

# Central Southern



## B. Mac. Myers

320 Sharon Dr.  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70124  
(bmacmyers@hotmail.com)

## Phillip A. Wallace

4515 S. Prieur St.  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70125-5044  
(phillip\_wallace@hotmail.com)

In general, landbird migration was quite dull. The Parkers considered both weather and migration normal in Arkansas. Elsewhere, March was cool and wet. Especially in southern parts of the Region, both April and May were exceptionally dry. In April and early May, easterly winds persisted over the Gulf. This may have displaced migrants to sw. Louisiana and Texas. In any case, migrant landbirds were very scarce in coastal areas from se. Louisiana to nw. Florida. At Ft. Morgan, Alabama the Sargents had the poorest banding spring of their career. Robert Duncan in nw. Florida and Myers in se. Louisiana both considered the migration among the worst in memory. There were quite a few marginally early or late records that space constraints precluded citing.

**Abbreviations:** F.W.B.S.F. (Ft. Walton Beach Spray Fields, Okaloosa, FL).

## LOONS THROUGH GALLINULES

Two Red-throated Loons, casual in the Region, were reported in *Henry*, TN 8 Mar (JB), and a single bird was in Ft. Pickens, FL 28 Mar (P&BT). The only reports of Pacific Loon came from *Henry*, TN, with 2 being seen 4 Mar (FB et al.) and one on 8 Mar (JB). This has been a reliable location for the species in recent years. Several Eared Grebes were reported far to the e. at F.W.B.S.F. 21-23 Mar (DW, RAD). A Band-rumped Storm-Petrel landed on a boat off Pensacola 4 May (JM) and was successfully released after being taken to the Wildlife Sanctuary, marking the 5th time the species has landed on a boat in the area since 1993. An imm. Neotropic Cormorant was seen 30-31 May in *White*, AR, where the species is still rare (KN, LN). For the 2nd year, a Tricolored Heron was in *White*, AR 28 May (KN, MD). Glossy Ibis, rare inland in our Region, was reported from the Starkville, MS area, from *Lake*, TN, and from *White*, AR. There were seven reports of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks from Louisiana. In *Vermilion*, they have taken over Wood Duck

nesting boxes, with 12 being reported 13 Apr (BF, DP). Farther e., 5 were seen flying toward the Mississippi R. in *Plaquemines* 18 Apr (BMM, PAW). Five Long-tailed Ducks, uncommon to rare in the Region, at Guntersville, AL 31 Mar-9 Apr was an excellent total (LBR, m. ob.). Two more were found in *Marion*, AL 14 Mar and 2 Apr (ph. JJ). A female Common Merganser represented the 7th area record in *Oktibbeha*, MS 22 Feb-11 Mar (TS, MS, JB, KK).

Thirteen Swallow-tailed Kites heading n. in *Baldwin*, AL 23 Mar provided a good total (SS). One reported in *Beauregard*, LA 13 Apr was apparently from the Sabine R. breeding area (DFL). Continuing her research on the species, Coulson reported 22+ Swallow-taileds from a single roost near a nesting colony in *St. Tammany*, LA 5 May (JOC). Tennessee tallied its 2nd record of White-tailed Kite at Black Bayou 20-21 Apr (NM, ph. KL, DM); Arkansas had its 6th in *Benton* 23 May (EN) and 7th in *Jefferson* 13 Apr (G&JL). A migrating flock of 148 Mississippi Kites in *Beauregard*, LA 13 Apr (DFL) must have been an impressive sight. Swainson's Hawks were reported in normal numbers in the w. part of the Region. Of more interest was one seen in *Calcasieu*, LA 20 Apr carrying a stick, thus lending credibility to suspected breeding in the area (VR, MR). One in *St. John*, LA 3 Mar was from a part of the Region where it is rare (PY). A count of 64 Red-tailed Hawks reported from *Tunica*, MS 3 Mar (JRW) showed astonishing variety, including one Krider's, one Harlan's, 2 dark-morph individuals, and 4 others of the western race. A rare dark-morph Rough-legged Hawk was seen in *Lake*, TN 21 Apr (CAS), and a 2nd dark morph was reported from *Tunica*, MS 11 Mar (JRW). An extraordinary report of a **Crested Caracara** came from *Okaloosa*, FL 1 Mar (LD, †RAD). This comes on the heels of a 19 Feb report from *Baldwin*, AL. The *anatum* subspecies of Peregrine Falcon was reported from Arkansas in *Prairie* 7-22 Apr, in *White* 19-28 Apr and 21 May (KN, LN) and also from *Lake*, TN 9 Apr (JRW). Black Rail was once again reported from one of the Region's most reliable areas in spring, Dauphin I., AL 9 Apr (RRS). One to 2 Purple Gallinules returned to *Noxubee*, MS, where they have nested the last two years, 4 May+ (TS).

