

N.P. 17–19 Jun (MM); also of interest was the capture of 6 different juvs. at two MAPS stations in Rowan, KY 14 Jul–6 Aug (ARb). In Fulton, KY, the state's first Painted Bunting (a male that remained on territory courting female Indigo Buntings well into summer) was last reported 23 Jul (BP, MM). Small numbers of Pine Siskins and Red Crossbills were reported throughout the season, and probably bred, at Roan Mt., Carter, TN (RK et al.) and at Newfound Gap in the Great Smoky Mountains N.P. (RH et al.), probably the result of a

good cone crop in the spruce-fir forests at those locations.

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Central Southern



Louisiana coast on 30 Jun. Onshore winds and the highest tides, predicted to be 1–1.5 m above normal e. of landfall area, resulted in a number of interesting bird records, both on the coast and inland, but may have devastated the tern colonies on Louisiana's Chandeleur Islands.

Abbreviations: L.O.S. (Louisiana Ornithological Society), O.A.S. (Oktibbeha Audubon Society).

LOONS THROUGH FRIGATEBIRDS

Lingering or summering Common Loons were noted in two Alabama locations: inland in Auburn 8 Jun (SDu) and at Dauphin I. 9 Jul (ECS). Pied-billed Grebes, which breed erratically in the Tennessee Valley, produced two broods in Colbert, AL in Jul (DJS). Unquestionably the most remarkable reports of the season were of not one but 2 albatrosses from nw. Florida. The "expected" albatross in the Gulf is Yellow-nosed, and indeed both sightings appear to have been of Yellow-nosed Albatross. The records were nearly a month apart, with the first coming 6 Jun about 15 km s. of the Alabam/Florida line "in Florida waters" (JPF), to quote Bob Duncan. This was reportedly a "leisurely" observation at close range. The 2nd record, in the wake of Tropical Storm Bill, was of a bird over land at the head of Blackwater Bay, FL 2 Jul (MW). The description was consistent with the bird's being a Yellow-nosed Albatross (race uncertain). Although neither report was accompanied by full documentation, and the records have not been acted upon by the Florida Bird Records Committee, the evidence at hand seems to justify putting them in print here.

Cory's Shearwaters, regular over the nearshore waters of the Gulf in summer, were twice encountered off South Pass of the Mississippi R. in Louisiana waters. One was 68 km se. of South Pass 24 Jun (SWC, DLD, JS, GS, PC, RDP), and 2 were

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For a change, the season was very wet over much of the Region, with New Orleans receiving a record 46 cm of moisture in June. One can do no more than surmise that the effects of this rainfall were mainly beneficial, since most of it was not in the form of tropical downpours. There was, however, some cyclonic weather, provided by Tropical Storm Bill, which made landfall on the central

60 km off South Pass 9 Jul (GS, SWC, DLD, MM, CS). Four Sooty Shearwaters, casual in nw. Florida waters, were seen from shore at Ft. Pickens 18 May (JL). Three pelagic trips 34–75 km out of South Pass into Louisiana waters 18 & 24 Jun and 9 Jul (SWC, DLD, CS, GS, JS et al.) produced the following storm-petrel numbers: Wilson's (32, 10, 24), Band-rumped (1, 4, 5), and Leach's (1, 0, 2).

Imm. Masked Boobies, also regular in the Gulf at this season, were seen on the 18 & 24 Jun pelagic trips, the first 117 km off South Pass and another 2 birds 34 km out. A subad. Brown Booby was seen from shore in Escambia, FL 5 Jul (DF), not long after Tropical Storm Bill. A Northern Gannet about 9 km off South Pass 9 Jul (SWC, DLD et al.) established one of the very few Jul records for Louisiana, while one was found dead at Gulf Shores, AL 6 Jul (HS), and another was seen at Dauphin I. 9 Jul (ECS).

