

along the immediate coast (where rare) in *McIntosh* during June and July (DCo), and an Ovenbird nest found at Piedmont N.W.R. in June (JL, *vide* NG), a locally rare occurrence.

— A Scarlet Tanager was seen feeding a fledgling in n.e. *Harris*, GA July 1 (LH, *vide* TM), providing a locally rare record. This and the Piedmont N.W.R. (n. of Macon) birds (NG) could possibly represent the southernmost breeding locations for the species in the Region! Another species found s. of its usual summer range in Georgia was Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A pair was at a Union City (s.w. of Atlanta) feeder June 28 (JLi, *vide* JS). One wonders if these birds attempted to nest, and just how close by did they try? Breeding Dickcissels were not reported this year, although one was found in North Carolina in July and two were in Georgia in June. The only sparrow report of interest was of Lark Sparrows in *Aiken*, SC. Two pairs were found June 8 (LG) and they were observed carrying food. This is possibly the first real evidence of nesting in South Carolina for the species. An absurdly late bird was the Dark-eyed Junco found in I'On Swamp, Francis Marion N.F., SC June 10 (SG, CB). And a pair of Shiny Cowbirds was found at Mt. Pleasant, SC July 4 (ST) for the only report this season. What is disturbing is that the birds were courting, with the male displaying in front of the female. Does this mean trouble or what!

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Florida Region

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For the 2nd consecutive year, above-normal rainfall throughout the Region followed a dry spring—except in south Florida, where exceptional rainfall since last November was topped off by an out-and-out monsoon. At Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, 24.2 inches were recorded in June–July, 150% of normal, and water levels were the highest in 30 years. Predictably, “dry-season” (winter–spring) wading bird nesting efforts in the Everglades were poor (*see also the Winter 1994–1995 report*), although Ted Below noted that southwest coast colonies seemed little affected. Tampa Bay area waders enjoyed an outstanding year, and a satisfying increase was also noted at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Despite the active tropical storm season, just one system affected the Region during this period. Hurricane Allison came ashore near St. Marks June 5, weakened, and veered northeast into Georgia. A storm surge of eight feet caused flooding and shoreline erosion in *Franklin* and *Wakulla*. Flooding was less severe along Pinellas beach communities and in Tampa Bay, but most skimmer and oystercatcher nests washed out. The fate of ground-nesters closer to the storm track was unknown.

It is our sad duty to record the death of Herbert W. Kale II, age 63, July 16. Herb died too soon of natural causes in Apalachicola, almost literally with his boots on after a day in the field checking on Seaside Sparrows. No one was better loved among the Florida family of birders and ornithologists. Herb, this one's for you.

Abbreviations: A.B.S. (*Archbold Biological Station*), A.P.A.F.R. (*Avon Park Air Force Range*), E.M.C.A. (*Emeralda Marsh Conservation Area*), F.F.N. (*Florida Field Naturalist*), F.O.S.R.C. (*Florida Ornithological Society*)

Records Committee), G.F.C. (*Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission*), R.S.R.S.R. (*Rock Springs Run State Reserve*).

Loons to Frigatebirds

Scattered Com. Loons summered on both coasts (AFS, MB, CB). More surprising was a Horned Grebe, in breeding plumage, at the Palm Harbor sewage plant July 15 (RWS, PB) and again July 22 (KN) for the first summer *Pinellas* report. Three boat trips off Plantation Key (July 2 & 3) and Marathon (July 7) yielded the following pelagic species: five Cory's, three Greater, one Sooty, and 21 Audubon's shearwaters, plus one Wilson's and two Band-rumped storm-petrels (PH).

The annual G.F.C. aerial survey of nesting Brown Pelicans tallied 10,277 pairs at 39 sites, including a first-ever *Wakulla* colony of 50 pairs at Palmetto I. in Oyster Bay. Nesting success was good on both coasts, averaging >1.5 young per brood at 7 sites (SN, JR). Summer surveys of Anhingas at E.M.C.A. (*Lake*) peaked at a remarkable 661 July 29 (JM *et al.*). Over 100 Magnificent Frigatebirds passed along the *Pasco* coast June 5 following Allison (DR) for the largest county report (*vide* BP). Another 84 seen over L. Maggiore, St. Petersburg, July 9 were not weather-related (DG).

