

CONTENTS

1973 Christmas Counts	
Robert R. Reid, Jr. . . . .	3
Red Crossbill Winter	
Helen Thigpen . . . . .	8
Bander's Corner	
James V. Peavy, Jr. . . . .	9
The Seasons, Winter & Spring (Dec. 1973 - May 1974)	
Thomas A. Imhof . . . . .	10
AOS Spring Meeting	
James V. Peavy, Jr. . . . .	15
Announcement of Fall Meeting . . . . .	15
In Memorium, Blanche Evans Dean . . . . .	16

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE STAFF

Editor: Wm. R. Maner, P. O. Box 74005, Mountain Brook, Alabama 35223

Seasonal Editor: Thomas A. Imhof, 1036 Pike Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35218

Counts Editor: Robert R. Reid, Jr., 2616 Mountain Brook Parkway, Birmingham, Alabama 35223

Bander's Corner Editor: James V. Peavy, Jr., 5205 Beacon Drive, Birmingham, Alabama 35210

Field Notes Editor: Donald Hulsey, Route 3, Box 682, Trussville, Alabama 35173

1973 CHRISTMAS COUNTS FEATURE NORTHERN  
VISITORS AND LINGERING SUMMER RESIDENTS

Undoubtedly the most outstanding event recorded on the 13 Christmas Counts reported to Alabama Birdlife for the 1973 Christmas season (which included two counts at Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge--one on Dec. 22 and the other on Jan. 6) was the invasion of Red Crossbills. This nomadic finch was reported by three field parties at Birmingham for a state record in abundance of 55, and a group of 6 was sighted at Jacksonville. The Red Crossbill is not new to Alabama (see Imhof, Thomas A., Alabama Birds (1962): 540-41); but there have not been many observations until recently (see Imhof, "The Season, Fall 1972 and Spring 1973," Alabama Birdlife, Vol. 20, p. 16, Vol. 21, p. 14). However, during the winter of 1973-74, the bird appeared in relative abundance in the Mountain Region. Illustrative of its nomadic nature is that banding indicates the influx may have been of two races--the race minor, which is the eastern subspecies inhabiting places as far south as the Great Smokies (and the one that might normally be expected here when the bird does invade Alabama), and the race sitkensis, which is smaller and duller in coloration, breeds in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, and on rare intervals occurs in the East (see Peterson, Roger Tory, A Field Guide to the Birds (1934): 210; and also the article by Helen B. Thigpen, "The Season, Winter 1973-74" and "The Banders' Corner" in this issue).

The single Black Scoters at Gulf Shores and Bay County were another northern species that is reasonably rare in our area in the winter. Other notable northern visitors were the Short-eared Owl at Dauphin Island (the fourth winter and latest Ala. Gulf Coast record for the species) and the Rough-legged Hawk at Marion.

The Gulf Shores count, held on Dec. 31, featured Fairly Chandler's New Year's Eve party, expertly hosted by our distaff counters from Pensacola and Birmingham, and a noteworthy southern visitor, the third Ala. winter record for a Magnificent Frigate-bird.

From the West, observers at Marianna were treated with a male Vermilion Flycatcher--a rare western visitor in winter that has not been seen too often recently on the coast and, when appearing, has usually been a female or immature rather than the male with his brilliant red plumage. Other western visitors included the White-winged Doves (3) at Mobile and Lincoln's Sparrows (primarily a western species) at Dauphin Island (3) and Gulf Shores (2).

Doubtless the mild winter contributed to many summer residents remaining on the coast. Most significant in this category were the Indigo Bunting seen at Bellingrath Gardens on the Dauphin Island count (a male in mottled plumage), a male Summer Tanager within the count week at Marianna, a male Hooded Warbler at Bay County and two Yellow-breasted Chats at Ft. Morgan. Other summer residents that are rare to uncommon on the coast in winter included Black-and-White Warblers at Gulf Shores and within the count week at Mobile, the record number of 12 Yellow-throated Warblers at Bay County with others reported on or within the count week of the Mobile, Gulf Shores and Marianna counts, and White-eyed Vireos on six counts, including a high of 5 at Gulf Shores (an Ala. Gulf Coast winter record) and 1 inland at Eufaula Refuge on its Dec. 22 count. Also of interest was a hummingbird that may have been a lingering summer Ruby-throat or a visiting western Rufous within the count week at Bay County.

Baltimore Orioles have recently been appearing in greater numbers on Christmas Counts in the Southeast, and this year they were reported on two counts

in the AOS area--2 on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count and 1 at Pensacola where also was seen 1 Bullock's Oriole, a winter visitor from the West and the third known observation for NW Fla. Thus, at Pensacola, both of the birds now considered by the AOU as races of the Northern Oriole were recorded.

Perhaps the mild winter might also have accounted for the large number of counts on which certain of the wading birds appeared. The White Ibis was reported on five counts, with a high of 9 at Pensacola and one inland on the Jan. 6 Eufaula Refuge count. Single Green Herons were reported on four counts, including one inland at Birmingham (its second winter record), and the Cattle Egret on five with a high of 26 on Dauphin Island. A Little Blue Heron was also found inland on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count, and single Least Bitterns appeared at Gulf Shores and within the count week at Bay County. The American Bittern, a more northerly wader, was reported on six counts, with a high of 4 at Bay County and inland both on the Eufaula Refuge counts (3 on Dec. 22 and 2 on Jan. 6) and at Jacksonville (1). Bay County also reported 38 Am. (or now called Great) Egrets for a NW Fla. Christmas Count record and 10 Black-crowned Night Herons (while 9 of the latter were seen inland on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count). The Yellow-crowned Night Heron might be expected to be rarer in winter since it is the more southern of the two night herons, but 7 were reported at Pensacola for its fourth consecutive Christmas Count record and 2 at Bay County. Notable also in the wading bird category were the Reddish Egrets--2 at Dauphin Island and 1 at Ft. Morgan.

In the category of species endangered from persistent pesticide residues, 42 Brown Pelicans were noted at Bay County for a recent NW Fla. record; however, the 20 at Dauphin Island was a decline from its 1972 Christmas Count. In this same category, immature Bald Eagles were noted within the count weeks at Wheeler and Eufaula Refuges (as well as one on the Jan. 6 count at the latter), an Osprey on the Bay County count, a Peregrine Falcon at Gulf Shores, and single Merlins (or Pigeon Hawks) on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count and within the count week at Bay County. The Am. Kestrel was generally down in numbers throughout the area although reported on all 13 counts.