## SHOREBIRDS

An obliging Snowy Plover seen in *Benton* 5-8 May provided the 3rd Arkansas record, the first since 1974, and the first spring record ever (BH, ph. JS, KN, LN et al.) A count of 47

Wilson's Plovers along 10 mi of Fourchon Beach, LA 24 Mar was an excellent total (DPM, RDP). Joining the Wilson's were 4 Piping Plovers. A Piping was also reported from *Benton*, AR 23 Apr, a rare inland record (MM, DC). The fish farm near Hickory Plains, AR has become the yellowlegs capital of the Region, with a mind-boggling 7000 Greater and 11,000 Lessers reported 7 Apr (KN, LN). A count of 8000 Lessers was reported from the same area last spring. Willets were reported inland from Alabama and Arkansas. Thirty-eight at Wilson Dam, AL 28 Apr (PDK, m. ob.) and 400 at Pensacola 23 Apr (A&DF) were high counts for those areas. In *Jefferson Davis*, LA, 40 Upland Sandpipers 14 Apr was a good total (JPK, JoK). A flock of 17 Whimbrels at Port Fourchon, LA 6 May was a good number for se. Louisiana (PAW, BMM), and a Long-billed Curlew at the same location 4 Mar provided a rare se. Louisiana record (BMM, PAW, RDP). In Gulfport, 9 Marbled Godwits 23 Apr represented a large number for the Mississippi coast (TS, MS). The rice fields in *Vermilion*, LA 27 May yielded 95 Ruddy Turnstones, an excellent inland total (JPK, CF). A single bird of that species also showed up in *White*, AR 30 May (KN). On 21 Apr, 137 Buff-breasted Sandpipers in *Jefferson Davis*, LA made for one of the highest spring counts for the Region in recent years (JPK, JoK). It was a good season for **Ruffs** (all Reeves) in the Region. One seen 1 Mar at F.W.B.S.F. provided a first area record and was extremely early (LD, †RAD et al.). Two were photographed at Hickory Plains, AR 7 Apr (KN, LN), and one remained through 12 Apr. Finally, one was seen 17 Apr in *Acadia*, LA (†DFL). With the Ruffs at Hickory Plains 7 Apr were 1200 Long-billed Dowitchers, a very large number for an inland location. Seventy-nine Wilson's Phalaropes 7 May in *Cameron*, LA were upstaged by a single female **Red-necked Phalarope** in alternate plumage there (†JPK, †JW, SZ, vt. MS et al.).

### GULLS THROUGH TERNS

Franklin's Gulls were particularly scarce in sw. Louisiana, with only one being reported for the season 27 Apr in *Cameron* (BMM, CCS, RDP). A count of 50 at *Benton*, AR was not unexpected (MM, DC), but 35 at Pine Bluff, AR 15 Apr (KN, LN) and 3 in *Obion*, TN 27 May (JRW) were farther e. than usual. An ad. **Little Gull** in basic plumage at Reelfoot L., TN 31 Mar provided one of very few records for the state (†CAS, PC, JD). A possible Nelson's Gull (Herring x Glaucous Gull hybrid) in first-winter plumage was reported

from Grand Isle, LA 24 Mar (ph. DPM, RDP). There were five reports of Lesser Black-backed Gulls, with three from Louisiana and one each from Alabama and Tennessee. All but the Tennessee report were from coastal areas. The only Glaucous Gulls reported were in *Henry*, TN 4 & 8 Mar (FB, SB, JB et al.) and *Cameron*, LA 6 May (PY). Great Black-backed Gulls were reported from Dauphin I., AL 9 Apr (LD, RAD, m. ob.) and from *Cameron*, LA 7 May (ph. JPK, ph. JW, SZ). Rare anywhere in the Region, a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake was a good find in *Cameron*, LA 27 Apr (ph. BMM, CCS, vt. RDP). Noteworthy Least Tern sightings included early reports from Elmer's I., LA (DPM, RDP) and coastal Mississippi (JTh, *vide* SJP), both on 24 Mar. Unusual inland reports near the end of May came from the Starkville, MS area (TS) and *Lauderdale*, AL (TMH). In addition, a count of 2000 Least Terns from the Fourchon/Grand Isle, LA area 6 May was an unusually large number (PAW, BMM).

### DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Eurasian Collared-Doves continue to spread in Arkansas, with 2 in *Clay* 17 Mar (GH) and 6 in *Sebastian* 28 May (SB). White-winged Doves were reported singing from several Louisiana locations, suggesting possible breeding. One in *Montgomery* 26 May (ph. MO) was Tennessee's 2nd documented; one in *Lee* 14–17 May was only the 8th inland for Alabama. At Grand Isle, 5 ad. and 2 fledgling Inca Doves were found 6 May (PAW, BMM); this is the easternmost breeding record for Louisiana and perhaps for the United States. Single Common Ground-Doves were at Grand Isle 7 Apr (DPM) and in *Vermilion*, LA 17 Apr (DFL, m. ob.). A Black-billed Cuckoo 18 Apr at Birmingham (LFG) was early, and one in *St. Tammany*, LA 20 May (DPM) was late.

Five pairs of Burrowing Owls reported nesting at Eglin Air Force Base bombing range (LF) were said to have been there several years. A Chuck-will's-widow in *Oktibbeha*, MS 8 Apr (DCr, JTa) was early, and so was one in *Harrison*, MS 4 Apr (JM, MK *vide* SJP). Chimney Swifts were early, with one in *Oktibbeha* 19 Mar and 2+ in *Lauderdale*, AL 5 Apr (PDK). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird in *Lauderdale* 6 Apr (DEK) was early, and one in *Clark*, AR 25 Mar (GN) presumably was. A male Calliope Hummingbird in *Iberville*, LA 1 Apr (JVR) had probably wandered from the Cardiff/Dittmann yard nearby. A Broad-tailed Hummingbird that wintered at Pensacola remained until 4 Apr (*vide* RAD).

Three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in *St. Clair*, AL 12 May (RRR et al.) were late.

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

An Olive-sided Flycatcher in *St. Clair* 12 May (RRR et al.) was considered rare; one was in *Lake*, TN 19 May (JRW, PDC et al.), and another was reported 25 May in *Crittendon*, AR (JAD). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers are rarely reported in the Region in spring, so singles in *Lauderdale* 3 May (PDK), *Mobile* 12 May (MW), *Washington*, AR 20 May (MM), and *St. Tammany* 20 May (DPM) were noteworthy. An Acadian Flycatcher in *Cameron* 30 Mar (SWC, DLD) and another at Grand Isle 31 Mar (BMM, CCS, PAW) were quite early, one in *Noxubee* 16 Apr (TS) was also early. An Alder Flycatcher in *Putnam*, TN 28 May (SJS) was a county first. A Least Flycatcher was a rare spring find in *Lauderdale* 7 May (DJS, SWM, JTG). One Least Flycatcher 23 May and 6 more 26 May in *Washington*, AR (MM) were late. A wintering Vermilion Flycatcher remained at F.W.B.S.F. until 1 Mar (LD, RAD, DWe), one was at Little Rock 22 Mar (MA), and another was at Baton Rouge 9 March (DFL, MSe). An Ash-throated Flycatcher wintered at F.W.B.S.F. until 30 Mar, and what may have been the same bird was reported 12 May (DW). A Great Crested Flycatcher in *Harrison*, MS 16 Mar (MDo, BrH) was early, as was one in *Lawrence*, AL 13 Apr (DJ S). The Great Kiskadee present at Venice, LA for almost two years was calling vigorously 18 Apr (PAW, BMM). A Tropical/Couch's Kingbird 8 May (RAD) in *Santa Rosa*, FL was the 6th for that area. Western Kingbirds returned to *Shelby*, TN 29 Apr–31 May+ (WRP, ph. JRW) and nested at the same site where last year's nesting was the first confirmed for the state. Other Westerns included 2 in *Plaquemines*, LA 31 Mar (GO, JF, m. ob.) and one at Ft. Pickens, FL 8 May (RAD). Gray Kingbirds have not bred at Dauphin I since 1997, so an early one there 14 Apr (SH) was a good find; another was in *Baldwin*, AL 23–24 Apr (BS, DRC, RC). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were widely reported in the Region, especially in Alabama, where Greg Jackson considers them "rare, but increasing breeders." Two were in *Arkansas*, AR 20 May (KR).