A Brown Pelican inland on L. Martin, LA 22 Jun (JK, KF) was unexpected, as was one far out on the Gulf 90 km se. of South Pass 24 Jun (SWC, DLD et al.). Neotropic Cormorants 30 Jun in St. Martin and 20 Jul in Vermilion (JH) were at the e. edge of the breeding range in Louisiana. In Marshall and Jackson, AL several colonies of Double-crested Cormorants yielded a total of 281 nests—there was only a single prior nest record for the state! One in Rapides, LA 3 Jul (JH) was also unusual. A single Anhinga at Noxubee N.W.R., MS 29 Jun (LT, ST, ET) was representative of many records on the refuge this season (*vide* TS). Not unexpectedly, Tropical Storm Bill drove Magnificent Frigatebirds inland, one appearing in Baton Rouge, LA 30 Jun, the day of landfall (JT, VT), and another the next day in Tangipahoa, LA (RM).

HERONS THROUGH DUCKS

A count of Cattle Egrets returning to a roost on Bluff L., Noxubee N.W.R., MS 19 Jul (MC, O.A.S.) reached 39,509 individuals. Small numbers of White Ibis nested in the egret colony in Jul for the 4th year in a row (TS). A total of 393 White Ibis on Yazoo N.W.R., Washington, MS 19 Jul (SD, GK, SK) was unprecedented, and 14 ads. in White, AR during the period (KN, LDN) were likely nesting. There were

also a few records from the Mountain & Tennessee Valley sections of Alabama in late Jun and early Jul (LB, WB, SDu, GNP et al.). Since neither species of *Plegadis* ibis is expected in inland Mississippi, the following records from 19 Jul are noteworthy: a White-faced and a Glossy Ibis at



Summering Great Black-backed Gulls in the Gulf Coast states are exceptional and must be carefully distinguished from Herring Gulls and their hybrids (and backcrosses) with Herring Gull. This Great Black-backed near South Pass, Louisiana 18 June 2003 provided one of few June records for the state. Photograph by David P. Muth.

Muscadine W.M.A. (SD, GK, SK) and a Glossy Ibis at Yazoo N.W.R. (GK, SK). *Plegadis* numbers at the two refuges totaled 154 birds. A total of 30 Glossy Ibis 30 Jun in Okaloosa, FL during the period represented all-time high numbers for the breeding season (LF, BM). In Arkansas, an ad. White-faced Ibis was in White 7 Jun (KN, LDN) and the Nicholsons had 9 imm.

Plegadis in Desha, AR 26 Jun.

A Roseate Spoonbill in Laplace, LA 2 Jul (RM) was likely a product of Bill, and one was in the hill country of Tangipahoa, LA 18 Jul (PL, KL). A juv. seen by three parties at Noxubee N.W.R., MS 24 & 26 Jul (RW, LW, DR, TS, LT, ND) was far inland, as were 8 imm. in Desha, AR 26 Jul (KN, LDN). The small colony near the mouth of Belle Pass, Lafourche, LA was active again this year (RDP et al.). There were 17 reports of post-breeding Wood Storks from Louisiana, e. cen. Mississippi, Alabama, and nw. Florida totaling nearly 3000 individuals. The earliest was one in Caddo, LA 14 Jun (RS), and the largest concentrations were over 700 in Perry and Hale, AL 17 Jun (BKF), 525 in Vermilion, LA 22 Jun (JK, KF), up to 400 in Acadia, LA 29 Jun (DM), and more than 700 in Hale, AL 20 Jul (GDJ, DGJ); a total of 156 was seen in Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Winston, Lowndes, and Clay, MS. Arkansas records were of 25 in Chicot and one in Desha 26 Jun (KN, LDN).