Other coastal notables were an immature Broad-winged Hawk at Pensacola, a Limpkin at Marianna (perhaps wandering westward from Wakulla Springs although Marianna has good cypress swamp habitat in the Chipola River area), a Chuck-will's-widow at Mobile and a Whip-poor-will at Pensacola. Bellingrath Gardens was productive for the Dauphin Island count since it, in addition, yielded a White-breasted Nuthatch, a rarity on the Gulf Coast. In the sparrow and related seed-eaters category, Pensacola reported a Dickcissel, Gulf Shores had 3 Grasshopper Sparrows (which were also reported on both counts at Eufaula Refuge), Gulf Shores and Dauphin Island had single LeComte's Sparrows, and there was a Henslow's within the count week at Gulf Shores. Rounding out the list of significant coastal observations were Anhingas (which are rarely noted on our Christmas Counts) at Marianna (2) and within the count week at Bay County, a Rough-winged Swallow at Bay County, and a phalarope within the count week there, doubtless either a Northern or Red, which observers will attest are difficult to distinguish in winter plumage. The Sandhill Crane flock was again at Gulf Shores with a count of 23, and 13 Am. Avocets were recorded on the Mobile count for their tenth out of its last eleven Christmas Counts. Species that normally do not winter as far south as the coast, being rare or uncommon there, included a Bewick's Wren at Gulf Shores, White-crowned Sparrows at Gulf Shores (10) and Pensacola (1), and a Fox Sparrow within the count week at the latter.

Noteworthy inland observations included the Whistling Swan within the count week at Wheeler Refuge for three of its last four Christmas Count periods,

Oldsquaws within the count weeks at both Wheeler and Birmingham, Dunlin on both Eufaula Refuge counts (6 on Dec. 22 and 2 on Jan. 6), 7 Short-billed Dowitchers on the Dec. 22 count there, 4 Tree Swallows at Marion, a House Wren at Wheeler Refuge (it not usually being found that far north in winter), and 2 Palm Warblers there (where until last year the bird had not been recorded recently during the winter season). Brewer's Blackbirds were reported from Wheeler (3--where they are uncommon and local in winter), from Birmingham (25--where they are even rarer, this being the second Christmas Count record), and from Marion (505--where the prairie pasture habitat is more like their western homes).

Waterfowl were down in number, especially on the coast. This appears to be due partly to a general decline in numbers and partly to so-called "short-stopping" by feeding programs in more northern areas. Exceptions were recent records for Lesser Scaup at Bay County (2325) and Red-breasted Mergansers at Pensacola (828). The white phase of the Snow Goose also seems to have done reasonably well with a Tenn. Valley record of 233 at Wheeler Refuge and good numbers of 16 at Bay County, 12 at Gulf Shores, 11 at Ft. Morgan and 8 on the Jan. 6 Eufaula Refuge count. Bay County also recorded a high Christmas Count number of 36 Wood Ducks, our only generally resident duck.

In the category of birds of the marsh and shore, some terns that normally winter farther south still appeared, as they often do, in the AOS area. These included a Gull-billed Tern within the count week at Bay County and Sandwich Terns at Dauphin Island (3), Gulf Shores (1) and within the count week at Bay County. Recorded in high numbers at Dauphin Island were the Royal Tern (439) and Black Skimmer (348) for second highest Gulf Coast winter records. Piping and Snowy Plovers are, because of diminishing beach habitat, included on the "Blue-List" of species not yet endangered but whose numbers are reported on the decline (American Birds (1973), 27(6):943). On the 1973 AOS counts, Pippings were found on or within the count week of five counts, but with a high of only 5 at Dauphin Island, and Snowys on three with a high of 7 at Gulf Shores. Only one Am. Oystercatcher (also on the "Blue-List") was found, it being at Dauphin Island. However, abundance records were set for the Great Blue Heron at Wheeler Refuge (94 for a Tenn. Valley winter record), Bonaparte's Gull on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count (223 for an inland record), Ring-billed Gull also on that count (191 for an inland record outside the Tenn. Valley), Killdeer at Gulf Shores (772 for a second high for the AOS area), and Black-bellied Plover at Bay County (88, the most in almost a decade on an AOS Christmas Count). Bay County also had high numbers of gulls--1051 Herrings (a Gulf Coast count record), 921 Ring-bills and 957 Laughings. Spotted Sandpipers had a good year, being recorded on eight counts, including inland observations of single birds at Wheeler Refuge and Birmingham and a high count of 12 at Pensacola. The Virginia Rail seems also to have done well on the Christmas Counts with 9 at Gulf Shores, 8 at Bay County and 2 inland on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count.

Other non-passerine abundance figures were: Common Loon--364 at Pensacola for a NW Fla. record; Horned Grebe--509 at Gulf Shores for the highest recent Gulf Coast record; Double-crested Cormorant--1210 at Ft. Morgan for the second highest Gulf Coast record; Black Vulture--171 at Marion for the second highest AOS area record, 91 at Marianna for a Gulf Coast record, 56 at Dauphin Island, setting a Christmas Count record for the Ala. Gulf Coast, and 37 at Jacksonville for a Mt. Region record; Marsh Hawk--the sizable number of 29 on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count; Com. Ground Dove--the high number of 36 at Bay County; Belted Kingfisher--58 there for an AOS area record; and Yellow-shafted (Com.) Flicker--246 at Birmingham, also for an AOS area record. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers did well this winter with an inland record being set at Marion (50) and regional records at Birmingham (46) and Wheeler Refuge (35); and, as all observers have noted, the Mourning Dove is becoming more numerous in urban areas as evidenced by the almost 1400 recorded at Birmingham. In addition, for the second straight year, energetic nighttime

observing resulted in high counts of Screech Owls at Birmingham (25) and Gulf Shores (15).

The first Christmas Count at Marion in over a decade set an AOS area record in abundance for the Water Pipit (597) and Coastal Plain records for Cedar Waxwing (1475), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (183), Hermit Thrush (26), and Winter Wren (16). Other passerine abundance figures included: Eastern Phoebe--38 on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count for an AOS area winter record; Tree Swallow--the large number of over 1100 at Mobile; Blue Jay--735 at Birmingham for an AOS area Christmas Count record; Crows--4373 Fish and 1265 Common at Marianna for AOS area and Gulf Coast records, respectively; House Wren--38 at Ft. Morgan for an AOS area winter record; Carolina Wren (said to inhabit practically every brushy area in the Southeast)--300 at Birmingham for an AOS area record with 108 at Marion and 95 at Gulf Shores for Upper Coastal Plain and Gulf Coast records, respectively; Long-billed Marsh Wren--39 on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count for an inland record; Com. Mockingbird--352 at Birmingham for an AOS area Christmas Count record; Brown Thrasher--112 also at Birmingham for the same; Myrtle Warbler--over 1900 at Gulf Shores; Rusty Blackbird (which observers reported to have been present this winter in larger numbers than usual)--259 at Marianna for a Gulf Coast record; Com. Grackle--a relatively large roost for the Gulf Coast estimated at over 7500, also at Marianna and being a record for that area; Cardinal--694 at Birmingham for an AOS area record at that time, with 460 at Wheeler Refuge and 366 at Marion for Tenn. Valley and Coastal Plain records, respectively; Savannah Sparrow--548 on the Jan. 6 Eufaula Refuge count for an AOS area record; Slate-colored Junco (now considered by the AOU as a race of the virtually all-inclusive "Dark-eyed Junco")--2157 at Birmingham, also an AOS area record, with 414 at Marion (highest for the Coastal Plain); White-throated Sparrow--1621 at Birmingham for an inland record; and Swamp Sparrow--426 on the Dec. 22 Eufaula Refuge count for the same.