A total of 90 White-eyed Vireos was found in the Grand Isle area 31 Mar (PAW, BMM, CCS). A singing Bell's Vireo in *Covington* 12 May (WDR) was only Alabama's 8th inland record and the first for the inland coastal plain. Another was singing in *Faulkner*, AR 20 May (HR, EH). A Blue-headed Vireo in *Washington* 31 Mar (MM) was the earliest for nw. Arkansas by 21 days. One in *Butler*, AL 8

May (WDR) was late. A Philadelphia Vireo in *Oktibbeha* 9 May (TS, MS) was unusual and late. A Black-whiskered Vireo was at Grand Isle 6 May (†PAW, †BMM) and was seen through 22 May (m. ob.). Tree Swallows seem to be rapidly increasing as breeders in the Region. Small numbers were found nesting in *Noxubee* and *Oktibbeha*, MS; in *Lauderdale*, *St. Clair*, *Lamar*, and *Morgan*, AL, and in *Cleburne*, AR. A Bank Swallow 24 Mar in *Lafourche* (PAW et al.) was early. Cliff Swallows arrived in nw. Louisiana 18 Mar (JT, CL) and by 21 Mar were repairing old nests in *Caddo* (RS). They continue expanding south in Alabama, with eight pairs nesting in *Covington* (WDR). A Cave Swallow 7 May in *Cameron* (†JPK et al.) was likely one of those nesting under the nearby bridge over Sabine L. A recently fledged Horned Lark found 15 May in *W. Feliciana*, LA (*fide* SWC) represented a significant southeastward breeding expansion. A White-breasted Nuthatch in *Montgomery* 6 Apr (LFG) was unusual. A Swainson's Thrush at Shreveport 28 May (JTr&JT) was quite late. Two Hermit Thrushes in *Iberville* 10 May (JOC, CR) were exceptionally late. Terence Schiefer submitted a detailed report of an American Pipit of the *alticola* race, seen in *Oktibbeha* 10 Apr. Two pairs of Cedar Waxwings were found nesting in *Johnson*, AR 16–19 May (DA), and one bird fed a fledgling Eastern Bluebird!

### WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS

Despite the generally lackluster migration, there were a number of locally early and late records of warblers and tanagers. The only Brewster's Warbler was one 13 Apr (SM) in *Davidson*, TN. Single Nashvilles were unusual in *Choctaw* 16 Apr (MS) and *Lowndes*, MS 28 Apr (TS, MS). A count of 73 Northern Parulas 12 May in *Montgomery* (LFG) was noteworthy. Single Cape Mays were in *Montgomery* 24 Apr (LFG), in *Jackson*, MS 5 May (DCi), and in *Cameron* 6 May (PY). Two Black-throated Blues were at Grand Isle 6 May (PAW, BMM), and another was in *St. Martin*, LA 5 May (WW). Keeping track of species of concern, the Schiefers reported 6 Cerulean Warblers 9 Apr–28 Apr, and 10 Swainson's Warblers 10 Apr–31 May+, all in areas near Starkville, MS. Another Swainson's was singing in *Faulkner*, AR 14 May (HR). A total of 3–4 Connecticut Warblers was reported in *Davidson* and *Sumner*, TN 11–25 May; another was in *Madison*, AL 14 May (DRC, RC). Single Mourning Warblers were in *Marshall*, MS 12 May (JG) and in *Madison* 14 May (DRC, RC, CDC). A single Canada Warbler at Grand Isle

19 May (CCS et al.) was an unusual spring record. A **Painted Redstart** found 16 Apr in *Cameron* (BB, †RB) stayed until 18 Apr and was photographed and videotaped by many. This was only Louisiana's 3rd record and its first in spring.

### TOWHEES THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

A **Spotted Towhee** at Birmingham 19 (†LFG) and 23 Apr (†GDJ) was Alabama's first well-documented record. Single Spotted were reported 4 Mar in *Washington* (MM) and 15 Apr in *Pulaski*, AR (D&SP). Two Rufous-crowned Sparrows were at Mt. Magazine S. P., AR 25 Apr (ph. DS); they had not been found there for several years. An American Tree Sparrow in *Washington* 1 Apr (MM) was unusual. Lark Sparrows were seen more than usual in Alabama, and one in *Oktibbeha* 5 Apr (TS) was 17 days early. A count of 29 singing Grasshopper Sparrows 3 May in *Lauderdale* (PDK) was the highest ever for nw. Alabama. Single Harris's Sparrows stayed rather late in Arkansas and Tennessee. An Oregon Junco in *Washington* 9 Mar (RHD) was unusual, and a Dark-eyed Junco there 28 Apr (MM) was the latest ever for nw. Arkansas. Six Lapland Longspurs in *Lowndes*, AL 21 Mar (BKF) were unusual and late.

