

MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Organized April 30, 1955

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March 17, 1972

MOS NEWSLETTER - Vol. 17, No. 2

Compiled by: W. H. Turcotte

ANNUAL MEETING

Dr. Gordon Gunter, our Secretary, has mailed out announcements for the MOS Annual Meeting to be held May 5 - 6, 1972 at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Ocean Springs, Mississippi. The business meeting will begin Friday evening at 7:30 P.M., May 5 at the Laboratory. Two boats, the Hermes leaving from the Laboratory and the Gulf Researcher leaving from Gulfport (departure time, Saturday 8:00 A.M.) will make cruises to and beyond offshore islands. There will be a third field trip to the Sandhill Crane Area and other points of interest for the land-lubbers or spillover from the boat trips which can accommodate only twenty people each. Bring lunches and other necessities or niceties for the field trips.

It is important that everyone attend the meeting at 7:30 P.M. to settle business matters and assignments for people to go on the field trips.

Please return your reply card promptly to facilitate meeting arrangements. Unfortunately our genial host, Dr. Gunter, will not be with us, but he has made arrangements for four very capable "general factotums" to stand in for him.

MORE EVENING GROSBEAKS

Mrs. T. H. Hannah, Forest, Mississippi recorded and reported twenty-four (24) evening grosbeaks at her feeder on February 16, 1972 and visiting daily to February 20, 1972.

Mrs. William G. Wills, Jr. reported twelve (12) or more on March 2nd at a feeder, corner of St. Ann and Belmont Streets in Jackson, Mississippi. This is the same neighborhood where they first appeared in northeast Jackson in 1966. John Phares and I counted fifteen (15) at the same feeder at noon the same day immediately following Mrs. Wills' report.

W. H. Turcotte

PINE SISKINS IN KOSCIUSKO

February 12, 1972

"For the last three weeks I have had a small flock of Pine Siskins feeding on crushed pecans in the parking lot at our office. The lot is surrounded by pecan trees and the cars crushed the nuts as they drove through. I began breaking nuts for the

birds and throwing them right in front of the office door and they feed all day on the walk within two or three feet of passersby. There are about twenty-five in the flock. This afternoon, we went down to feed them and a red tailed hawk swooped down in their midst and got at least one and possibly two. All this happened right in town on the pavement--sort of weird--".  
Walter Davis, Kosciusko

#### ADULT BALD EAGLES REPORTED

Mrs. J. H. Pepper, (one of five Audubon Society members from Yazoo County) and Mrs. Zumalt (also Audubon member) sighted an adult bald eagle (all white head) at a woods between Wolf Lake and Five Mile Lake in Yazoo County on February 11, 1972.

Another sighting of an adult bald eagle near Rodney Lake, Jefferson County, Mississippi on February 20, 1972 was made and reported by Mr. Bobby Vaughn, Port Gibson, Mississippi. Mr. Vaughn telephoned in the report the same day this observation was made. The bird flushed from the ground at close range and flew to a nearby sandbar where it remained. WHT

One adult bald eagle observed February 14, 1972 by Randy Shealy and John H. Phares near the north boundary of Copiah Management Area. The bird was on the ground and flew up when truck approached to within 175-200 yards. White head and tail were clearly visible. Bird acted as if it wanted to alight in the nearby trees but continued on as we did not stop the truck until we had traveled forward several hundred feet. John H. Phares

#### WASHINGTON COUNTY NOTES

On a Christmas Count in South Washington County, Jan. 2, 1972, Edward Alexander, Jr., compiler, several interesting species were reported. Three separate Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen by Lula Coffey; Ben Coffey; Ed and Ginger Alexander. Two immature Bald Eagles on Lake Washington, a male Vermilion Flycatcher, a House Wren, three Yellow-throats, and a LeConte's Sparrow were also reported by the Coffeys, in the Lake Jackson area, generally. On Jan. 8, Wiley and Polly Mock, Randall and Ann Imbler, and the Alexanders (all of Greenville) worked the locality of the Vermilion Flycatcher and found 3 males and 2 females. A visit on Jan. 15 was non-conclusive, because of high wind.

Elie Ganier of Percy, saw a Sandhill Crane on his place, Jan. 9. On Jan. 12, Ed Alexander found the crane and was able to move slowly to within 50 feet, before it flew. Ben B. Coffey, Jr.

Editor's Note: Mr. Ganier, by letter of March 10, 1972, reports the Sandhill Crane still present that date on his place but expects it may soon follow the blue geese he has heard moving northward.

#### SOME FALL RECORDS OF NOTE

On Dec. 6, 1971, at the Tupelo Fish Hatchery, Lula and Ben Coffey found a Dunlin and 87 Least Sandpipers. On Dec. 7 at the Noxubee N. W. R., they reported seeing 31 Horned Grebes, 1 Sora, 1 Common Tern, 2 Short-billed Marsh Wrens, a singing White-eyed Vireo, and a female Yellowthroat. West of Starkville, 40 Water Pipits and 70 Savannah Sparrows were walked up.

