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August saw fewer than normal migrants along the coast, and feeder watchers complained about the paucity of resident birds in yards and at feeders. Vegetation was barely recovering from the devastating effects of Hurricane *Ivan* that went ashore near Gulf Shores, Alabama as a Category 3 last year on 15 September.

Then came *Katrina*. The storm came ashore near Bay St. Louis, Mississippi on 29 August as a Category 4 hurricane, causing devastating damage to Louisiana, Mississippi, and southern Alabama. Severe damage to migrant traps (hummocks and coastal forests), marshes, and riparian habitat was widespread. The storm tracked northward through Mississippi, spreading havoc well into the interior, at least as far as Hattiesburg. Interior pine forests were flattened, with countless snapped or uprooted trees. The impact on the coastal birding community was harsh. Most coastal birders were displaced from their damaged or destroyed homes, barred from birding haunts by debris-strewn, impassable roads, and prevented from birding by the demands of recovery. September birding was poor, with no fronts reaching the coast.

And then came *Rita*. This storm went ashore near the Louisiana-Texas line 24 September as a Category 3 hurricane, inundating coastal Louisiana and parts of eastern Texas with storm surge and high winds. The impact of these storms is covered in the S.A. section in this report.

The first cold front of the season entered the Region 6–7 October, producing modest fallouts at Ft. Morgan and Dauphin Island but fewer birds than expected in proportion to its strength. The remainder of October and November were uneventful. Overall,

migration along the coast was poor to mediocre at best. Migrants were faced with trees stripped of leaves and browned-out vegetation. One can only speculate whether upon reaching the southern part of the Region, birds either kept going across the Gulf or returned to the interior well north of the devastated areas. Winter visitors were reported in very low numbers along the coast through the end of the period, especially Yellow-rumped Warblers and White-throated Sparrows.

Abbreviations: Bald Knob (Bald Knob N.W.R., White, AR); Noxubee (Noxubee N.W.R., e.-cen. MS); St. Catherine (St. Catherine Creek N.W.R., Adams, MS); Wheeler (Wheeler N.W.R., Limestone, AL). State names are included only with the initial use of a place name.

WATERFOWL THROUGH STORK

One to 2 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, uncommon in Arkansas, were in *Hempstead* 20 Aug (KN, LN), *Washington* 24–28 Sep (MMI, JN), and *Desha* 27 Aug–25 Sep (DiB). Continuing the species' range expansion, 8 were located in *Ascension*, LA 23 Aug (JH) and 85 in *Cameron* 29 Nov (JPK, JK), the latter in company with 120 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks. Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were noted 12 Aug in *Lonoke*, AR, where very rare (LY, EL). The only Greater White-fronted Geese reported in the Region were up to 24 in *Limestone*, AL 22 Oct–25 Nov (NC, SWM). Reports of waterfowl were way down, probably due to the inaccessibility of sites due to hurricane disturbance or displacement of observers, especially in Louisiana and Mississippi, but the unusually warm weather to the north of the Region probably also delayed arrivals in the south. Formerly very rare in the Region, Ross's Goose is now considered uncommon and regular. One was in *Madison*, MS 25 Nov (GK, SK) and another at Noxubee 30 Nov (TS). A Tundra Swan was a rare find in *Cleburne*, AR 25 Nov (KN, LN). Very late were 14–17 Mottled Ducks in *Desha* 13–20 Nov (DiB). The Kleimans commented that there were more ducks than usual at Lacassine Pool, *Cameron*, LA, where they counted 13,500 Green-winged Teal, possibly due to damaged coastal marshes. Maximum ever for Alabama's inland coastal plain were 50 or more Greater Scaup in *Henry* 25 Nov (EB, MB, PSa). A Long-tailed Duck in *Oktibbeha*, MS 16 Nov was both rare and early (TS). A Hooded Merganser at Noxubee 9–12 Aug established a first Aug record for the area (DR).

An ad. female Common Merganser, a species accidental in Mississippi, was found in *Chickasaw* 24–25 Nov (p.a., WP).