This was the "echo" year for the Evening Grosbeak following the winter invasion of 1972-73. However, this species was reported on only two counts--20 in Birmingham and 6 in Jacksonville, relatively small numbers when compared with the previous year. On the other hand, it was noted within the count week as far south as Pensacola and Marianna, thus making observations on or within the count week of 4 of the 13 counts as compared with 5 of 11 the previous Christmas season. Although another species from the northern forests, the Red-breasted Nuthatch, was virtually absent during the winter of 1973-74, the Pine Siskin did well with the 234 at Birmingham setting an AOS area record.

On the 1973 counts, a record total of 196 species were recorded and 5 additional ones during the weeks of the counts (the full count period being Dec. 15 through Jan. 1). Complete tabulations of all species on counts conducted during that period will appear in Vol. 28, No. 2 of American Birds (now incorporating Audubon Field Notes), which will be received by all participants in those counts. Therefore, in order to avoid duplication, a complete tabulation of only counts not held during that period will be set forth following this article. A summary of the above 13 Christmas Counts conducted in the AOS area is as follows:

**CORRECTION--**In last issue's article on the Breeding Bird Survey, Alabama Birdlife, 21:8-10, two species were omitted. The Pine Warbler, 4.14 average birds per route and Prairie Warbler, 4.11 birds per route should appear in paragraph A immediately following the Chipping Sparrow. This means then that 63 species were recorded one or more birds per route and that the total species recorded on the seven years of the Breeding Bird Survey in Alabama is 160.

--T. A. Imhof

Count and Compiler	Species (a)		Total Individuals	Participants	Parties	Party-Hours
	On Count	Within Count Week				
Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge (John A. Dougherty)	96	100	101,197	34	6	61
Birmingham (Thomas A. Imhof)	90	94	44,704	54	13	122
Jacksonville (C. William Summerour)	61	62	5,865	10	2	13
Marion (James V. Peavy, Jr.)	92	92	50,272	14	4	48
Eufaula Wildlife Refuge (Dec. 22) (Mike Fuller)	110	113	13,817	17(b)	8	94
Eufaula Wildlife Refuge (Jan. 6) (Julian L. Dusi)	92	94	3,584	14	--	17
Mobile (Richard E. Hayward, Jr.)	134	135	18,498	11	7	45
Dauphin Island (M. Wilson Gaillard)	127	127	9,002	18	8	53
Ft. Morgan (P. Fairly Chandler)	97	97	7,657	6	4	27.5
Gulf Shores (P. Fairly Chandler)	128	135	36,874	21	8	76
Pensacola (Curtis L. Kingsbery)	115	120	15,801	35(b)	9	83
Marianna (Marion W. Gray)	82	88	18,719	11(b)	5	32
Bay County (Panama City) (Donald P. Scott)	130	140	13,936	25(b)	10	88

(a) Species combined in the 1973 revision of the AOU checklist are treated separately in this article because reported separately on Christmas Counts.  
 (b) Additional observers at feeders.

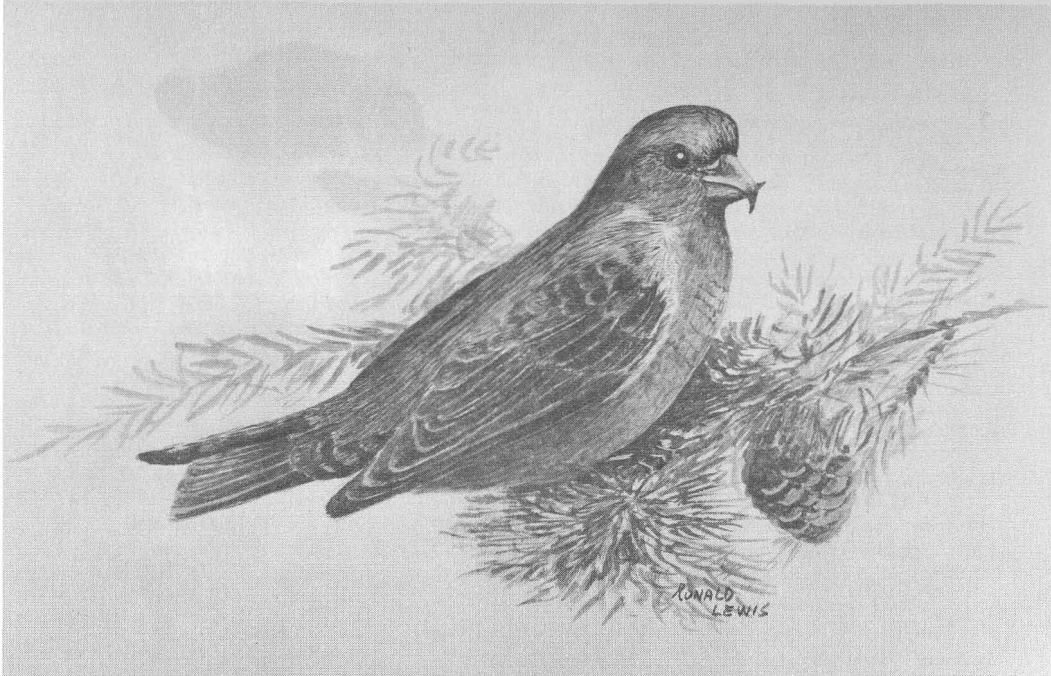
Robert R. Reid, Jr.  
Counts Editor

2616 Mountain Brook Parkway  
Birmingham, Alabama 35223

Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge (incl Chattahoochee R., sloughs managed for waterfowl, and Cowhee and Wylance Creeks--count limited to refuge area): Jan. 6: 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Overcast except cleared during noon hours; temp. moderate; wind light and variable; 55 party-miles (51 by car, 3 on foot, 1 by boat). Participants: Neva Brunton, Sue Chambliss, Julian L. Dusi (compiler), Rosemary T. Dusi, Ted Ellis, Pat Hagan (ass't refuge manager), Ed Jones, Marjory D. Lyons, Jackie and Ron McKittrick, Harriett and Tom Meadows, and Ann and Lucy Tyrrell.

