

MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Organized April 30, 1955

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Compiled by: W. H. Turcotte.

Purple Martin Arrival Dates: First arrival dates on purple martins this year: Near Crystal Springs Feb. 3 (two only on Marion Watkins' place), Feb. 10 on Dick Burney place. Twenty-four were observed same location on February 22, reported by St. Clair Thompson. Gulfport, February 13, first arrival reported by Mrs. Bedford Floyd and on March 9 martins were still arriving. Jackson, February 26, first arrival by W. H. Turcotte. West Point, Clay Co. Miss., March 5, two martins observed by Barry O. Freeman. Picayune, February 18, by Mrs. Mayo Tolman.

Wintering Baltimore Oriole: Mrs. W. G. Wills, Jr. reports an over-wintering male Baltimore oriole. The bird, in full plumage, was first observed the first week in January at a feeding tray of Mrs. J. D. Sadler on North Congress St. in Jackson and reported to Mrs. Wills. Mrs. Wills observed it again at same location the second week in February.

Wintering Dickcissel: Mrs. W. G. Wills, Jr. tells us the dickcissel she reported wintering at her home is still there (March 10). It is a male, having developed the black spot on its breast since the time she first observed it (December 31). She has heard it in full song on several occasions.

Maryland Yellowthroat: Five Maryland Yellowthroats were observed by Sammie Danna on January 3, 1959 at Boze Lake, four miles southeast of Rosedale, Bolivar County, Miss. Mrs. W. G. Wills, Jr. observed Maryland Yellowthroat at Mayes' Lake, Northeast Jackson, on March 8. W. H. Turcotte checked one at same location on March 14.

Early Dove Nest: James Morgan, Drew, Miss., reports finding a mourning dove nest with one egg in a pine tree in his yard on February 28, 1959. Mr. Morgan is an employee of the Game and Fish Commission engaged in dove banding work at Parchman and vicinity.

Gulfport Notes: "For about the past month I have had a chance to observe closely Cedar Waxwings here at home and surprised to learn that they go to roost an hour or so before all the other birds in my yard, sometimes when the sun is still brightly shining. In the morning they are the last to stir, sitting in the bush until the sun is well up and long after the other birds are feeding. When doing their morning preening they often preen each other. We have gone out with flashlight at night to see them (one night there were 91 in one shrub) all with heads under wings, not at all disturbed by our talking or the light. No doubt, none of this is news to you but this is the first year they have stayed here so long and roosted where I could watch so well.

"At this time I have the privilege of another interesting observation. The nesting of a Great Horned Owl (a pair). I do not know how long the 'setting' has been going on but intend to know when the hatching occurs. On March 9th, the first Chimney Swift arrived."-- MRS. BEDFORD FLOYD, MARCH 9, 1959.

Picayune Notes: "For the past three months here birds have been about in much smaller numbers and fewer varieties than for several years; natural food is very plentiful but has not been touched.

"Cardinals, white-throated sparrows and, unfortunately, house sparrows have been the only daily visitors on the grounds and at the feeders. The highest count on cardinals seen at one time was but 17; white throats 18 (last year 81, normally over 50).

"Of the irregular visitors a mockingbird has been the most frequent; blue jays about frequently in the trees but seldom visited the feeders. Carolina wrens (1-2) seen frequently in December and January. Robins seen in flocks several times in December, the greatest number Dec. 10 when 400-500 flew over; small numbers (2-25) seen occasionally in January; entirely absent in February. One brown thrasher seen twice in December, 6 times in January and almost daily since February 14. Chickadees (1-3), goldfinches (1-2) seen occasionally during the entire period. Tufted titmice (3) seen but three times. One kingfisher appeared at the pond 4 times in December and twice in February. Red-shouldered hawk seen but once in December and in January (usually frequent visitor). Rufous-sided towhee (1 male) has been visiting the feeder almost daily since February 13. Chipping sparrows (2) Feb. 24 (usually daily visitors).

"Entirely absent have been the catbird, rusty blackbirds, hermit thrush, meadowlark, killdeer, kinglets (both), myrtle warblers, field and song sparrow which have been seen more or less frequently nearly every winter. Woodpeckers have been almost entirely absent. Cedar waxwings, frequently visiting in large flocks have been seen once: Feb. 27.

"A phoebe heard Feb. 5, purple martins (1-7) about daily since Feb. 18. Otherwise no signs of any migrants.

"The Gulf Coast has been seen only on hurried trips; the complete absence of brown pelicans and black skimmers has been noticeable. (At Cameron, La., Dec. 5-7, annual meeting and field trips of LOS, not a single brown pelican was reported). February 23, near Long Beach I was surprised to see a mature white ibis feeding on the near beach. -- AMY B. TOLMAN, MARCH 1, 1959.