Rarely reported in the Region and in apparent decline, 21 Northern Bobwhites both ads. and chicks, were found in *Benton* AR 13 Sep (MMI, JN). A Red-throated Loon 25 Nov in *Henry* provided Alabama's 3rd for the inland coastal plain (EB, MB, PSa). Ten Red-necked Grebes on the Red R. in *Caddo* and *Bossier*, LA on 26 Sep after *Rita* were a remarkable find in interior Louisiana (p.a. HH, PH). Another at *Wheeler* 19 Nov was Alabama's 19th (HD, MJH, KW, BM et al.) Rare but regular in the Region, Eared Grebes were found in Mississippi (6), Louisiana (4), and Arkansas (one) 18 Sep–19 Nov.

Surprisingly, only two storm-petrels were reported in spite of the two fierce storms. A Wilson's Storm-Petrel 30 Aug on the Tennessee R. in *Lauderdale* (GDJ) was the 2nd inland and first Tennessee Valley record for Alabama. A Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (p.a., GDJ, DGJ) 30 Aug at the same location was Alabama's first inland record—and very nearly became a pursuing Bald Eagle's snack. However, there were no tropicbirds or boobies reported in the Region, in spite of much searching on inland lakes and reservoirs following the hurricanes. American White Pelicans were reported in Arkansas (140), Louisiana (1032), Mississippi (5), and Alabama (193) 22 Sep–11 Nov. Brown Pelicans found well inland in ones and twos were likely hurricane related: singles in Alabama and Arkansas, 2 in Mississippi, and in Louisiana—The Pelican State—8. Accidental in Mississippi, 4 Neotropic Cormorants were found 21 Aug at St. Catherine (p.a., TS, m.ob.). The 50 Anhingas at St. Catherine 21 Aug were a large number for Mississippi (TS, m.ob.).

There were numerous Magnificent Frigatebird sightings following *Katrina* and *Rita* at inland locations. Alabama had its 5th and 6th inland records, single birds at *Colbert* (SWM) and *Henry* 30 Aug (MB) Arkansas had singles at *Desha* 4 Sep (JB) and 25 Sep (DiB, BMC), *Hempstead* 24 Sep (LN, CM), *Clark* 25 Sep (DH, GG, EG), and *Ouachita* 25 Sep (HJ). Following *Katrina*, sightings of small numbers occurred 29 Aug–1 Sep in *East Baton Rouge*, *Lafourche*, and *Cameron*. *Rita* brought other sightings throughout Louisiana. One was sighted as far n. as Shreveport on 25 Sep (JT, JeT), and 82 were over the LSU campus 23 Sep preceding landfall (JBo, DB).

Only one American Bittern was reported a single bird in *White*, AR 14 Oct (KN,

SA Little more than six weeks after Hurricane *Dennis* (Category 3) struck the western Panhandle of Florida and Alabama, *Katrina* formed from a tropical wave, becoming a depression 280 km southeast of Nassau in the Bahamas on 23 August. The following day, it became a tropical storm, moved northwestward through the Bahamas, turned westward toward South Florida, and began strengthening. *Katrina* made first landfall in the Miami area as a Category 1 hurricane on 25 August, moving southwestward across southern Florida, dumping over a foot of rain, toppling trees and power lines, and damaging homes and businesses. Upon entering the Gulf of Mexico, *Katrina* began to strengthen, reaching Category 5 on 28 August, 400 km south-southeast of the mouth of the Mississippi River. Winds reached 175 mph (280 km/hr), and that day the central pressure fell to 902 mb (at the time, the fourth lowest on record in the Atlantic). *Katrina* turned to the northwest and then northward, making its second landfall in Plaquemines Parish as a Category 4 storm just south of Buras on 29 August. Continuing northward, *Katrina* rolled over the Mississippi Sound and made a last landfall near the Louisiana-Mississippi border as a Category 3 on the morning of 30 August. It weakened as it moved inland to the north-northeast but was still a hurricane 150 km inland near Laurel, Mississippi.

Katrina was the worst natural disaster of its kind in the history of the United States, producing catastrophic damages to thousands of structures and to the environment. The costs to human life—over 1200 killed, hundreds of thousands evacuated, many permanently from the region—and to property (well over \$100 billion) may pale against the long-term environmental damage to the region, which will take many years to assess, particularly the impact of toxins that were released when levees in New Orleans and other structures were breached or damaged (preliminary tests by EPA indicate surprisingly low levels of most pollutants in sediment and floodwaters). Here we note only the most overt damage that has been noted by the area's birders and conservationists; future columns will include updates as they are available. The Internet has extensive material on the subject from government agencies as well as NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy, and a compilation of resources is available at <www.birdblog.com/bird/Environment/Katrina.html>.