Pied-billed Grebe-1; Great Blue Heron-75; Great (or Am.) Egret-19; Am. Bittern-2; White Ibis-1; Canada Goose-194; Snow Goose-8; Blue Goose-35; Mallard-382; Black Duck-2; Gadwall-4; No. Pintail-36; Am. Wigeon (or Baldpate)-9; No. Shoveler-50; Wood Duck-13; Ring-necked Duck-353; Canvasback-50; Lesser Scaup-2; Rufflehead-34; Ruddy Duck-6; Hooded Merganser-9; Turkey Vulture-6; Black Vulture-18; Red-tailed Hawk-9; Red-shouldered Hawk-1; Bald Eagle-1; Marsh Hawk-10; Am. Kestrel (or Sparrow Hawk)-6; Bob-white-6; Am. Coot-197; Killdeer-24; Com. Snipe-4; Greater Yellowlegs-5; Lesser Yellowlegs-2; Least Sandpiper-7; Dunlin (or Red-backed Sandpiper)-2; Ring-billed Gull-59; Bonaparte's Gull-1; Mourning Dove-80; Com. Ground Dove-3; Screech Owl-1; Great Horned Owl-2; Barred Owl-3; Belted Kingfisher-7; Yellow-shafted (Com.) Flicker-12; Pileated Woodpecker-5; Red-bellied Woodpecker-9; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker-2; Hairy Woodpecker-6; Downy Woodpecker-5; Red-cockaded Woodpecker-1;

Eastern Phoebe-9; Blue Jay-70; Com. Crow-13; Fish Crow-9; Carolina Chickadee-26; Tufted Titmouse-20; Brown-headed Nuthatch-5; Carolina Wren-21; Long-billed Marsh Wren-5; Short-billed Marsh (or Sedge) Wren-3; Com. Mockingbird-10; Brown Thrasher-3; Am. Robin-52; Hermit Thrush-10; Eastern Bluebird-5; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher-1; Golden-crowned Kinglet-14; Ruby-crowned Kinglet-37; Loggerhead Shrike-10; Com. Starling-59; Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warbler-15; Pine Warbler-3; Com. Yellowthroat-3; House Sparrow-3; Eastern Meadowlark-121; Red-winged Blackbird-130; Com. Grackle-46; Cardinal-28; Purple Finch-11; Pine Siskin-4; Am. Goldfinch-24; Rufous-sided Towhee-31; Savannah Sparrow-548; Grasshopper Sparrow-1; Vesper Sparrow-54; Slate-colored (Dark-eyed) Junco-7; Chipping Sparrow-150; Field Sparrow-46; White-throated Sparrow-46; Swamp Sparrow-12; and Song Sparrow-140. Within count week: Green-winged Teal, and Blue-winged Teal.



## RED CROSSBILL WINTER

Helen Thigpen

Certain participants of the Christmas bird count sat eagerly awaiting Tom Imhof's tally of the American Goldfinch, so they could reveal what they expected to be the surprise write-in of the day--Red Crossbills. It was an even greater sensation than they had anticipated, for two parties reported them near Lake Purdy (one saw a flock of 30), while another party had previous sightings from the Vestavia area.

Thus began "Red Crossbill Winter" and numbers of Birmingham birders took advantage of this rare opportunity to observe these northern visitors frequently throughout the season. According to Tom Imhof's statistics, this is only the fourth winter in the last fifteen that they have been reported in the state and the second year recorded in Birmingham.

Red Crossbills were sighted December 24, 1973, feeding in Virginia pines on the south slope of Shades Mountain and were seen almost daily in that vicinity until mid-April. Seeds from the many Virginia pines in this area seem to have composed their principal diet, since they were only rarely seen feeding on other conifers. On a few occasions some appeared to be removing and eating small insects from twigs and buds of other trees, and on two occasions a female was observed eating sunflower seeds at a bird feeder.

At the time of the Crossbill's appearance in December and continuing through January into February, most of the days were overcast, with dense fog or rain. During this gloomy weather, the Red Crossbills sometimes fed on the lower branches only eight or ten feet from the ground and permitted human approach without alarm. But attempts at photography gave disappointing results, due to the fog and poor lighting. By the time photographic conditions improved, the Crossbills were feeding higher.

Except in very rainy weather, the birds made daily visits to one observer's bird bath, with as many as sixteen birds in it at one time.

Flocks of Pine Siskins were often associated with the Crossbills. The striking similarity of Pine Siskin and juvenile Red Crossbill plumage was demonstrated when Tom Imhof banded one of each on January 13, 1974. Helen Kittinger photographed them. The juvenile Crossbill probably hatched in October. One wonders if its nest was in the Bankhead Forest where Red Crossbills were known to be last winter and spring.

The measurements of this juvenile and seven adult males and females banded by Mr. Imhof at the same location in February indicate that they belong to one of the smaller Red Crossbill races, whereas one collected in Mississippi about 125 miles away was of a larger race.

The invasion seems to have been widespread, for sightings were reported from many areas--Walker County, Little River Canyon, Bankhead Forest, Rocky Ridge, Mountain Brook, Adamsville, Phenix City and Tannehill State Park.

The flocks were initially rather large (30 or more), but began diminishing in size until only 6 or 8 were usually seen together. Finally only one was reported at the annual spring bird count in Birmingham on April 27.

And so goodbye to the Red Crossbills for now, but the experience gained by many Birmingham birders during "Red Crossbill Winter" should guard against their next appearance going unnoticed.

## BANDERS' CORNER

James V. Peavy, Jr.

From a bird-banding point of view, this winter was a particularly exciting one. Early in the season the banders in the Birmingham area were treated to a visit from Dr. Val Nolan of Indiana State University. Dr. Nolan, along with two graduate students, came to Alabama to study wintering Juncos. With the help of local birders, especially Percy and Helen Thigpen, Harriett Wright, Bob Reid and Tom Imhof, Dr. Nolan was able to capture and band enough Juncos in three days to make his trip successful. At the same time those of us fortunate enough to be with him learned a great deal about the natural history of Juncos. In conjunction with the Junco study, Tom Imhof was netting birds at the Thigpen home and while there caught a Red Crossbill, the first ever banded in Alabama; later, he banded seven more. For more on Red Crossbills, see the article in this issue by Helen Thigpen.

For me the most exciting event of the winter occurred on February 3, 1974, when Tom Imhof, Ted Weems and I set out to band shore birds. The shore bird banding fell through because there were no birds to speak of when we reached our planned netting site. As we had already driven nearly 100 miles, Tom suggested that we check out a report he had received concerning a large flock of Purple Finches. So we drove on to Collirene, Ala. to look at an unharvested sorghum field. When we arrived we were astonished by the vast number of birds. We later estimated the Purple Finches alone numbered at least 5000, with many more birds of other species also feeding in one twenty-acre field. Quickly setting up our nets, we banded birds from 10:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. During this time we banded 380 Purple Finches, 14 Juncos, 8 Pine Siskins, 1 White-throated Sparrow, 12 Savannah Sparrows, 3 Field Sparrows, 13 Song Sparrows, 1 Vesper Sparrow and 1 Bobwhite for a total of 443 birds banded in eight hours. The only limit to the number of birds we could band was how fast we could remove them from the net and band them.