Starlings in huge flocks numbering into the thousands have been seen frequently in Jackson and outlying areas this winter -- December and January. I have seen more in this area this year than at any time in the past. They are frequently seen feeding in large numbers in Chinese tallow trees along the city streets.

"Some observers feel the starling is supplanting the English sparrow to some extent."-- JOHN H. PHARES, 1-5-59.

Cedar Waxwings: Miss Fannye A. Cook reports observing on March 16th numerous cedar waxwings at Crystal Springs feeding on mistletoe and other berries. St. Clair Thompson reported observing on March 15 a flock estimated at 1,000 or more in Hazlehurst feeding on berries of two large holly trees and nandina shrubs.

Wintering Common and Snowy Egrets: On January 3 and 10, 1959 three snowy and two common egrets were seen on the north end of Lake Whittington in Bolivar County. -- SAMMIE DANNA, JANUARY 31, 1959.

Editor's Notes: Observations on March 14 - Cook's Lake 1/2 Mile West of Jackson, observed 13 ruddy and 1 scaup duck, also about 12 purple martins, 10 tree swallows and 3 rough wing swallows. Large numbers of robins were on city golf course. Observed numerous myrtle warblers and white-throated sparrows in Riverside park and Mayes' Lake. Several purple finches observed on Mayes' Lake and one at home, all apparently feeding in elm trees. -- W. H. TURCOTTE.

Wilson's Snipe: 12 Wilson's Snipe observed by Pat Ryan along a ditch north of Richton, Perry County on March 10. Pat advises these are the first snipe he has seen in east Mississippi in several years.

Annual MOS Meeting: The MOS Annual Meeting will be held April 24 and 25, 1959 in conjunction with the Mississippi Academy of Sciences meeting at Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss. At this writing plans and program are incomplete, but our officers are at work. We plan to have a good Saturday morning field trip again this year. Make your plans now to attend if at all possible.

SPRING BIRD-STUDY FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULED FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE
MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND GUESTS RESIDING OR VISIT-
ING IN THE JACKSON AREA

Saturday mornings March 28 - May 2, 1959

- March 28 - (7 to 10:00 A. M.) Natchez Trace. Meet at Maywood Mart, intersection of Old Canton Road and Northside Drive, North Jackson. Mrs. W. G. Wills, Jr., Leader
- April 4 - (7:00 to 9:00 A. M.) Riverside Park Nature Trail and Mayes Lake. Meet at swimming pool parking lot in Riverside Park, northeast Jackson. John H. Phares, Leader
- April 11 - (7:00 to 9:30 A. M.) Legion Lake, Rankin County. Meet at State Game and Fish Commission Museum, 111 North Jefferson Street, opposite State Fair Grounds. B. E. Gandy, Leader
- April 18 - (6:00 to 9:00 A. M.) West Jackson, Livingston Park, Cook's Lake, and Lakewood Memorial Park. Meet at Livingston Park Zoo. Miss Fannye A. Cook and Mrs. D. Ruth Harper, Leaders
- *April 25 - (6:00 to 9:00 A. M.) Natchez Trace Parkway. Meet at Community Clubhouse in Riverside Park, Northeast Jackson, Mrs. Bedford Floyd, Leader
- May 2 - (5:00 to 11:00 A. M.) Eagle and Albermarle Lakes, Warren County. Meet at Baptist Church, across street from Mississippi College, Clinton. W. H. Turcotte and H. L. Tackett, Leaders

* Bird lovers attending the Mississippi Academy of Sciences and the annual meeting of the Mississippi Ornithological Society on this date are cordially invited to make this trip.

All who are seriously interested in bird study and who wish to make any of these scheduled trips are asked to contact John H. Phares or W. H. Turcotte, Telephone FL 5-9361, Extensions 307 and 221, in advance of the trip.

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

March 23, 1959

Memo to: All M. O. S. Members

Subject: Participation in the Annual Program Meeting

The annual meeting of the Mississippi Ornithological Society will be held the afternoon of Friday, April 24, 1959, at Mississippi College, Clinton, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Mississippi Academy of Sciences.

It is planned to have an M. O. S. program of approximately two hours' duration similar to the one last year featuring short reports (5 to 15 minutes) of individual or group activities, observations, slides, motion pictures, etc. Those of you who may be in a position to actively participate in the program are urged to submit a brief summary or outline of what you wish to present and the approximate time required, slide or motion picture projector equipment needed, etc., in order that a program outline can be prepared and submitted to the membership prior to the meeting date. Notice of your plans to participate in the program should be submitted to John H. Phares, 4539 Meadow Ridge Drive, Jackson 6, Mississippi, not later than April 15.

A Saturday morning field trip, April 25, is planned as a special feature of our annual program meeting. The trip last year was highly successful, with more than 95 different species recorded, so plan now to attend.

John H. Phares, Chairman
Program Committee