Coastal Mississippi and Louisiana experienced the worst of *Katrina's* ferocity. On Mississippi's coast, there is little marshland to protect inland areas. Its barrier islands are 25 km offshore, so significant wave heights were easily propagated in Mississippi Sound. The towering storm surge, estimated at over 10 m and probably higher than during *Camille* of 1969, thoroughly inundated the barrier islands and the coast. Onshore, the artificial beaches along Mississippi Sound remained intact in some places, but widespread destruction of the coastline extended through areas up to 100 km east of the storm center, through Hancock County and Harrison County in Mississippi along the coast and inland to Interstate 10 (<www.srh.noaa.gov/ffc/html/psrlx_Katrina.txt>). The implication of this devastation for migrants, which rely on the region's bottomland swamp forests as well as Gulf-side habitats during both spring and fall migrations, is harsh: we expect little or no vegetation bearing seeds, fruits, or acorns, and little to sustain insects for migrants in the near term.

In Alabama, vegetation, marshes, and islands still badly damaged by Hurricane *Ivan* of the previous autumn received another terrible blow. At Fort Morgan and on Dauphin Island, which serve as storm barriers for the Alabama mainland, *Katrina* destroyed more than 200 homes and swept away tons of sand from the beaches. The area's Live Oaks, vital to Neotropical migrants and still recovering from *Ivan's* severe winds, were once again stripped of leaves and limbs. Shrubs were again burned and browned by high winds and salt water, while pines snapped below the crowns, particularly at nest cavity sites, or were killed by saltwater intrusion. The coastal scene was much the same from the western Florida Panhandle through southeastern Louisiana.

Judy Toups, co-author of *Birds and Birding on the Mississippi Coast*, writes that the Mississippi oaks look "as if they had a military haircut that's just growing out." As of early February 2006, she writes that there are few if any signs of Live Oak recovery in places such as Ansley and coastal Hancock County. Even oaks north of Interstate 10 are not showing signs of recovery. And gums, pines, and magnolias did not fare as well. Toups also reports that many favorite birding places have been wiped out—nonexistent, inaccessible, or birdless. From the beachfronts of Hancock County, to the coastal preserve at Ansley and Heron Bay (probably the hardest hit of all birding areas), to Buccaneer State Park and the North Beach area, "the eeriest thing of all was not finding a single passerine with the exception of one Savannah Sparrow, which has lived from fall through winter in a rock pile near Bayou Caddy." She reports that resident landbirds suffered heavy losses, including in her neighborhood in Gulfport, with woodpeckers apparently very hard hit. Encouraging news came from the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge that the 140-bird flock of endangered cranes is relatively intact. Of 38 birds that had radio transmitters, 25 have been found alive, but the loss of two females responsible for 40% of recruitment (egg-laying and raising of young) were found dead. Scott Herford, Refuge Manager, said that there was "minimal habitat damage" and

considered the broken and downed pines a good thing, as refuge managers are trying to reestablish pine savannahs, and the storm opened up the canopy.

Inland Mississippi had its own share of problems. Well inland from the sound, Hattiesburg was raked with winds of 95 mph (152 km/hr) for eight hours, which snapped pines and stripped Live Oaks. Other canopy trees were significantly damaged or toppled. The swath of downed pines extended north as far as Jackson. *Katrina* brought down scores of trees at Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge in east-central Mississippi, including cavity trees where endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers roost and nest. Foraging habitat for these woodpeckers was also destroyed.

Hurricane *Rita* soon followed *Katrina*. On 17 September, *Rita* formed as a depression east of the Turks and Caicos Islands, moving westward through the central Bahamas over the next two days and becoming a Category 1 hurricane. Moving through the Florida Straits, the storm strengthened rapidly, passing Key West to the south as a Category 2 on 20 September. *Rita* entered the hot water of the Gulf of Mexico and within 24 hours had become a Category 5 storm; by 22 September, winds reached 175 mph (280 km/hr) and the storm's central pressure dropped to 897 mb. The next day, the storm's intensity dropped to a Category 3, and it made landfall about 0230 CDT near Sabine Pass, on the Louisiana-Texas border. The storm caused extreme flooding and wind damage in the area before passing inland to the north-northwest, reaching northwestern Louisiana in the evening of 24 September.

