



Figure 1. Winter Wren in Bulloch Co., © 2011, by John W. Parrish, Jr.

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JUVENILE PURPLE GALLINULES IN BIBB COUNTY -- Middle Georgia birders documented 2 juvenile Purple Gallinules (*Porphyrio martinica*) at the Macon Cherokee Brickyards in Bibb County, Georgia, during August and September 2011. This record is the first evidence of breeding by this species in Bibb County. This gallinule is an “uncommon local breeding resident throughout the Coast and Coastal Plain” (Beaton et al. 2003), and is considered to be rare in Bibb County and surrounding areas (Johnson 1998). There is one prior record of a Purple Gallinule at the Cherokee Brickyards, which was observed on 4 September 2004, 3 days before Tropical Storm Frances passed through Georgia (Zaremba 2005-2006). The 2004 record and the sighting reported here documented birds from the same mined pit in the brickyards.

On 3 September 2011, Ty Ivey, Jerry Amerson, Paul Johnson, Ken Clark, and Jim Gilreath found 2 adult Purple Gallinules, each standing on water lotus (*Nelumbo* sp) leaves, in separate areas of the large (approx. 100 ha) formerly mined pit; the sightings were at 2 locations approximately 0.2 km apart, and occurred about 15 minutes apart. The adults were easily identified by their

bright blue, black, and purple colors, and lack of white stripes on the flanks which are indicative of Common Gallinules (*Gallinula galeata*). On Labor Day, 5 September 2011, Ty Ivey, Paul Johnson, Jerry and Marie Amerson, Anne Armstrong, Bill Flatau, and James Fleullan relocated one adult bird. The highlight came on 10 September 2011 when Ty Ivey, Paul Johnson, Jerry and Marie Amerson, Ken Clark, Walt Bowman, Anne Armstrong, Jim Gilreath, and Tom Price found 2 large juvenile Purple Gallinules. The juveniles were discovered in the same pit, but in a location which had not been previously scouted. One adult was observed that same day, in its customary place. My notes from 10 September pertaining to the juvenile Purple Gallinules include the following: “smaller than a nearby standing Common Gallinule,” “complete white undertail coverts (seen especially well when the bird is walking away),” “dull brown above,” “pale buffy below,” and “always walking (never swimming).” The white undertail coverts seen on these birds distinguish juvenile Purple Gallinules from juvenile Common Gallinules, which are commonly found at the brickyards in the summer. Two weeks later (24 September 2011), Ty Ivey photographed one of the juveniles (Fig. 1).

Other Purple Gallinule records (breeding not confirmed) from middle Georgia include 5 and 12 May 1928 in Bibb County (Mounts 1930, Burleigh 1958), 9 June 1953 in Houston County (Whitney 1955, Burleigh 1958), 30 May 1963 in Baldwin County (Harold C. Jones per Georgia College and State University Biology Dept., unpubl. records), and 28 May 1999 in Bleckley County (Bell 1999). There are 2 Piedmont records at Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area near Forsyth: 15 May 1990 (Moore 1990) and mid-May 1998 (Sewell 1998).

### Acknowledgments

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Figure 1. Juvenile Purple Gallinule photographed by Ty Ivey at the Macon Cherokee Brickyards, Bibb Co., Georgia, on 24 September 2011.

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