted a lone Mississippi Kite on the White Springs islands and a Black-bellied Plover in partial breeding plumage along the White Springs dike. David found Least Terns on July 14 and July 21 and a single Pinewoods Sparrow on July 23 and again on August 2.

Thomas Z. Atkeson, Jr.

Brownsboro (Huntsville) --

Our spring migration was a great disappointment. We noticed no waves of birds, and the Warblers we saw and heard did not linger. Our first migrant Warbler was a black and white on March 26. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers came on April 7, and the first Scarlet Tanager on April 8. On April 11, we had our last Purple Finches, and on April 14 our first Indigo Buntings, Prairie Warblers and Chuck-will's-widow. Several Whip-poor-wills were heard, and White-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos seen on April 15. On the 16th, we heard a Black-throated Green Warbler, caught a Ruby-throated Hummingbird in a mist net, saw a Wood Thrush, and saw an Anhinga in a blackberry patch on the side of our mountain. These were some of our firsts of the season. Yellow-breasted Chats started coming through on April 26. This was the only specie seen in greater than usual numbers. There seemed to be fewer Thrushes, Warblers, and Vireos and definitely fewer Flycatchers than we have had the past two years. We banded one Rose-breasted Grosbeak on May 8. This was the only one banded this spring, compared with 9 in 1961--all banded before May 8.

A record for the Tennessee Valley area was the adult male Connecticut Warbler netted and banded on May 20.

Our birding and banding have lagged this summer as a result of the dry weather and heat. We have maintained a small pool in the woods near the house. This is one of the few sources of water in the surrounding valley and has attracted birds from the varying habitats around us. The pool seems to have made more Wood Thrushes nest close by, and our feeders must be responsible for a rise in the Chickadee and Downy Woodpecker populations.

We hope we will have more of interest to write of the fall migration, but if dry weather was responsible for the birds passing us by this spring, we can't hope for many to stop this fall as this area is drier than it has been for years.

Margaret Robinson

The Bander's Corner

Birmingham

During the first 6 month of 1962, we banded 477 birds, using baited wire traps. 21 species are represented:

Mourning Dove	2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	Evening Grosbeak	52
Blue Jay	6	Purple Finch	165
Brown Thrasher	5	Cardinal	19
Mockingbird	5	Rufus-sided Towhee	35
Tufted Titmouse	10	Goldfinch	5
Carolina Chickadee	2	Slate-colored Junco	4
Robin	1	Chipping Sparrow	55
Pine Warbler	1	Field Sparrow	24
Myrtle Warbler	56	White-throated Sparrow	27
Summer Tanager	1		

Of the 27 returns, there were 1 Summer Tanager, a Titmouse, a Cardinal, a White-throated Sparrow, a Myrtle Warbler, and a Field Sparrow, each of which was 4 or more years old, and one Chickadee 7 years old. (Chickadee banded as an adult 6-2-56 and last seen 7-30-62).

D.O. and Harriet Wright

Jet Age Jay — A banded Blue Jay found April 1962 in Chatom, Washington County, Ala. was banded in New Jersey 8-14-61.

M. W. Gaillard

1962 Nature Camp Another Success

A total of 53 campers attended Blanche Dean's Nature Camp held June 7-14 at Cheaha State Park. The leaders of the Bird Section were three of our able A.O.S. members, Blanche Chapman, Idalene Snead and Cecil Hornady. An excellent list of 81 species of birds was identified and studied by this enthusiastic group. The high spot of each day was the song of the Oven Bird heard just at dusk.

Other group leaders were Judge William Bibb--Indian Lore; Amy Mason--Flowers; Ruth Brabston--Insects; Clustie McTyeire--Mushrooms; Bob Ham--Trees; Blanche Dean, the originator of Nature Camps in Alabama, led the Fern Group.

We all feel this was an interesting and worthwhile effort in the field of Conservation.