Another interesting bird banded this winter was a Western Tanager which I banded at Ft. Morgan on February 17.



THE SEASON, Winter-Spring

December 1973 through May 1974

Thomas A. Imhof, Editor

Winter weather was warm, especially January 13 to February 3 and about February 22 to March 5. Mobile reports its warmest January in 100 years; Birmingham the warmest in 24. Winter survival of small land birds, especially the half-hardy ones, was excellent! So many of them were noted in late February and March that it was often difficult to decide which were successful winterers and which early spring migrants. It must be remembered though that the warm weather of the Southeastern U. S. is not affecting the biological clocks of our summer and transient birds when still in Central America or beyond. Thus, the February Indigo Buntings near the coast are most likely successful wintering birds, but the March 16 Indigo in Birmingham could have been a spring migrant that made exceptional progress from the coast where the earliest arrival date is March 6. In short, this warm weather can move birds inland from the coast, but not from Central America to our coast.

Birds and vegetation were about a week or so early until about April 1, when they became about normal. Many cold fronts, including some that produced killer tornadoes, swept north Alabama. But, as often happens in spring near the coast, the warm, wet, maritime air slowed them down, twisted them into a north-south line, or stalled them altogether. This produced cloudy weather with frequent, occasionally heavy rains that averaged out our temperature as just below normal and precipitation as somewhat above normal. Water levels inland at end of period were high.

This spring, good birding in north and central Alabama was usually associated with rain and warm fronts. On the coast a few good birding days, March 22 to April 13, were followed after Easter (April 14) by unsettled weather, southeasterly winds, generally poor birding with a few bright spots such as May 26, and little birding effort.

MIGRATION PEAKS--On Dauphin about as follows: Mar. 22, Parula and Gnatcatcher; 26 & 27 (148 banded by REH & MEM), White-eyed Vireo, Parula, Prothonotary, Hooded, Indigo & Pine Siskin; Apr. 6, Orchard & Baltimore Orioles; Apr. 9, (61 banded by MEM), Wood & Swainson's Thrushes, Tanagers; Apr. 10, Wood Thrush; Apr. 13, Orchard Oriole & Eastern Kingbird; Apr. 23, Blackpoll & Cape May. On her 6-week visit to Dauphin in 1973, AGI got 200 species, this year 45 less! At Ft. Morgan Apr. 15-19 & Gulf Shores Apr. 15-16, JVP, HME, TAI & RDG banded 377 birds (average only 38 birds per bander per day); top species in order were White-eyed Vireo, Catbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush & Indigo Bunting.

COUNTS--On Dauphin, Apr. 13, 102 species, 22 observers (MBC).  
 On Dauphin, Apr. 19-21, 131 species (AOS), about 40 species short.  
 On Dauphin, May 4, 103 species, 13 warblers (MBC).  
 Birmingham, 10th Annual (BAS), Apr. 27, 48 observers, 151 party-hours, 140 species, 32 warblers; top birds, Blue Jay 1628, Mourning Dove 1101, Starling 1022, Cardinal 834, Mockingbird 635, Myrtle Warbler 553, Sora new (HHK).  
 Bankhead Forest, 4th Annual (BAS), May 11, 34 observers, 44 party-hours, 94 species, 27 warblers. The northern aspect of the forest is clearly shown by the following counts of Upper Austral (first) & Lower Austral species: Whip-poor-will, 80 & Chuck-will's-widow, 17; Black-throated Green Warbler, 16 & Yellow-throated Warbler, 17; Ovenbird, 22 & Kentucky Warbler, 72; Scarlet Tanager, 72 & Summer Tanager, 48.

Noteworthy records for the period follow (TV-Tennessee Valley, Mtr-Mountain Region, Pied-Piedmont, UCP-Upper Coastal Plain, LCP-Lower Coastal Plain, GC-Gulf Coast, CP-Coastal Plain (last 3 regions combined), rec-record):

Common Loon: May 29, Muscle Shoals (HHK, HBT, ALM), latest TV.  
 Wilson's Storm-Petrel: May 2, in Gulf (REH), 2nd rec Ala.  
 Brown Pelican: Max. 60, May 18, Sand I. (AB, RB, DN, GN).  
 Double-crested Cormorant: Apr. 23, L. Oliver, 2 (LAW), another inland rec.  
 Magnificent Frigate-bird: Dec. 31, Gulf Shores (JVP, LNP), 3rd winter rec.  
 Green Heron: Dec. 29, B'ham (MHP), 2nd winter rec north of CP.  
 Green Heron & Cattle Egret are now established as regular in winter on coast.  
 Cattle Egret: Mar. 12, Marion (JRB), earliest UCP.  
 Reddish Egret: At least 3 (2 Dauphin, 1 Gulf Shores) thru late Dec. (LRT, PFC mob).  
 Black-crowned Night Heron: Mar. 17, 6; Apr. 3, 1; Apr. 30, 4; Eufaula Ref. (JM).  
 Least Bittern: Dec. 31, Ala. Point (CLK mob), 4th winter rec Ala.; Apr. 27, Eufaula (WG, WM).  
 American Bittern: Apr. 30, Eufaula Ref. (JM), latest spring LCP.  
 White Ibis: May 11, Double Springs (TAI, JMI), 1st spring rec Mtr.

Whistling Swan: about Jan. 1, Wheeler, 2 immatures (Ferguson), occurring annually.  
 Fulvous Tree-Duck: about Dec. 1, Eufaula Ref. (fide LAW); Feb. 26 near Scottsboro, 3, 1 now specimen Dept. Cons. Coll. (JH); 1st winter recs Ala., 2nd & 3rd inland recs.  
 Gadwall: May 29, a pair, Muscle Shoals (HHK, HBT, ALM), ties latest Ala.  
 Pintail: May 20, female, Wheeler Ref. (DCH, JLW), latest Ala.  
 Green-winged Teal: Apr. 5, 4 & 19, 2 Wheeler Ref. (DCH), latest Ala. except GC.  
 Blue-winged Teal: May 29, 2 males, Muscle Shoals (HHK, HBT, ALM), latest TV except summer recs.  
 Shoveler: Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP), latest LCP.  
 Ring-necked Duck: Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP), latest LCP.  
 Ring-necked Duck: May 29, a female, Muscle Shoals (HHK, HBT, ALM), ties latest Ala. rec except sum.  
 Canvasback: Mar. 31, East L., B'ham (RRR), latest Mtr.  
 Greater Scaup: Apr. 18, St. Andrew's Bay near Ft. Morgan, male (JVP, many), latest Ala.  
 Bufflehead: May 2, a pair, Wheeler Ref. (DCH, JHG), only 1 later rec Ala.  
 Oldsquaw: First wk. Jan. 3 at Wheeler (CD) & max. of 4 Jan. 7 near B'ham (ALM, mob); Feb. 27, 3 at L. Lurleen (HHK, HBT); Mar. 18 to Apr. 1, 3 at Lee Co. Public L. (TF, RM), latest Pied; Apr. 17, Wheeler (HJ); none reported GC.  
 Black Scoter: Dec. 31, Alabama Point (GDJ mob); Mar. 29, Gulf Shores, 3 (PFC).  
 Red-breasted Merganser: May 28, Wheeler Ref. (DCH); latest Ala. except summer recs.