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were encountered as far e. as Okaloosa, FL 12 Jun (PLP), for a first area record, in Plaquemines, LA a day earlier (MC), and in Woodruff, AR 26 Jul (KN, LDN; 2 birds). Breeding has apparently been established upriver from New Orleans, but birds reported out of range could well be from

the feral Florida populations (Bob Duncan reports that the Gulf Breeze Zoo has a free-flying flock). Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, very rare in Arkansas, were in Desha 26 Jul (KN, LDN). Mottled Ducks, also rare in Arkansas, were recorded by the Nicholsons 7–8 Jun in White and 12 Jul in Desha. Five Blue-winged Teal (including 4 young) in Desha, AR 12 Jul implied local nesting, and there were 3 Ruddy Ducks at the same location (KN, LDN). Hooded Mergansers were found breeding in two Alabama counties: a female and 4 young 30 May in Franklin (PDK), and a female with 8 young in Russell 1 Jun (BKF).

HAWKS THROUGH PHALAROPES

Single Ospreys 20 Jun in Oktibbeha and 8 Jul in Noxubee (TS) were unseasonal for that area of n. Mississippi. Jennifer Coulson monitored 40 Swallow-tailed Kite nests (27 in the Pearl R. basin on the Louisiana-Mississippi border and the remainder in the Atchafalaya basin), and reported that 70% produced at least one young. Peak numbers from aerial censuses were 197 in the Pearl R. 25 Jul and 85 in the Atchafalaya 29 Jul (JC, SD, PS). Unusual records included single birds 9 Jul in Adams, MS (WmCG, DMCG) and 19 Jul in Iberville, LA (SWC, DLD); 25 in Autauga, AL 25 Jul (TAP) represented a good number. Scattered records of Mississippi Kites in the Starkville, MS area (about 8 individuals) were unusual, as



Unprecedented for the state was this Parasitic Jaeger at Pelican Island, Mississippi on the odd date of 26 June 2003. Photograph by David Dortch.

were 2 in Bibb, AL 23 Jul (GDJ, DGJ) and 50 in Iberville, LA 19 Jul (SWC, DLD). Three reports of Bald Eagle were received from s. Louisiana, where young are fledged in Mar and the species is usually gone by May: 4 & 6 Jun in Jefferson (BF, NN) and 16 Jul in St. Charles (PN). In

Noxubee, MS, on the other hand, there was a nest with one young 5 Jun (DR), and there were sightings in late Jul of an ad. (TS). A subad. was seen in Oktibbeha, MS 12–13 Jun (TS). In Alabama, there was a single nesting record, based on an ad. and 2 juvs. seen 25 Jun in Elmore/Tallapoosa (LB, WB), along with two other sightings in late May and Jun.

Two breeding-season records of Sharpshinned Hawk—14 Jun in St. Tammany (TDC) and 19 Jun in Vernon (CM)—raised the possibility of breeding in Louisiana, and one 22 Jun in De Soto, MS (CHB, WRP) had similar implications.

Single Cooper's Hawks 30 Jun in *Lafayette* (BF), 3 Jul in *Calcasieu* and *Vernon* (DM), as well as 4 Jul in *Iberville* (VR), were consistent with other indications of an expanding breeding range in Louisiana. There were three reports of the species from Arkansas, where it is a rare nester: 14 Jun in *White* (KN, LDN), 6 Jul in *Washington* (MMI), and from 15 Jul+ in *White* (KN). Ordinarily, Swainson's Hawks breed no closer to the Region than cen. Texas, but an ad. in *Acadia*, LA 29 Jun (DPM) hinted at possible nesting. There were two Arkansas records a month apart: 26 Jun (MMI) and 26 Jul (JN, MMI), both in *Benton*.

Seven Purple Gallinules, including 3 young 12 Jul in *Arkansas*, AR, were noteworthy (KN, LDN), as was an ad. 16 Jul in *Lowndes*, MS (TS), at a location where they have bred the past four years. Six ad. Common Moorhens were seen 1 Jun in *Tallahatchie*, MS (GK, SK). American Coots, which summer only occasionally in the Region, were seen in *Hale* and *Marengo*, AL 17 Jun (BKF) and 6 Jul (DS, JS), respectively, as well as in *Desha*, AR 12 Jul (KN, LDN).