Egrets to Flamingo

At E.M.C.A., 287 Great Egrets June 24 marked the summer high count (JM *et al.*). An unusual increase of imm. Little Blue



Heron at Marco and Rookery Bay (where nesting was average) in late July perhaps represented a move away from high inland water levels (TB). Reddish Egrets increased on both coasts, with 80 pairs estimated for the Tampa Bay region (n. to Clearwater and s. to Sarasota), and an astounding count of 74 fledged young, suggesting 45–50 pairs, at Mullethead I. (a.k.a. Haulover Spoil), Merritt Island N.W.R., June 22 (RP, AFS, RH). White Ibis in Tampa Bay enjoyed an outstanding year, with 10,000 pairs at 5 colonies and 9000 at Alafia Bank alone (RP, AFS). At least 2 White Ibis nested in the Marco colony in early July marked the first known coastal nesting in s.s.w. Florida, again possibly due to inland flooding (TB). Over 500 pairs of Glossy Ibis nested in 2 Tampa Bay colonies (RP, AFS). At Marco I., Below tallied a remarkable 964 Glossies in a July roost count, more than twice the 10-year average. Roseate Spoonbill numbers at 3 Tampa Bay colonies jumped 40% to 150 pairs. At least 290 young fledged, indicating excellent nesting success (RP, AFS). Another 25 young counted at Mullethead I., June 22 indicated 13–15 pairs there (RP, AFS, RH). In the last 6 years or so, foraging Roseate Spoonbills have increasingly used drying wetlands, roadside ditches, and water retention areas e. of Tampa Bay. This year they routinely flew NE to the bottomland swamps of Lettuce L. Park and the Lower Hillsborough River Flood Detention Area, >15 mi from the nesting colony and >10 mi inland (RP). Farther inland at E.M.C.A., ≤12 spoonbills were seen throughout the period (JM *et al.*) The Eur. Spoonbill on the loose since late 1993 was seen again in McKay Bay, this time at the “Swiftmud” pits with 50 Roseates July 9 (ML). Despite the flooded conditions in s. Florida, over 5500 pairs of Wood Storks nested statewide at 33 colonies in May and June (JAR). This was 55% more than last year, a poor year. At Corkscrew, storks began nesting in early March and increased to 913 pairs, but numbers dwindled as water levels rose, and no more than 200 young fledged in July (TB). A large foraging flock of 125 storks was at the East River Pool, St. Marks N.W.R., July 25 (RW). Single flamingos were reported (but no details provided) from the Dunedin Causeway June 5 (B. Whitman) and St. Marks Light June 10 (A. Whitaker). Probably both were storm waifs, carried by Hurricane Allison. But were they wild birds?

Ducks to Rails

A late July count of 175 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, including young, at Zellwood indicated a good nesting season (RWS, PB, SB).

One Black-bellied Whistling-Duck at Occidental W.M.A., *Hamilton*, July 22 (TK) and two at E.M.C.A., July 29 (JM *et al.*) furnished the only reports for that species. Four Blue-winged Teal at the McKay Bay pits June 9 were very late (PB, AGS, RWS). Probably summering were a Lesser Scaup at the Palm Harbor sewage plant June 9–July (PB, AGS, RWS), a Red-breasted Merganser near the mouth of the St. Johns R., June 25 (RC), and four Ruddy Ducks at Occidental W.M.A., July 31 (RR).

Over the past decade, Osprey numbers between Naples and Indian Key have increased from 17 to 31 nests, with productivity averaging a steady 0.95 young per active nest (TB). But in nearby Florida Bay, Ospreys continued their 15-year slide (OB). Sixty-three Ospreys at E.M.C.A., July 29 provided the season high count there (JM *et al.*). A single Snail Kite was reported, off I-95 near Daytona Beach June 6 (BR). Two Mississippi Kites seen regularly over a heavily wooded creek in South Jacksonville from May–July 4 may have nested (m.ob.). Bald Eagles continued their extraordinary increase of the past decade, with 831 active nests producing 982 young (SN). Four reports of Cooper’s Hawk in *Hillsborough* and *Pasco* supported recent indications of this species’ increase in w.c. Florida (PB, RWS, AGS). Extremely early was the Broad-winged Hawk July 25 at Boyd Hill Nature Park, *Pinellas*, the first county summer report (DG). Two Crested Caracaras at Tosohatchee S.R., *Orange*, June 27 were at the n. edge of their range (KF). Single Am. Kestrels at R.S.R.S.R., July 8 (OAS, PS) and at Gibsonton July 23 (AFS) indicated that this scarce species still persists in those areas. An out-of-season imm. Merlin near Gainesville June 20 (RN) furnished the first Florida summer report (*fide* BP; details to F.O.S.R.C.). Also out of season was the Peregrine Falcon at Placid L. Estates, *Highlands*, July 14–15 (AF, RB).