Hawks: 3 counts below in natural prairie of Central Alabama are a good indication of relative abundance, and, except for Black Vulture roost at Marion, about the same in birds per mile (compiler Marion--JVP, Montgomery routes in 5 counties by JEK).

	Date	Miles	TV	BV	SS	CP	RT	RS	RL	Marsh	Merlin	Kestrel	TOTAL
Montgomery vic.	1-23	119	8	2		1	33	1		1		8	72
Montgomery vic.	1-31	119	13	10			31	3		3	1?	11	54
Marion Chmas Count	12-23	207	30	171	2	2	22	4	1	8		21	262
Swallow-tailed Kite:	Mar. 4,	Dog R.,	Mobile,	chased by	F. Crows	(AG),	early.						
Mississippi Kite:	Apr. 25,	19 birds,	Mobile	(HG);	Apr. 29,	5 near	Dothan	(SP).					
Broad-winged Hawk:	Jan. 31	and Feb. 4,	Wheeler	Ref. (DCH),	1st winter	rec TV.							
Rough-legged Hawk:	Dec. 23,	Marion	(HHK);	Feb. 16,	B'ham	Airport	(GC);	Apr. 2,	Boligee	(RDB),	latest	Ala.,	total now 25 recs, species established as regular in winter in Ala.

Bald Eagle: Early Jan., adult & immature, Wheeler (CD); Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP).  
Osprey: Feb. 19, Bon Secour, 4 birds, 2 at nest (TAI).  
Peregrine Falcon: Feb. 2, 3, 5, Decatur (DCH); Apr. 16, Ft. Morgan (TAI, RDG); Apr. 20, Dauphin (AOS).  
Merlin: Feb. 10, Hatchechubee, Russell Co. (JM); Feb. 20, Gulf State Park, caught Myrtle Warbler in mid-air (TAI, PFC, others); June 2, B'ham downtown (RRR, JVP).  
Ruffed Grouse: 6 dates (Feb., Apr., Aug., Nov., Dec.), Skyline Mgmt. Area, Jackson Co., the only place in Ala. where species persists (except perhaps intro. birds in Bankhead) (WMan).  
King Rail: May 15 & 22, Montevallo (RJK, JLS, mob), rare north of Fall Line.  
Virginia Rail: Apr. 21 (4--MF, SP) & 28 (WG, WMat), Eufaula Ref., latest LCP; Apr. 30 - May 16, Wheeler Ref. (WCD, DCH).  
Black Rail: Feb. 19 (TAI), Mar. 29 (PFC) & Apr. 14 (TAI & RDG) 2 places, Gulf State Park; species now recorded on GC Feb. to June, Sept. & Oct., probably permanent resident.  
Purple Gallinule: Mar. 17, Eufaula Ref. (JM), earliest LCP; May 22, Montevallo (HHK, others).  
American Coot: May 20, 2 adults, 6 young, Huntsville (photo--DCH, others).  
American Oystercatcher: Apr. 16, Gulf State Park (TAI, RDG); probably resident in Baldwin Co.  
Semipalmated Plover: Apr. 23, 2, Phenix City (JM), earliest UCP.  
Piping Plover: Apr. 28, Eufaula Ref. (WG, WMat), 2nd inland spring rec.  
American Golden Plover: Feb. 19, 7 including flock of 5, Gulf Shores (TAI), earliest Ala.  
Black-bellied Plover: Mar. 28, 2, Apr. 12 & May 2, 2, Wheeler Ref. (DCH & JHG), earliest inland rec; Apr. 27, Eufaula Ref. (WG, WMat), 1st spring rec. except TV & GC.  
Common Snipe: Apr. 30, 2, Eufaula Ref. (JM), latest LCP.  
Solitary Sandpiper: Jun. 3, Marion (RRR, JVP), only Jun. rec Ala.; Max. 60, Apr. 24, Phenix City, Bussey's L. (JM); Mar. 22, Wheeler Ref., 2 (DCH, JLW), earliest TV.  
Pectoral Sandpiper: Jan. 10, 4, Weiss L., Cherokee Co. (WJC); Feb. 17, Eufaula Ref. (WG, SP), 3rd & 4th winter recs; June 3, Marion (RRR, JVP), latest Ala.; recs all 12 mos.  
Dunlin: Apr. 30, 14 birds, Eufaula Ref. (JM), latest LCP, 7th rec inland Ala. in spring.  
Short-billed Dowitcher: Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP), 1st spring rec LCP.  
Semipalmated Sandpiper: Feb. 28, 8, Swan Creek, Limestone Co. (DGH), 1st winter rec TV or earliest spring rec; May 26, 85, B'ham Airport (RRR), spring max. Mtr; June 2, B'ham Airport (RRR, JVP), latest Mtr.  
Western Sandpiper: Feb. 19, Gulf Shores, 700 in closely-packed flock (TAI), state max.; Apr. 24, 2, Wheeler Ref. (DCH), earliest TV; June 1, B'ham Airport (TAI), latest Mtr.  
Marbled Godwit: May 17, Wheeler Ref. (DCH), 5th inland rec, all spring, 3rd & latest TV.  
Glaucous Gull: Apr. 5-7, Dauphin I. (CM, TD, mob), 3rd spring GC.  
Ring-billed Gull: Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP), latest LCP.  
Laughing Gull: Apr. 20, L. Oliver (JM) 11 birds, regular spring Chattahoochee Valley.  
Bonaparte's Gull: Feb. 19, Gulf Shores & vic., 2750 (TAI), state max.  
Gull-billed Tern: Feb. 18, St. Andrew's Bay, near Ft. Morgan, 13 (TAI, PFC), winter max.  
Black-billed Cuckoo: May 25, Maud, Colbert Co. (TAI, HME), latest TV.  
Barn Owl: Apr. 24, Eufaula Ref., 2 (MF, SP).

Long-eared Owl: Feb. 17, Ft. Morgan (TAI, JVP, WRMa, TLW), 3rd & latest GC.  
Short-eared Owl: Nov. 20 - Dec. 15, Dauphin (REH, SBH), 4th & latest GC; Dec. 23, Marion, found dead (TAI, JMI).  
Chuck-will's-widow: Dec. 29, Mobile (JLDo); Feb. 17, 2 netted briefly, Ft. Morgan (JVP), 6th & 7th winter recs Ala.; Mar. 5, Dauphin (DB), ties earliest GC.  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Dec. 18, Mobile (FEB), 5th winter rec Ala.; Mar. 30, Lovick, B'ham (RRH, CL), early.  
Unidentified hummingbirds: Feb. 16 & Mar. 11, Dauphin (CMe, & LRT).  
Rufous Hummingbird: Jan. 27 to Feb. 28, Magnolia Springs (photo--PFC); Apr. 16-17, Ft. Morgan (TAI, JVP, HME), 4th & 5th recs Ala.