Nov. 17, at Gray Center, Highway US 51, Madison County, 150 Brewer's Black-birds were seen. (BC, LC)

Along and near the Lakeview levee (Walls, DeSoto County) the Coffeys report the following as of interest at a cottonfield slough. Nov. 14: Golden Plover, 2, Dowitcher (sp?) 15; Dec. 1: Dowitcher 6. Nearby on Nov. 14: Sprague's Pipit 2, Western Meadowlark 1; Dec. 1: Lapland Longspur 50. Along the levee Nov. 14, 520 Tree Swallows plus 225 at the levee bend that is in Tennessee; latest seen in Memphis area but not a latest date. Special search on Dec. 1, since one had been seen, Nov. 28, 100 miles north (Reelfoot Lake). On the Moon Lake (Lula) Count, Dec. 26: Palm Warbler 2 (LC).

Ben B. Coffey, Jr. and Lula Coffey, 672 N. Belvedere, Memphis, Tenn.

#### PURPLE MARTIN ARRIVALS

Purple martin "scouts" began arriving in the Jackson area around Mid-February. The first to show at my house this year was a single male on March 8 followed by two males and one female on March 9. None as yet seem to have taken up residence. We have seventeen gourds and two (eight and twelve room) apartments for let. Competition for tenants is getting fierce around this town!

#### ROBIN ROOST

A large contingent of robins has appropriated one of the nicer residential areas adjoining the Country Club in North Clarksdale, Mississippi this past winter. In fact this has been going on for the past three years from November to March. According to a resident, the roost embraces approximately 25 acres of residential area where "robins come to roost in this particular area in droves, probably millions, and they become quite offensive -- discolor leaves to the magnolia trees and live oaks."

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Division of Wildlife Services, Mr. Bobby Tramel, State Supervisor, Starkville, Mississippi made an investigation of the problem in late January and proposed a plan of harassment to try and move the robins as a field test. The remedy proposed (bird bombs, shell crackers, firecrackers, portable robin distress call units) may have sounded worse than the malady - but it was accepted by residents and town officials. "Operation robin-roost" began on Monday evening, January 31 and was repeated four evenings in succession (one hour each) with plenty of well-organized assistance. Result: Robins returned and were displaced only one hour each of four evenings with lots of noise and fireworks. A survey showed no other suitable roosting place within a ten mile radius of Clarksdale.

#### FLIERS AFIELD

Ben and Lula Coffey, recently returned from a tour of areas in the Southwest, are now planning a late April and early May trip to Columbia, South America.

Arnold and Thalia Ritchie entertained MOS Jackson members and friends at their home with a color slide show on their recent vacation trips to Rocky Mountain areas.

Mr. and Mrs. Orrick Metcalfe, Sr. from Natchez were visiting in Jackson on the evening of February 10. We understand before sundown they discovered red-cockaded woodpeckers at the Natchez Trace Colony north of Highway 43 and were joined by other birdwatchers to see a singing male woodcock performing nuptial flights at the Pearl River Waterfowl in crepuscular light. A pleasant trip to Wheeler Lake attending a meeting of the Alabama Ornithological Society followed.

The JACKSON CHAPTER, Audubon Society received its charter and held the first regular meeting after organization on February 28th, 1972. Total membership now stands at 77. A field trip on March 11 to Springdale Hills near Pochahontas, Mississippi was well attended. Ed Blake was local guide, landowner, interpreter and host during our visit

to this developed, attractive Christmas tree farm, arboretum and historically interesting place. A field trip committee is working on other plans for the Spring season.

B. E. Gandy, MOS Treasurer and Director, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, is on Cloud 9 following recent approval of final plans for the new \$500,000 museum building to be located on land at the present site behind the existing structure. The new building will house a 125 seat auditorium, aquarium, aviary, live animal pit with stream and growing plants, space for existing and new exhibits, preparation rooms and offices. Congratulations, Erskine, as we look forward to completion and dedication of the new building early next year, culminating years of effort and anxiety on your part.

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### BALTIMORE ORIOLE

A Baltimore oriole, male in full adult plumage was seen on Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge, Southern Washington County, March 11, 1972 (good study in good light.) Mr. and Mrs. Ed Alexander, Jr., Greenville, Mississippi.

### EARLY DOVE NEST

On March 11, 1972 your editor and others in the field trip party to Springdale Hills west of Pocahontas, Mississippi observed a Mourning dove nest with eggs. The female was incubating and flushed from the nest in a cedar tree. WHT

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Watch for me to  
arrive ON OR  
about March 27!