Reports of shorebirds included the usual mix of late-spring and early-fall migrants, plus a few from the mid-summer hiatus period when no migrants are expected (about 10 Jun to 10 Jul coastally). Two pairs of American Oystercatchers were seen on Grand Terre I. 22 & 23 Jun (CW, SW et al.); they nested nearby if not actually on Grand Terre. Of other breeders, the only reports were of Willets, including one over the Gulf 44 km off South Pass 18 Jun (DLD, SWC et al.), one in *Barbour*, AL 1 Jul after *Bill* (TH), and 2 rather far inland in *St. Martin*, LA 8 Jul (JH). A Semipalmated Plover in *Okibbeha*, MS 18 Jul (TS) was earliest ever in the Starkville area by five days, and a Piping Plover was noted in *Prairie*, AR 27 Jul (KN, LDN). Two American Avocets in *Mobile*, AL 26 Jun (DD, CD) were well out of season, as was a Greater Yellowlegs on Grand Terre 23 Jun (CW, SW); single birds were very early in *Benton*, AR 26 Jun (MMI) and coastal *Okaloosa*, FL 2 Jul (DW). A Lesser Yellowlegs summered in *Benton*, AR 2 Jun–7 Jul (RD). A Solitary Sandpiper in *Leighton*, AL 7 Jul (DJS) and 2 in the Starkville, MS area 10 Jul (TS) were early fall migrants. Two Whimbrels in *Vermilion*, LA 3 Jun (JH) and 2 in *Pensacola*, FL 5 Jun (CB) were late for north-bound migrants; one on Grand Terre I. 22 Jun (CW, SW) was about a month later than any previous se. Louisiana record; and one in *Mobile*, AL 11 Jul (ECS), with another 16 Jul at *Cameron* (BF, RT), added to the growing list of late summer and fall

records of a species formerly considered rare in fall migration there.

A Semipalmated Sandpiper 17 Jun in *Benton* (MMI) was extremely "late," and 2 Stilt Sandpipers 25 Jun in *Mobile*, AL (DD, CD) and 3 Short-billed Dowitchers on Grand Terre I., LA 23 Jun (CW, SW) were noteworthy for being in the "hiatus" period. The same was perhaps true of a White-rumped Sandpiper in *Benton*, AR 21 Jun (RD), though the species is a notoriously late migrant. A juv. Wilson's Phalarope 9 Jul in New Orleans (MER, DD) was earliest in fall for se. Louisiana by a week.

JAEGERS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

A Parasitic Jaeger was seen on shore 26 Jun on Pelican I., *Mobile*, AL (DD, ph. CD). A Ring-billed Gull 30 Jul in *Oktibbeha*, MS (TS) was by three weeks the earliest for the Starkville area, and a second-summer Great Black-backed Gull 18 Jun at the mouth of South Pass was the first Jun record for se. Louisiana. While a few imm. Sandwich Terns seen well off South Pass on 18 Jun and 9 Jul pelagic trips (DLD, SWC et al.) were surprisingly far offshore, imm. Common Terns on these trips represent further confirmation that small numbers summer well off the Louisiana coast. One well inland in *Eufala*, AL 1 Jul (TH) was probably entrained by *Bill*. Another in *Henry*, AL 26 Jul (WFC) was less easily explained. Inland records of Least Terns included two reports from the Starkville, MS area 1 & 3 Jun (TS) and the same number from *Washington*, on the Mississippi R., 19 Jun (GK, SK, SD). Three nest sites were located on sandbars in the Arkansas R. in *Desha*, AR 10 Jul (AM, JP), and there were late Jul records from *White* and *Prairie*, AR (KN, LDN). The aforementioned pelagic trips off the mouth of the Mississippi R. yielded low totals of 5 Bridled and 6 Sooty Terns. On 1 Jul, 5 Bridleds were at *Pensacola* Beach and 6 Sooties were at *Gulf Breeze*, FL (RAD), both in the wake of *Bill*. A Sooty Tern was also found dead in over 340 km inland in *Auburn*, AL 3 Jul (ph. JID), two days after *Bill*.