A young male Black-headed Grosbeak at New Orleans 10 Feb–2 Mar (GM) was a good find. Painted Buntings were widely reported from inland Mississippi and Alabama. A count of 50+ Dickcissels in *Baldwin* 15 Apr (RRS et al.) was high for so early. Bobolinks were widely reported in good numbers, and they were early in some areas. Rare in Mississippi, 4 Western Meadowlarks were in *Tunica* 4 Mar (JRW), and one was in *Marshall* 12 May (JG). Single Yellow-headed Blackbirds were in Alabama and Mississippi. A Brewer's Blackbird in *Iberville* 1 Apr (JVR) and 2 in *Walton*, FL 12 May (L&JM) were unusual and late. Only 2 Shiny Cowbirds were reported, one each in coastal Florida and Louisiana. Away from their se. Louisiana haunts, Bronzed Cowbirds were reported from Baton Rouge and Lafayette. A count of 200–300 Purple Finches in *Van Buren*, AR 28 Mar (MB, LS) was extraordinary. An American Goldfinch in *Forrest*, MS 28 May–31 May+ (DCi, SW) was exceptionally late.

### OTHER REPORTS

The editors received reports of Great Cormorant in Alabama, Parasitic Jaeger in Florida, Hooded Oriole in Louisiana, and Common Redpoll in Arkansas. In all cases, written descriptions were suggestive of the species reported, but they were not entirely

persuasive to us. If accepted by state committees, details of these records will be added to later Regional reports.

**Contributors (subregional editors in bold-face):** Mark Alderman, David Arbour, Mary Alice Beer, Sandy Berger (SBe), Jamen Berk (JBe), Frank Bills, Sharon Bostik, Barbara Breedlove, Roger Breedlove, James Brooks, Steven W. Cardiff, **Phillip D. Casteel** (middle Tennessee), David Chapman, David Cimprich (DCi), Jennifer O. Colson, David Cross (DCr), Dean R. Cutten, Raelene Cutten, Jay Desgrosellier, Mike Dillon, Donna L. Dittmann, Michael Dodge (MDo), Robert H. Doster, Jo Ann Drew, Lucy Duncan, **Robert A. Duncan** (w. Florida), Larry Fenimore, Joelle Finley, Barry K. Fleming, Carol Foil, Bill Fontenot, Ann & Don Foster, Larry F. Gardella, Jeff T. Garner, Jesse Grantham, Barry Haas, Steve Haas, Tom M. Haggerty, Eric Haley, Brittney Hamba (BrH), George Hoover, **Greg D. Jackson** (Alabama), Jud Johnson, Mike Kayes, Keith Kimmerle, Donna F. Kittle, Paul D. Kittle, Joanne Kleiman, **Joseph P. Kleiman** (Louisiana), Daniel F. Lane, Ken Leggett, Charles Lyon, Guy & Joan Luneau, Steve W. McConnell, Jaque & Lee McDaniel, Gloria McKinnon, Don Manning, Susan Marden, Mike Mlodinow, Nancy Moore, Jay Morris, David P. Muth, B. Mac Myers, Gaye Neal, Ellen Neaville, Kenny Nichols, LaDonna Nichols, Mike O'Malley, Glenn Ousset, **Max & Helen Parker** (Arkansas), Dave Patton, **W. Robert Peebles** (w. Tennessee), Stacy J. Peterson, Drew & Sherry Phillips, R. Dan Purrington, Hershel Raney, Robert R. Reid, J. V. Remsen, Virginia Rettig, Linda B. Reynolds, Molly Richard, Christie Riehl, W. Douglas Robinson, Karen Rowe, Robert R. Sargent, Marion Schiefer, **Terence Schiefer** (Mississippi), Rosemary Seidler, Michael Seymour (MSe), Joyce Shedell, Damien J. Simbeck, Don Simons, Chris A. Sloan, Scott Somershoe, Curt C. Sorrells, Stephen J. Stedman, Ladelle Strefaci, Bill Summerour, Mark Swan, Phil & Betsy Tetlow, Jenny Thompson (JTh), Juliet Tang (JTa), Jean Trahan (JTr), Jeff Trahan, Phillip A. Wallace, Don Ware, David Weber (DWe), Jason Weckstein, Sandy Whistler, Jeff R. Wilson, Mike Wilson, Walker Wilson, Peter Yaukey, Stan Zamek. We also wish to thank the many contributors whose records could not be included.

