

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY, 1968

Thomas A. Imhof

Only recently have the 1968 breeding bird survey totals been available. In 1966 we ran 40 of the 41 routes in Alabama, in 1967, 37 routes, and last year only 32 of them. We hope this improves considerably in 1969.

The ranking of the 30 most numerous species counted on the surveys in Alabama for the three years is shown below.

1966	1967	1968
1. Bobwhite	Cardinal	Cardinal
2. Cardinal	Mockingbird	Mockingbird
3. Mockingbird	Com Grackle	Bobwhite
4. House Sparrow	Bobwhite	Com Grackle
5. Com Grackle	House Sparrow	Red-winged Blackbird
6. Com Crow	Red-winged Blackbird	Blue Jay
7. Mourning Dove	Mourning Dove	House Sparrow
8. Blue Jay	Blue Jay	Mourning Dove
9. Red-winged Blackbird	Indigo Bunting	Com Crow
10. Indigo Bunting	Com Crow	Indigo Bunting
11. R-s Towhee	E Meadowlark	R-s Towhee
12. E Meadowlark	Starling	E Meadowlark
13. Starling	R-s Towhee	Purple Martin
14. Yellow-br Chat	Yellow-br Chat	Starling
15. Purple Martin	Purple Martin	Yellow-br Chat
16. Chimney Swift	Chimney Swift	Carolina Wren
17. Wood Thrush	Wood Thrush	Chimney Swift
18. Carolina Wren	Field Sparrow	Orchard Oriole
19. Orchard Oriole	Carolina Wren	Wood Thrush
20. Field Sparrow	Orchard Oriole	Field Sparrow
21. Yellow-b Cuckoo	Tufted Titmouse	Tufted Titmouse
22. White-eyed Vireo	Yellowthroat	Red-bellied Woodp
23. Red-bellied Woodp	Red-bellied Woodp	Yellowthroat
24. E Kingbird	White-eyed Vireo	Fish Crow
25. Yellowthroat	Br-h Cowbird	E Kingbird
26. Tufted Titmouse	E Kingbird	White-eyed Vireo
27. Brown Thrasher	Brown Thrasher	Car Chickadee
28. Robin	Robin	Br-h Cowbird
29. Blue Grosbeak	Car Chickadee	Gr Crested Flyc
30. Car Chickadee	Blue Grosbeak	Brown Thrasher

THE SEASON FALL 1968

Compiler and Editor—Thomas A. Imhof

The following tentative schedule is proposed:

Fall Season (September-October-November) deadline for copy 10 December.

Winter Season (December-January-February) deadline for copy 10 March.

Spring Season (March-April-May) deadline for copy 10 June.

Summer Season (June-July-August) deadline for copy 10 September.

The consolidated report below has the advantage of comparing records of the same species in various parts of the state. Please note that it uses records whose parts are: (1) species properly identified, (2) date, (3) locality, (4) observer, (5) number of birds, and (6) significance. The first four must be present, otherwise we cannot use it. If you have any suggestions or criticisms, by all means please contact the Season Editor. If your part of the state or your records are not included, it is up to you to do something about it.

Fall Report—In Alabama generally it was cool and dry all fall. The coolness was due rather to lack of very high temperatures than to some very low ones. Rainfall was low enough to provide good shorebird habitat for Birmingham observers. Mobile at October's end had less than 50% of its normal annual rainfall—a deficiency of over 30 inches!

Possibly the highlight of this fall was the invasion of the state by birds of the northern coniferous forest that do not come this far south in numbers every year—Red-breasted Nuthatch, Evening Grosbeak, Pine Siskin.

Loon, Ibis—A Com. Loon on Lake Oliver, Chattahoochee R. on 21 Oct. (LAW) is earliest for the Piedmont. The report of two pairs of Glossy Ibises—no white on face—photographed nesting in cactus on an island in Mobile County in June (MWG) is the first known breeding of dark ibises between Louisiana and peninsular Florida. This hiatus also exists in the breeding range of Sandhill Crane, Burrowing Owl, Mottled Duck, Painted Bunting, and others, so it is difficult to see why only the dark ibises have evolved two distinct species, Glossy and White-faced.

Waterfowl—Geese arrived early at Wheeler, Canadas on 11 Sept. and Blues and Snows on 2 Oct., near early dates. Arrivals "lagged during October and most of November, though these began to level off in late November" (TZA). At close of period Wheeler was short 10% of the geese present at the same time and place last year (TZA). Due apparently to drought on the Canadian nesting grounds, ducks at Wheeler were 30% off from last year (TZA). At Lake Purdy near Birmingham, a Pintail on 15 Sept. (JNC, HHW, HHK) and an Am. Widgeon on 28 Sept. (JNC, HHK) are earliest for the Mountain Region. Widgeon were particularly numerous at Wheeler (TZA), and at Eufaula Refuge on 19 Oct. it and the Shoveler were the commonest ducks (TAI, DH, et. al.) The Shoveler, however, was considered scarce at Wheeler. A Canvasback at Mobile on 4 Oct. (MWG, JLD, GMM) is by two weeks the earliest for Alabama. Early Lesser Scaup were at Eufaula Refuge on 19 Oct. (TAI, et. al.) and at Mobile on 4 Oct. (MWG, JLD, GMM) earliest for state by 3 days. Many of the waterfowl that used to winter in Mobile Bay are now reported to remain all