Katrina and *Rita* annihilated more than 160 km² (100 mi²) of wetlands in Louisiana alone. The storms transported huge volumes of mud and sediment, burying clam and oyster beds, and miles of seagrass estuaries in which marine vertebrates and invertebrates breed, hide, and feed. Dan Purrington reports that there are extensive openings in the already beleaguered marshes, and huge piles of marsh vegetation (mostly *Spartina alterniflora*) have accumulated in various places. The lower Chandeleur Islands (Curlew Island, Gosier Island) were reduced to minor mounds or shoals (see <www.nccdc.noaa.gov/Katrina>), but the same happened after *Camille*, and the tern colonies moved north to the main chain, on what is locally known as Monkey Island. Within about four years after *Camille*, the shoals had built up into islands again, and the colonies returned to Curlew and Gosier Islands. These islands became major nesting sites for Brown Pelicans. There will be little vegetation on the surviving islands for some time, which will have some impact. Encouragingly, if predators had reached the Chandeleurs, they are probably gone now.

Grand Isle, Louisiana, came through the storms in relatively good shape. The oaks are shredded but still show signs of life. The winds were offshore for *Katrina* and onshore for *Rita*, but erosion was moderate, although on Fourchon Beach, to the west, the beach ridge suffered some major erosion. However, habitat for species such as Wilson's Plover, for example, should be good in the breeding season of 2006. Towns and cities in Louisiana such as Venice, Empire, Port Sulfur, and Cameron are disaster areas, some now uninhabitable. But at least some of the Live Oaks survived (in contrast to the Water Oaks and the magnolias), according to Victoria Bayless, who visited Peveto Woods (Hollyman Sanctuary) in Cameron Parish soon after the storm. In Cameron, the jetty area—a magnet for birds and birders alike with the newly built metal fishing pier and observation tower—is simply gone. The coastal marshes near what was the east jetty appeared to have no Clapper Rails when Purrington visited. Because the state's marshes were wholly underwater for long periods during these hurricanes, this species probably fared very poorly. Holley Beach, notes Purrington, "looks like images of Hiroshima after WWII. The entire community of Johnson's Bayou is gone."

The coastal marsh in southeastern Louisiana—where the marsh habitat is already dwindling, cut up by oil-field canals with attendant saltwater intrusion, abetted by the disastrous Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet—will probably be assessed as the worst damaged of the Gulf habitats. Most of the freshwater marshes from around Pecan Island westward to the Johnson's Bayou area were infiltrated with salt water, which killed most of the marsh grasses and rendered the entire area anaerobic and emitting a strong sulfurous smell. Michael Musumecche writes from his visit there that "we did not see a Blue Jay, Northern Mockingbird, Northern Cardinal, Brown Thrasher, Loggerhead Shrike, House Sparrow, or Common Moorhen."

As the Christmas Bird Counts revealed, Venice and Cameron have almost no resident landbirds now. At Venice, there were almost no sparrows, notably Swamps, which are usually abundant in winter. Purrington found essentially no seeds to sustain them. Likewise, there were very few raptors, presumably because of a lack of prey. Remarkably, herons and egrets seem to have fared better than other groups; their numbers seem closer to normal, exceptions being Reddish Egrets and Roseate Spoonbills at Port Fouchon. As of late January 2006, there are also rather few Black-crowned Night Herons. Vultures, by contrast, have been conspicuous and abundant after the storms.

DiB). A count of 60 Great Egrets was considered high for the Ozarks in *Benton* 3 Oct (JN, JW). Also considered a good number, 150 graced Wheeler 19 Oct (NC). Highest ever for n. Alabama, 510 were in *Shelby* 31 Aug following *Katrina* (GDJ). Arkansas sported 129 very late White Ibis in *Desha* 20 Nov (DiB). Probably a result of dispersal by *Rita*, 128 Roseate Spoonbills were in *Desha* 25 Sep, the highest number ever for Arkansas (DiB, JB). Rare in Alabama, 5 were in *Colbert* 5–8 Aug (DJS, SWM) and another in *Hale* 13–24 Aug (AR). Uncommon in Mississippi, 5 were in *Bolivar* 6 Aug (WP), up to 2 were at Noxubee 9 Aug–15 Oct (TS, m.ob.), 12 were at Anna's Bottom in *Adams* 19 Aug (TS, MS, m.ob.), and 39 were at St. Catherine 20 Aug (TS, MS, m.ob.). Wood Storks were reported between 16 Jun and 23 Oct, including some large counts prior to *Katrina*. Totals by state were Arkansas 368, Louisiana 178, Mississippi 339, and Alabama 2.