Eastern Kingbird: Apr. 5, Wheeler Ref. (DCH), earliest TV.  
Gray Kingbird: Apr. 13, Dauphin (MBC), earliest is Apr. 12.  
Western Kingbird: Mar. 30 (LRT) & Apr. 25 (DDN) Dauphin; Apr. 16 (TAI, others) Ft. Morgan.  
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: May 15, Dauphin (JMa), latest GC.  
Great Crested Flycatcher: Mar. 7, Spring Hill, Mobile (MAG), earliest Ala.  
Eastern Phoebe: Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP), latest LCP.  
Least Flycatcher: May 4, B'ham (JRB).  
Rough-winged Swallow: Mar. 9, Magnolia Springs (PFC), earliest GC.  
Barn Swallow: new breeding sites almost annually in almost every county north of Montgomery, especially Breeding Survey routes and Interstate bridges.  
Cliff Swallow: one or more new colonies each year, old ones getting bigger, but still confined to TV.  
Purple Martin: Feb. 9, a pair, Auburn (TF), early.  
Red-breasted Nuthatch: Dec. 16, 10 mi. north of Jasper (TF); Mar. 18, B'ham (PLT, HBT); occurs annually in Mtr even in off years such as this one.  
Long-billed Marsh Wren: Apr. 28, Eufaula Ref. (WG, WMat), latest LCP.  
Sprague's Pipit: May 29, Muscle Shoals (HHK, HBT, ALM), seen at very close range walking on ground, only known May rec outside the breeding range!  
White-eyed Vireo: Mar. 13, L. Purdy (ALM), earliest Mtr; 154, Apr. 27 (BAS), Ala. max.  
Solitary Vireo: at least 20 instances singing in Jan. & Feb. throughout state except TV.  
Prothonotary Warbler: Mar. 23, Choctaw Ref. (CLK, PFC, mob), earliest rec inland Ala.  
Swainson's Warbler: Apr. 8, 4, Turner, Shelby Co. (TAI, JVP), earliest Mtr.  
Worm-eating Warbler: May 10, Bankhead Forest, nest 4 eggs (HHK), 3rd egg rec Ala.  
Tennessee Warbler: Mar. 27, Dauphin, 2 (LRT), earliest Ala.; Apr. 4, Ensley, B'ham (TAI), earliest Mtr; Apr. 6, Newburg, Franklin Co. (GDJ), earliest TV.  
Orange-crowned Warbler: Apr. 21, netted, Phenix City (RAP, TAI), latest CP; May 11, Bankhead Forest (TAI, JMI), ties latest rec Ala.  
Nashville Warbler: May 11, Bankhead Forest (TAI, JMI), latest Ala. except TV.  
Parula Warbler: Mar. 3, Mobile (MWG), early.  
Yellow Warbler: Apr. 5, Wheeler Ref. (DCH), earliest TV; May 31, Dauphin (LRT), latest GC.  
Magnolia Warbler: May 26, Dauphin (SBH, REH), latest CP.  
Cape May Warbler: Mar. 27, Dauphin (REH), earliest Ala; Apr. 27, 22, B'ham (BAS), max. Mtr.  
Blackburnian Warbler: May 26, Dauphin (REH, SBH), latest CP.  
Yellow-throated Warbler: Feb. 16, Cropwell, St. Clair Co. (MLM), 2nd winter rec Mtr.  
Chestnut-sided Warbler: Apr. 9, Dauphin (HGS, AGT), earliest GC.  
Blackpoll Warbler: May 26, Dauphin (SBH, REH), latest CP.  
Louisiana Waterthrush: Mar. 9, Lovick, B'ham (DJH), earliest Mtr.  
Yellow-breasted Chat: Dec. 22, 2, Ft. Morgan (PFC, others), 3rd winter rec GC; Mar. 23 Choctaw Ref. (PFC, MRM), ties earliest Ala.  
Wilson's Warbler: Apr. 26, SUNA, B'ham (ALM), earliest Mtr.  
American Redstart: Mar. 26, Dauphin, banded (REH), earliest Ala. except UCP.

Blackbirds continue to increase; this year's features seem to be a relative increase in Rusties and in city flocks especially Birmingham, possibly due to excessive garbage.

Baltimore Oriole: continue regular at more and more feeders each winter all over Ala.

Western Tanager: Feb. 17, Ft. Morgan, banded & photo (JVP, others), 2nd winter rec Ala.

Scarlet Tanager: Apr. 6, Newburg, Franklin Co. (GDJ), ties earliest TV.

Summer Tanager: Dec. 9, Bellingrath Gardens (BW, JW), 2nd winter rec Ala.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Apr. 1, Magnolia Springs (PFC), earliest Ala.; May 25, Riverton, 2 (TAI, HME), latest Ala.

Black-headed Grosbeak: Feb. 23-24, Magnolia Springs (PFC), annual occurrence established.

Indigo Bunting: Dec. 23, Bellingrath Gardens (BW, JW); Feb. 2, Mobile (JTR, N); Feb. 19, Ft. Morgan (JVP, WRM, TLW); Feb. 28, Fairhope (AN, MN); Feb. 23-25, Magnolia Springs (PFC); Mar. 16, B'ham (RR), 2nd earliest inland rec.

Dickcissel: Dec. 24, Fairhope (LPA).

Evening Grosbeak: a few mostly near B'ham and Anniston.

Purple Finch: Feb. 3, Collirene, Lowndes Co., 5000, 382 banded (TAI, JVP, TLW), max. Ala.

Pine Siskin: 138, Apr. 27, B'ham (BAS); 50, Feb. 3, Collirene (TAI, others); 50, Feb. 16, Evergreen (TAI).

American Goldfinch: 1000, Feb. 16, Evergreen (TAI).

Red Crossbill: common in M&R, Nov. 18, Little River Canyon (NGB, MKP) to May 11, Bankhead Forest (TAI, JMI); max. 75, Jan. 3, B'ham (JRB); 9 banded in B'ham all small races possibly from Pacific Northwest (TAI, HBT, FLT, photo-HHK); Opelika, Feb. 6, 8 (JLDu) 1st rec Pied; Phenix City, 7 miles west, Mar. 3, 12 on Pinus glabra (JM), 3rd CP rec.

Savannah Sparrow: Apr. 27, 8-10, Choctaw Ref. (CLK, mob), latest LCP.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Apr. 21, Eufaula Ref. (MF, SP), latest LCP.