Black Rails calling during the heat of the day were found at St. Marks N.W.R. Mounds Pool #3 June 24–25 (one bird; RWS, AGS) and at Occidental W.M.A., July 29–31 (three birds; MD, m.ob.)

Plovers to Skimmer

The tiny population of Snowy Plovers on the peninsula continues to dwindle. Near Marco I., 5 years of sandbar erosion and “terrible pressure from people and dogs” have reduced the number of nests from 5 in recent years to none this year (TB). A very early Piping Plover was at Honeymoon Island S.R.A., *Pinellas*, July 15 (PB, RWS). It’s jarring to think of this species “wintering” from July–March, isn’t it?

American Avocets in breeding plumage turned up in N. Jacksonville (one, June 30, increasing to 15 by July 31; RC, RR, MM), Merritt Island N.W.R. (four, July 9; BS), and Occidental W.M.A. (one, July 31; RR, RC, MM). A Greater Yellowlegs lingered at Shell Key until June 8 (PB), while already southbound were 180 Willets at the same site July 12 (PB). Other early fall shorebirds included a Whimbrel at Archie Carr N.W.R., *Brevard*, July 19 (MB), a Long-billed Curlew and 24 Marbled Godwits in Hillsborough Bay July 2 (AFS), another 110 godwits at Honeymoon Island S.R.A., July 7 (KN), and seven Semipalmated Sandpipers at Shell Key June 17 (PB *et al.*) Fifty-one Stilt Sandpipers in North Jacksonville July 22 provided a good count (RC), while rare anytime was a Pectoral Sandpiper at Ft. DeSoto Park, *Pinellas*, July 28 (RWS). Also unusual were five Wilson’s Phalaropes at Occidental W.M.A., July 31 (MD, m.ob.)

A dark-morph ad. Parasitic Jaeger was seen off Plantation Key July 2 (PH). Laughing Gulls increased to 6500 pairs at Shell Key (PB) and to 2100 pairs at Three Rooker Bar near Honeymoon I. (AFS). Another 5500 pairs nested at Passage Key N.W.R. (RP); all totalled the Tampa Bay region population was about 20,000 pairs at 6 colonies (RP). Two very late Bonaparte’s Gulls at the Palm Harbour sewage plant June 9 furnished the first summer report for *Pinellas* (PB, RWS), and an ad. Great Black-backed Gull at Shell Key July 23 & 25 (BI, PB) provided the only report this season. But *Pinellas* birders didn’t get all the gull goodies; an imm. Sabine’s Gull was seen at Hugenot Park, *Duval*, June 10–12 (RC). This would be the first state report for summer if accepted.

Caspian Terns nesting at Alafia Bank in Hillsborough Bay increased slightly to 84 nests, a new state high (RP). At 4 colonies statewide, Royal Terns totalled 3600 pairs (RP, AFS, RH). Sandwich Terns increased to 420 pairs at the 2 known nesting sites, both in Hillsborough Bay (RP); this exceeds all previous estimates this century. Three-hundred pairs of Roseate Terns nested at Boca Chica Shoal s. of Key West in July (MR). A flock of 125 Com. Terns at Honeymoon Island S.R.A., July 25 contained mostly immatures (RWS, PB). The large rooftop Least Tern colony at Florida Power Corporation’s Weedon I. office failed in July when Fish Crows took at least 175 young (DV). Colonies at Hugenot Park and Anastasia S.R.A. washed out (PP), and so did the one remaining sandbar colony near Marco I., where 228 nests were lost (TB). Below estimated that <100 Least Terns fledged in

his area, all from rooftop colonies. Twenty-three Bridled and 99 Sooty terns were found off Plantation Key and Marathon July 2, 3 & 5 (PH). Black Skimmers nesting late near Marco I. avoided the hurricane and had 82 nests in 2 colonies but, like Snowy Plovers and Least Terns, the local population has declined drastically due to sandbar erosion (TB).