HAWKS THROUGH RAILS

An early fall migrant, Swallow-tailed Kites moved through the Region 10 Aug–2 Sep, with 12 tallied in Louisiana and 30 in Mississippi. Unusual in ne. Louisiana and uncommon in the remainder of the state, single White-tailed Kites were in *Caldwell* and *Catahoula* 26 Sep (JQ, CQ). Another graced *LaSalle* 12 Nov (LyW, BW), and yet another was in *Vermilion* 1 Nov (BV). Perhaps becoming too common for noting, there were only 13 reports of Bald Eagles. Louisiana had 9, Mississippi 3, and Arkansas one bird at a nest. The Birmingham Audubon Society tallied an impressive 1280 Broad-winged Hawks 1 Oct. A Swainson's Hawk 10 Nov in *Baldwin* was a rare find (BS, ECS). Very rare in Alabama, a Golden Eagle was found injured 18 Nov in *Dallas* (ph. TRP); another was in *Newton*, AR 7 Oct (JSt). Accidental in Louisiana, 3 Crested Caracaras were found in *Cameron* 4 Sep (p.a., DB, JB, PB, EJa). Perhaps indicating a successful comeback, few reported Peregrine Falcons; just six reports were received, all from Arkansas. A Black Rail was a rare find in *Baldwin* 5 Nov (DPL). Rare in Arkansas, a King Rail was in *Hempstead* 20 Aug (KN, LN), and 5 were at *Desha* 17 Sep (DiB, SD). On 20 Aug, 150 Common Moorhens were tallied in *Hempstead* (KN, LN).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

A rare fall migrant in the Region, single American Golden-Plovers were at Bald Knob 13 Aug (LY, KD) and 27 Aug (DS). Another was in *Lee*, MS 4 Sep (WP), and a

late bird was in *Caddo* 26 Nov (JI, CL). Only 2 Piping Plovers were reported, one in *White* 14 Aug (KN, LN) and another in *Oktibbeha* 30 Aug (TS, MS). A good number for Mississippi, 300 Black-necked Stilts were counted in *Adams* 20 Aug (TS, MS, m.ob.). Nine in *Desha* 20 Nov were late (DiB). Rare away from the coast, inland American Avocets made appearances in Alabama (21), Mississippi (4), and Arkansas (45). Uncommon in Arkansas, 18 Upland Sandpipers were tallied 3–21 Aug in four counties. Rare in Arkansas, a Marbled Godwit was in *Prairie* 21 Aug (KN, LN). Another was seen 30 Aug in *Lowndes*, MS, where also rare (TS, MS). A Red Knot 13 Aug in *Desha* was a very rare find (KN, LN). A Sanderling 13 Nov in *Desha* was very late (DiB). Very rare in fall was a White-rumped Sandpiper in *Prairie* 29–30 Oct (KN, LN, et. al.). Rare but regular in Alabama, 6 Baird's Sandpipers were in *Colbert* 5 Aug–15 Sep (DJS). Six were in *Prairie* 21 Aug (KN, LN), where uncommon. A Dunlin was very early at Bald Knob 27 Aug (DS). Encouraging numbers of Buff-breasted Sandpipers were reported 7 Aug–17 Sep: Mississippi (13), Alabama (32), and Arkansas (52). An estimated 2000 Long-billed Dowitchers in sw. Louisiana rice fields 29 Nov must have been impressive (JPK, JK). A Wilson's Snipe 11 Aug in *White*, AR was very early (KN). Six *Katrina*-related Red-necked Phalaropes were sighted 30 Aug in *Lowndes* (KV), up to 3 on 30–31 Aug in *Oktibbeha* (TS, MS), and 2 in *Lauderdale* 30 Aug (TMH, JTG). One was in *White*, AR 6 Aug (KN, LN et al.).

