

## SIGHTING OF THE CURLEW SANDPIPER

Owen Fang

On Saturday morning 16 August 1980 at approximately 10:00 a.m., overcast sky, temperature about 82° F, wind from South at about 10 knots, a Curlew Sandpiper (Calidris ferruginea) in almost complete breeding plumage was observed by Owen Fang, Curtis Kingsbery, Don Richardson and Fred Wicke. The bird was observed at one time for about ten minutes at a distance of 50 feet within several feet of a Dowitcher and several Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The curved bill and the deep red brown color on the head, breast and belly made the identification unmistakable. This one observation was made with 7X35 and 10X50 binoculars and 20X and 35X scopes. All observations were made on the Eastern entrance to Perdido Bay across from Alabama Point near the edge of a large rain or tidal pool on the sand beach of the Gulf of Mexico.

The bird was then flushed and the white rump and tail observed. The tail appeared fanned out at the time of take off, and appeared to me white and sparsely flecked starting near the rump and distributed throughout the tail. I did not observe any black terminal band, but one observer did. If anyone reading this report has access to skins and/or has a good description of the upper tail markings of this species in breeding plumage, a report would be appreciated by me as well as the other observers.

After the bird was observed a second time in another spot one observer saw it flying around and then take off in a Westerly direction gaining altitude as it flew away.

It appears that this is the first fall record for the Alabama Gulf Coast. A previous sighting was made by T. A. Imhof in March of 1949 and another

sighting was made on 28 April 1972 by J. R. Bailey and J. F. Harsh.

Owen E. Fang  
4731 Hurow Drive  
Pensacola, FL 32507

GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS BREED IN  
LOWNDES COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Douglas Branch McNair

Grasshopper Sparrows (Ammodramus savannarum) nested in Mississippi at Golden Triangle Airport, Lowndes County in 1980. There are few breeding season reports for Mississippi. Thirteen birds were recorded along Mississippi River levees on the Dundee BBS route on 18 June 1978. This count was comparable to previous counts on this route (WW). Three were recorded in northeastern Mississippi on the Tupelo BBS route on 21 June 1978 (DC). Four, at least three singing, were recorded on the Yazoo NWR in southwestern Mississippi on 12 May 1979 (MOS). These birds may have been tardy migrants. Bierley (1980) said the Grasshopper Sparrow was rare and local in areas of Tennessee adjacent to Mississippi. Imhof (1976) indicated a local but widespread distribution for Alabama, including records for counties contiguous to Mississippi. Thus, confirmation of breeding in Mississippi was expected. There are undoubtedly more breeding localities than have been recorded.

The Golden Triangle airfield is a single long oval runway, about 600 m long and 100 m wide. Bermuda grass (Cynodon dactylon) is the dominant plant. Soybean (Glycine max) rows surround the airfield for most of its area. Other important plants are johnson grass (Sorghum halepense), foxtail grass (Setaria geniculata), Euphorbia nutans, Desmanthus illinoensis, and Sida rhombifolia.