White-winged Doves in five locations in *Okaloosa* as well as at *Gulf Breeze*, FL during the period strongly suggested local nesting (DW, AK, TF, RAD), as did a pair in *Mobile*, AL 1 Jul (*vide* HEH). Pairs of Inca Doves, which breed mostly in w. Louisiana, were found in areas where they were missed during the recent breeding bird atlas program: 15 Jun in *Rapides* and 23 Jun in *Lafayette* (JH). A pair of Common Ground-Doves in *Shelby*, AL 14–15 Jun (JG, MR et al.) was probably nesting, and one was seen *Gulf Breeze*, FL 26 Jul

(RAD). A Black-billed Cuckoo in *Ashley*, AR 1 Jun (LA) could have been a late migrant, but one in *Marshall*, AL 28 Jun (SWM) was possibly nesting. The same could be said of a Whip-poor-will in *Russell*, AL 1 Jun (BKF), which would be the southernmost nesting record for the state. Quite astonishingly, a Buff-bellied Hummingbird that wintered in *Baton Rouge*, LA from Dec+ was present throughout Jun and Jul (CMA, MMA, *vide* NLN). An ad. male *Selasphorus* hummingbird arrived in a *Thibodaux*, LA yard on the very early date of 21 Jul (JB), and a Rufous Hummingbird had returned to a *Birmingham*, AL feeder for the 4th consecutive year by 27 Jul (*vide* RRS).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH GOLDFINCH

Two reports of breeding-season Willow Flycatchers were received from *Benton*, AR: 4, including 2 singing males, 4 Jun (DJ) and 2 on 10 Jun (RD, MMI). Eight Western Kingbirds, which breed sparingly in w. Louisiana and were missed on the atlas, were seen in *Caddo* 14 Jun (RS, VLF). The most remarkable breeding record of the season was Louisiana's first known nesting of Gray Kingbird, in New Orleans, based on 2 ads. with 3 young 5–21 Jul (DM, m. ob.—ph). An earlier sighting 17 Jun about 2 km away (PY) could well have been of one of the adults. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, which are rare but increasing breeders in Alabama, were in *Morgan*, *Jackson*, and *Perry*, AL during the period (SH, DH, PDK, SER, HHR et al.). One in *Okaloosa*, FL 31 May (BB) provided a very late record of a casual species, but another nearby on 15 Jul (JE, JB) was the first ever in Jul for nw. Florida. A nesting pair in *Prairie*, AR 4 Jun (TS, RS) provided further evidence of eastward range expansion in the state.

In the same general area as last year's first summer record for s. Alabama was a Warbling Vireo in *Crenshaw* 2 Jun (DMW). Very surprising were 2 singing Horned Larks in *Pickens*, AL 31 May (RLW). Additional evidence of breeding Tree Swallows in the Starkville, MS area was gathered in early Jun (TS), with breeding confirmed at three Alabama localities: 9 Jun in *St. Clair* (FM, BM) and 1 Jul in both *Walker/Winston* (PL) and in *Cullman* (PL). Two reported from *Bossier* in ne. Louisiana 6 Jun (RS, VL, AM) were unexpected. A census carried out along about 14 km of the Arkansas R. in *Desha*, AR 10 Jul (AM, JP), yielded 354 Bank Swallow nest holes and 16 individuals (nesting was complete). Cliff Swallows continued to expand westward along US 82 in e.-cen. Mississippi, and nesting was reported for the first time in *Webster*, with

17 nests (TS); 10 pairs nesting under a bridge over the White R. in *Prairie*, AR 21 Jun (TS, PO) were also unusual.

A Swainson's Thrush heard singing 1 Jun in *Sharkey*, MS (KH) was a late migrant. Gray Catbirds, which nest sparingly in Louisiana, apparently no longer nest on Grand I., but they evidently did this year in Hammond, where 2 were present all summer (RuM, DeM). One in *Calcasieu*, LA 3 Jul (DM) was also of interest. Thirteen reports of Cedar Waxwing were received from nine Alabama counties spanning the entire month of Jul; all indicated possible or probable breeding, with one confirmed nesting record, 1 Jul in *Walker/Winston* (PL). The only Mississippi report of Cedar Waxwings was of 5 near Oxford 28 Jun (GK, SK).