Alabama's 4th Long-tailed Jaeger was reported 26 Sep at Wheeler following *Rita's* landfall (p.a., GDJ, DGJ). Laughing Gulls were widely displaced into the interior of the Region following both *Katrina* and *Rita*. Totals attributed to *Katrina* were Arkansas (10), Alabama (173), Mississippi (30), and Louisiana (one). Those attributed to *Rita* were Arkansas (41), Alabama (157), maximum ever for the Tennessee Valley), Mississippi (22), and Louisiana (60). Franklin's Gulls appeared in good numbers, with 41 in *Grenada*, MS 16 Oct–5 Nov (GK, SK), 40+ on 18 Oct in *Rapides*, LA (JH), and one in *Marshall*, AL 7 Nov (LBR). Early were 250 Ring-billed Gulls and a Lesser-Black-backed Gull at Wheeler 26 Sep (GDJ, DGJ). A Great Black-backed Gull was observed in *Cameron*, where rare, 10 Sep (p.a., RCD, DD). The first record since 1984, a Sabine's Gull, Alabama's 5th and first inland, was found dead at Wheeler 29 Sep following *Rita* (*Wheeler N.W.R., p.a., ph. CDC).

Very rare in Arkansas, another was in *Pope* 13 Nov (KN, LN).

There was widespread displacement of terns by *Katrina* and *Rita* into the interior of the Region as indicated by the accounts that follow. Very rare inland, Gull-billed Terns were in *Lowndes* (TS) and *Colbert* (DJS) 30 Aug. Also displaced 30 Aug were 44 Caspian Terns in *Oktibbeha* and *Lowndes* (TS, MS) and 29 in *Yalobusha* (GK, SK). Accidental in Arkansas and storm-related was a Royal Tern in *Ouachita* 25 Sep (p.a., ph. HJ, JRW). Sandwich Terns were found 30 Aug in *East Baton Rouge* (DL) and *St. Tammany* (JB, DB, PB). Another was in *East Baton Rouge* 25 Sep (PB, DL, JSa), no doubt *Rita*-related Alabama's 2nd inland occurrence was one in *Barbour* 30 Aug (LW). Twenty Common Terns were at Wheeler 26 Sep, maximum ever for the Tennessee Valley of Alabama (GDJ). Over 100 Forster's Terns 26 Sep were considered a good number for Wheeler and Wilson Dams (GDJ, DGJ).

Least Terns were reported inland throughout the Region, with 100 *Katrina*-associated birds 3 Sep in *Desha* (DiB, SD). Five more appeared inland in *Colbert* 30 Aug (DJS), one each in *Noxubee* and *Lowndes* (TS), and 3 in *East Baton Rouge* (PB et al.). Not storm-related were 40 in *Lonoke* (KN, LN) 7 Aug, where they are local and rare. Sooty Terns are of regular occurrence to the e. of tropical storms' point of landfall and inland usually e. of the decaying center of circulation. A total of 25 was noted in six interior Alabama counties on 30 Aug. Also on 30 Aug, singles were seen in *Oktibbeha* (TS) and *Lowndes* (TS, MS, DP). Another was in *East Baton Rouge* 28 Aug (VR). Black Terns made appearances in *East Baton Rouge* 29 Aug, with 64 tallied (PB, m.ob.). Fifty were in *Henry* 30 Aug (MB). Few Black Skimmers were reported, but in Arkansas, where accidental, singles were in *Monroe* 12 Sep (p.a., RM, JW) and in *Crittenden* 17 Sep (p.a., JRW, KN, LN).

DOVES THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS

Inca Doves were reported from nw. to se Louisiana, with 20 at *Bossier* 20 Nov (JI) and one each in *Lafourche* 17–19 Oct (SM, BMa) and *Iberville* 23 Oct (VR). Reported infrequently and in apparent decline in the Region, single Common Ground-Doves were found in *East Baton Rouge* 18 Sep (DL et al.), 9 Oct (JB et al.), and in *LaSalle* 10 Oct (BHW). Unusual in the mt. region was one in *Shelby* 31 Aug (GDJ). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo 18 Nov in *Oktibbeha* was latest ever for the area by 20 days (TB). Arkansas had a good owl season. A Snowy