Doves to Warblers

A Ringed Turtle-Dove was found with Eur. Collared-Doves at Pine Island, *Hernando*, June 18 (DR), and a White-winged Dove was with a flock of Eur. Collared-Doves at an East Point feeder, date unknown (RLW). First reports for Key West were two Mitred Parakeets June 9 and one (?) Red-crowned Parrot June 11 (RG). Single Whip-poor-wills at A.B.S., July 11 (KT) and R.S.R.S.R., July 18 (PS) furnished the 2nd and 3rd Florida summer reports. Two Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at separate locations in St. Petersburg July 25 were early migrants (ADS, RWS, MW), as was the Belted Kingfisher near A.B.S., July 8 (AF, LW). At least 24 nesting pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers were found in a study area at Wekiwa Springs S.P. (S. Belson).

An Acadian Flycatcher June 3 at Little Big Econ S.F., *Seminole*, was a good find (LM, OAS). Even better was the Western Wood-Pewee definitively identified by voice near A.B.S., June 19 for the first verified state record (GW, BP, JF *et al.*; details to F.O.S.R.C., note to F.F.N.). Florida Scrub Jays nesting in the Wekiva Basin had poor nesting success this year, with just 4 families out of 25 producing young (PS). Two Brown-headed Nuthatches were rare finds at R.S.R.S.P., July 2 (PS, OAS). Three pairs of Hill Mynas nested in July along the Indian R. at Stuart, where one pair had been present for 4 years (PH). These constitute the first *Martin* reports. (*fide* BP).

The decline of Black-whiskered Vireos is spreading to the e. coast. Jane Brooks reports that in monitoring since 1978 at Jack I. State Preserve, she found singing birds through the 1980s, but numbers have declined since 1989. She found just one last year, and none in 1995. She has seen a ♀ Brown-headed Cowbird just once, in 1991. What is the cause?

Fifty-four Parula Warblers at R.S.R.S.R., June 14 furnished a significant number (DP, BS). Earliest migrant warblers included two Prairies at A.B.S. (F. Davis) and another at A.P.A.F.R., July 11 (D. Leonard), a Black-and-white at Dunedin Hammock July 15 (PB, RWS), a Prothonotary at Bonner Park, *Pinellas*, July 20 (KN), and two Am. Redstarts at Bonner Park July 22 (KN). In his spring report, Howard Langridge reported probable nesting of a Swainson's Warbler at

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Steinhatchee Springs W.M.A.; nesting still has not been confirmed, but ≤four singing males were found in June (JK, BM). Always among the earliest "fall" migrants, Louisiana Waterthrushes were reported from Bonner Park July 6 (one bird, KN), and from Newnan's Lake, *Alachua*, where one was seen July 13 (JH, RR) and four–six were found along 150 yards of shoreline July 15 (MM, RR, DW).

Cardinal to Finches

Summer counts of N. Cardinals at R.S.R.S.R. peaked at 86 July 15 (PS, OAS). An "exceptional" season was reported for cardinals at Wekiwa Springs S.P., where an extensive new songbird monitoring program is underway (PS). Blue Grosbeaks may have nested at Brooker Cr. Preserve, *Pinellas*, where three singing males were seen throughout the period (RWS, PB), and also at E.M.C.A., where two singing males were found June 24 and again July 29 (JM *et al.*) Counts of singing ♂ Bachman's Sparrows at R.S.R.S.R., June 10 peaked at 12 July 8 (PS, OAS). Are Shiny Cowbirds becoming rare, or are observers numbered to them? Just one report was received, of a pair at a feeder on Fort George I., *Duval*, July 28–31 (RC). House Finches probably bred near Jack-

sonville, since a pair of adults visited a local feeder June 20–26 and two young did the same in July (DK).

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