A singing male Blue-winged Warbler in *Concuh* 19 Jun (DMW) represented the southernmost summer record for Alabama, and a Blackburnian Warbler in *Marengo* was the latest ever for the s. part of the state. Donata Roome found an unprecedented 74 Swainson's Warbler nests in bottomland and pine habitat in se. Louisiana during the 2003 field season. She estimated overall nesting success at 32%. Five reports (8 birds total) of the species, for which there is special concern, were received from *Oktibbeha*, *Winston*, and *Chocktaw* in e.-cen. Mississippi (TS, MS, LT). A Louisiana Waterthrush in *Iberville*, LA 29 Jun (VR) was an early migrant/dispersing bird.

Of the declining Bachman's Sparrow, there were two reports from the Starkville, MS area: 1-23 Jun and 3 Jul+ in separate *Noxubee* localities (TS, MS). Several singing Field Sparrows near the coast in *Baldwin*, AL into early Jul (CK) suggested breeding, as did Lark Sparrows in *Madison* and *Autauga*, AL during Jun (SWM, SER et al.). They were also encountered in the Starkville, MS area 1 Jun in *Lowndes* (TS), with 3 on the Macon B.B.S. route in *Noxubee* (TS, MS); the species is an uncommon to rare breeder there. For the first time in over a decade, a Grasshopper Sparrow was recorded on the Dundee B.B.S. route, *Tunica*, MS 22 Jun (WRP). Six Henslow's Sparrows, 5 singing, were seen in Fayetteville, AR 12 Jul (RD, MMI, JN, DN), and 2 were seen earlier in *Franklin*, AR 1 Jun (DJ, AG). The first summer record of *Song Sparrow* for nw. Arkansas was established by one in *Benton* 20 Jul (JN, MMI). A leucistic White-throated Sparrow from spring returned to a Jefferson, AL locality 13 Jul (RRS, MBS). Always a surprise in summer, a male *Rose-breasted Grosbeak* that visited a Baton Rouge seed feeder 19-21 Jul (JB, PG) probably represented the first area record

between Jun and Sep (ph. L.O.S. website). Painted Buntings become increasingly rare from cen. Mississippi into Alabama; interesting records of this rare but increasing breeder included one 15 Jun in *Marengo*, AL (DS, JS) and another 19 Jul in *Washington*, MS (GK, SK). Also at the e. edge of their breeding range were 2 Great-tailed Grackles in *Lafayette*, LA 8 Jul (JH). A female Baltimore Oriole carrying food in *Sumter* 17 Jun (DS, JS) was very far s. in Alabama to be breeding, and one at Ft. Walton Beach, FL 4 Jul (AK) established the first Jul record for nw. Florida. An American Goldfinch 8 Jun in the same location (MLS) established the 4th area Jun record.

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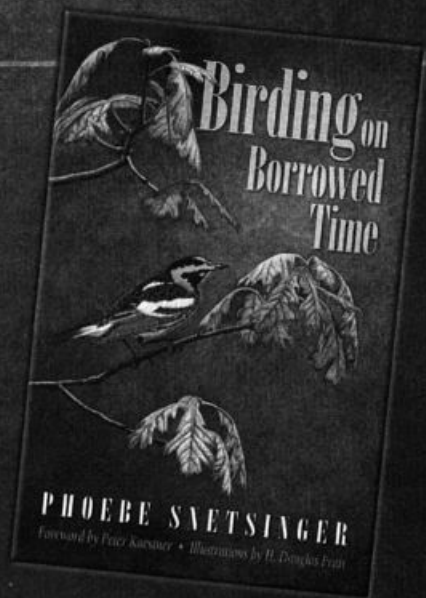
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