Owl found in a weakened condition in *Cleburne* 24 Nov was taken to a rehabilitation center on 27 Nov for later release. This was the 5th Arkansas record and first since 1955 (p.a., ph. LL, GL, TP, SP, MP). A very rare find was a Burrowing Owl in *Pulaski*, AR 10–14 Oct (JS, m.ob.). Three Short-eared Owls were found in *Pope* 26 Nov (KN, LN) and 2 on 30 Nov in *Poinsett*, AR (DiB). An injured Northern Saw-whet Owl in *Pope* was brought to a rehabilitation center 4 Nov (LS). About 100 migrating Common Nighthawks in *Pulaski* 16 Aug must have been impressive (HP, MP). The Knights' residence in *Lafayette*, MS hosted more than 150 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds 14–19 Sep (GK, SK). Accidental in Mississippi, an Anna's Hummingbird at the Loftin residence in *Oktibbeha* 19–25 Nov was banded by Bob Sargent. An Allen's Hummingbird 21 Aug at the Lamont residence in *Cullman*, AL was an early recapture of a bird banded 11 Dec 2004 by Bob and Martha Sargent.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRUSHES

Olive-sided Flycatchers, rare but regular in the Region, appeared between 7 Aug–27 Sep in Alabama (3), Mississippi (1), Louisiana (2), and Arkansas (2). A very late nesting Eastern Phoebe was in *Washington* 10 Oct (KS). Occasional in inland Alabama, single Vermilion Flycatchers were in *Coffee* 14 Nov (TSt, BSt) and *Limestone* 19 Nov (HD, MJH et al.). Rare to uncommon in Louisiana, singles were in *Caldwell* 26 Sep (JQ), *Rapides* 26 Sep (JH), *Red River* 2 Oct (JT), and *Cameron* 30 Oct (JB, m.ob.). Rare but regular in the Region, an Ash-throated Flycatcher was at Ft. Morgan, *Baldwin* 19 Oct (RRS, m.ob.).

Encouraging were sightings of 5 Bell's Vireos in three states (all p.a.): *Cameron* 31 Aug (RCD), *Iberia* 13 Oct (ph. MM), *Vermilion* 15 Oct (vt., DaP, PC), *Lafayette* 19 Sep (GK, SK), and Ft. Morgan 16 Oct (b., ph. RRS, MBS). Few migrating Blue Jays and low numbers of American Crows were noted in *Sebastian*, AR (BB, TB). Blue Jays were also in very low numbers along the Alabama and nw. Florida coasts (RAD, LRD). A Fish Crow 12 Aug in *Lauderdale* was indicative of increasing frequency in the Tennessee Valley (DJS). An estimated 20,000 Purple Martins at a roost in *Sebastian* 19 Aug must have been impressive (BB, TB), but 200,000 estimated at Wheeler 4 Aug was mind-boggling and the maximum ever for Alabama (WJR, KH). A Northern Rough-winged Swallow in *Prairie* 16 Nov was very late (KN, LN). Accidental in

Louisiana, a Rock Wren in *DeSoto* 18 Oct was a great find (p.a., ph. HH, PH, PD, JJ). Only one Bewick's Wren was reported, an individual in *Washington* 27 Sep (MMI). Very early were Ruby-crowned Kinglets in *Cameron* 5 Sep (RCD, PC) and *Sebastian* 16 Sep (BB). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was very late 24 Nov in *Carroll*, AR (MMI, JN). A singing Hermit Thrush in *Jefferson*, AL 26 Sep was early (RRS).

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Few reports of early arriving and late departing warblers (only six and nine, respectively) were received. This was due, no doubt, in part to the inaccessibility of storm-ravaged migrant traps and birding haunts, as well as the necessary absence of birders who became evacuees. The only Golden-winged Warbler reports came from Mississippi, where 6 were observed 10 Sep–4 Oct (TS et al.). Eight Nashville Warblers 15–20 Oct at Ft. Morgan made a good number (RRS, MBS). Six in *Washington* 15 Sep (MMI) and another 18 Sep (JN, MMI) in *Benton* were early. A count of 45–50 Black-throated Green Warblers in *Craighead*, AR 12 Oct was high. Eight Blackburnian Warblers were tallied in Arkansas 8 Sep–12 Oct (MMI, DiB). Only one of the declining Cerulean Warbler was reported, an individual 27 Aug in *Benton* (MMI, JN). Rare in the Region, 5 Mourning Warblers were reported 1 Sep–8 Oct. The Sargents banded 63 Common Yellowthroats at Ft. Morgan 26 Nov (RRS, MBS). Wilson's Warblers appeared in Alabama (2), Arkansas (10), and Mississippi (one).