Henslow's Sparrow: Apr. 20, Phenix City, Bussey's L. (GOS), always noteworthy.

Bachman's Sparrow: May 25, 3, Thomas Wildlife Ref., Colbert Co. (TAI, HME), rare in TV.

Dark-eyed Junco: Apr. 27, Bluff Park, B'ham (TAI), latest M&R.

Fox Sparrow: Apr. 12, 3 & Apr. 25, Wheeler Ref. (DGH), all latest ever Ala.

Song Sparrow: May 21, Weiss L., Cherokee Co. (CWS), nest & eggs, photo, 1st egg rec Ala.

Lapland Longspur: Mar. 30-31, Cochrane Causeway, Mobile, male (JLD, mob) 2nd rec GC.

AOS SPRING MEETING

James V. Peavy, Jr.

This spring the AOS met at Dauphin Island. As usual this favorite place for Alabama birders attracted a good turnout of our membership, with over 100 persons registering for the meeting. The meeting was highlighted by the excellent seafood buffet served by the Dauphin Island Business Men's Association and the program presented by Dr. Ken Marion.

The beautiful weather we enjoyed during the meeting unfortunately did not contribute to the birding; even so, a good variety of spring migrants was observed, and most birders were treated to very good views of such favorites as Painted Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Prothonotary Warbler. One very successful field trip was the one led by Curtis Kingsbery to look at shore birds on the Island's west end. Almost everyone saw Seaside Sparrows, Dowitchers, Black Skimmer, Ruddy Turnstone, Gray Kingbird and others. In all, about 150 species were recorded for the meeting weekend.

While most members were out enjoying the fine weather and good birding, a few were closeted away in the marine resources lab. These were the members who make up the AOS slide collection committee. They were able to select several more slides to add to the Society's ever-growing and improving slide collection.

As usual, the spring meeting was the time for the changing of the AOS officers. At the Saturday night banquet, President Tuck Hayward turned the meeting over to Vice-President James Peavy, who is President for 1974-75. New officers elected were: Dr. Howard Einspahr - Vice-President; Helen Thigpen - Secretary; and Alwilda Bennett - Treasurer. Unfortunately, Mrs. Bennett will not be able to serve, so Roger Maner has been appointed Treasurer.

! ! ! AOS FALL MEETING ! ! !

Place:	Dauphin Island
Date:	October 11-13, 1974
Registration:	Friday evening and Saturday morning Marine Resources Lab

OBSERVERS--Alabama Ornithological Society, Lois P. Archer, Thomas Z. Atkeson, Birmingham Audubon Society, J. Russell Bailey, Naomi G. Banks, Raymond D. Bates, Don Bland, Fred E. Bowers, Ann & Robert Bucher, Wm. J. Calvert, Greg Carlisle, P. Fairly Chandler, Hetty Cunningham, Cecil Davis, W. C. Davis, J. L. Dorn, Temple Douglas, J. L. Dusi, Howard M. Einspahr, Mike Fuller, Tom French, Georgia Ornithological Society, Mary A. Gaillard, M. Wilson Gaillard, Arthur Garrett, J. H. Garrett, Rosemary Gaymer, Wm. Gibbs, R. E. & S. B. Hayward, John Heflin, Ruth R. Horsley, David C. Hulse, Donald J. Hulsey, John M. Imhof, Thomas A. Imhof, Greg D. Jackson, Harold Johnson, James E. Keeler, Curtis L. Kingsbery, Helen H. Kittinger, Ricky J. Kittinger, Christine Leake, Mobile Bird Club, Wade Manning, Wm. Matheny, Jimmy May, C. Mayhew, Mary Ruth McCracken, Ron McKittrick, W. Roger Maner, Cornelia Messer, Wm. R. Middleton, Ann L. Miller, James Miller, Margaret E. Miller, Mary Lou Miller, Dot D. & George Newburn, Albert & Mini Nonkes, Norris, Richard A. Parks, Sam Pate, James V. & Lee N. Peavy, Morton H. Perry, Margaret K. Persons, Elberta G. & Robert R. Reid, Rick Remy, Helen G. Schiel, C. Wm. Summerour, Jo L. Susenbach, Alice G. Tait, Helen B. & Percy L. Thigpen, Lib R. Toenes, Ted L. Weems, L. A. Wells, Beverly & John Winn, Joe L. Wright.

IN MEMORIAM

Blanche Evans Dean--May 31, 1974

AOS lost one of its most instrumental founders, first presidents and avid supporters in the passing of Blanche Evans Dean in May of this year. Biologist, conservationist and teacher, Blanche was renowned as Alabama's most prolific and one of her foremost authors of works on natural history, having recently co-authored the widely acclaimed Wildflowers of Alabama published last fall. Her other books include Let's Learn the Birds of Alabama, Trees and Shrubs in the Heart of Dixie, Ferns of Alabama and Happy Trails, works designed for students and lovers of birds, plants and the out-of-doors of all ages. Many are used as texts and reference works in schools and colleges for study both by amateurs and professionals.

Throughout her lifetime, Blanche urged all to discover and increase their knowledge of the wonders of the natural world about us. Who will forget the traditional early morning field trip to the Shell Mounds led by Blanche Dean at our spring meetings at Dauphin Island? This is but an illustration of her active interest that stimulated teachers, students and all who knew her to learn of the myriad facets of nature. As she had said, "The only way to learn anything is to go out there and see it," and of nature study, "It's the most contagious thing there is." Long before the need for nature education became known as it is today, Blanche was sounding the call in her books and classes for preservation of natural areas and the development of nature centers.

In 1967, she was cited by the National Audubon Society "for distinguished service in the field of conservation education," an award that at that time had been given to fewer than 20 persons and was presented to her by National Audubon's President Emeritus. She also gave generously of her time and many talents to and was honored by the Birmingham Audubon Society, The Alabama Conservancy, the Alabama Wildflower Society and many other groups. Having taught biology for over 30 years in the Birmingham City School System, she also conducted the Alabama State Outdoor Nature Camp for over 12 years, participated in marking numerous nature trails and promoting conservation projects, and served with the American Youth Foundation for over a decade and as Assistant Director of Camp Burgiss Glenn in North Carolina.

The flyleaf of one of her books states, "She sees in every tree, shrub, bird and flower an expression of God." To paraphrase some of her philosophy, "For the experiences of beauty and the joy of the open road, field and sky, bird and flower and tree, one needs only an open heart and eye and the interest to go a-roaming. . . . The joys are never-ending as the seasons and are as infinite as the stars; but as Thoreau says, 'Only that day dawns to which we are awake.'" Blanche gave a lifetime to awaken both her friends and others to an appreciation of the world around us; and, although she will be sorely missed, her active influence, through her works and her stimulating interest and enthusiasm, will long extend for the benefit of future generations. AOS is proud to have had her as one of its guiding lights. We know she will be greatly missed and extend our deepest sympathy to her family.