A very late Summer Tanager was in *Washington* 16 Nov (MP, BC, SC). A Spotted Towhee was a rare find 27 Nov in *Craighead* (NL, CLa). One to 2 Clay-colored Sparrows were in *Washington* 14–29 Sep (MMI, JN), with another in *Benton* 15 Oct (KN, LN) and yet another in *Madison* 20 Oct (JN). An increasing local breeder in Alabama, a count of 21 Lark Sparrows in *Colbert* 12–13 Aug was an excellent number (DJS, SWM). Very rare in fall, 11, including 2 juvs., were in *Washington* 28 Aug–14 Sep (JN, MMI). A Savannah Sparrow 3 Sep in *Montgomery*, AL was very early (CTS, PS). A count of 38 Le Conte's Sparrows 26 Nov in *Caddo* was high and indicated considerable observer effort (JI, CL). A White-throated Sparrow in *Sebastian* 10 Sep was quite early (BB, TB). Seven Harris's Sparrows were seen 7 Nov in *Benton*, where uncommon (JN).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak 18 Sep in *Benton* was early (JN, MMI). Occasional in Alabama, a Black-headed Grosbeak was

found at Dauphin I. 29 Oct (HEH, CH). Over 327 Indigo Buntings were counted during a day-long Big Sit competition in *East Baton Rouge* 9 Oct (JB, DB, PB, JSa). Over 5 Painted Buntings, including several juvs., were seen 6–28 Aug in *Prairie* (JN). An all-time high fall count of about 100 Dickcissels occurred on 18 Sep in *East Baton Rouge* (DL, CB). A Bobolink was very late 6 Nov in *Craighead* (DiB). Red Crossbills continued to be found at their breeding site in Talladega N.E., AL, where 2 were seen 24 Nov (ECS).

Cited observers (subregional editors in boldface): Jeff Baxter, Dick Baxter (DiB), Bill Beall, Toka Beall, Phred Benham, Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Trish Berk, Devin Bosler, Justin Bosler, Curt Burney, Bob Caulk, Sara Caulk, Paul Conover, Dwight C. Cooley, Neill Cowles, Ken Dayer, Harry Dean, Sarah DeViney, Paul Dickson, Danny Dobbs, Robert C. Dobbs, Lucy R. Duncan, Robert A. Duncan, Jeff T. Garner, Evelyn Good, Glenn Good, Tom M. Haggerty, D Harrington, Milton J. Harris, Hubert Hervey, Patricia Hervey, Chaz Hesselein, Howard E. Horne, Keith Hudson, Jay Huner, Jim Ingold, Debi G. Jackson, **Greg D. Jackson** (Alabama), Erik Johnson, Hilda Jones, Joanne & **Joe P. Kleiman** (Louisiana), Gene Knight, Shannon Knight, Geneva Lackey, Louis Lackey, Dan Lane, Ed Laster, Norman Lavers, Cheryl Lavers (CLa), Charlie Lyon, Sam Maniscalco, Beth Maniscalco (BMa), Bill McAlister, Bill McCollum, Steve W. McConnell, Charles Mills, Mike Mlodinow (MMI), Ryan Mollnow, Michael Musumeche, Joe Neal, Kenny Nichols, LaDonna Nichols, **Max & Helen Parker** (Arkansas), Dianne Patterson, Wayne Patterson, Dave Patton (DaP), Sissy Pike, Tim Pike, David Plumb (DPI), Tommy R. Pratt, Courtney Quinn, John Quinn, Van Remsen, Linda B. Reynolds, Dave Richardson, Augusta Robinson, William J. Rogers, Paul Sanders (PSa), Martha B. Sargent, Robert R. Sargent, Jacob Saucier, Dan Scheiman, Marion Schiefer, **Terence Schiefer** (Mississippi), Jerry Schultz, Damian J. Simbeck, Lynne Slater, Kimberly Smith, C. T. Snow, Phil Snow, Eric C. Soehren, Bob Stallsmith (BSt), Teri Stallsmith (TSt), Jack Stewart (JSt), Bill Summerour, Jean Trahan (JeT), Jeff Trahan, Kyle VanWhy, Bill Vermillion, Ken Ward, Lorna West, Beth H. Willis, Lyndel Willis (LyW), Jeff R. Wilson, Jonathan Windley (JWi), Joe Woolbright, Lyndal York. 🍷

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