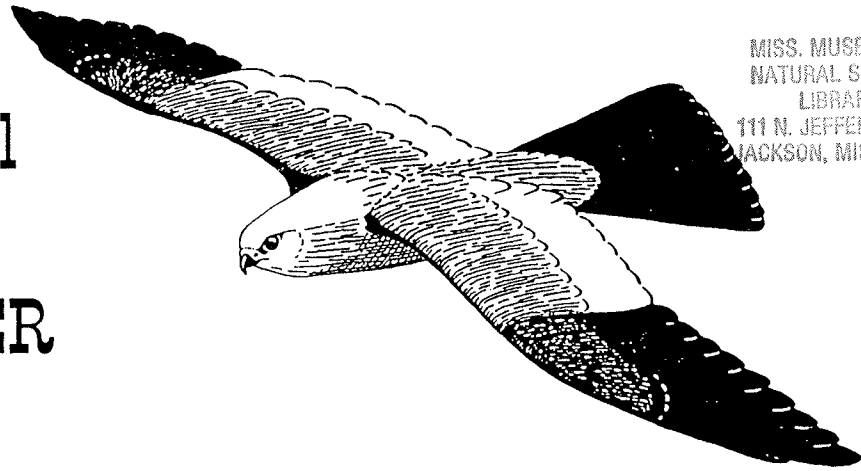


MOS: Founded in 1955 to promote scientific research and encourage greater appreciation of native birds

Mississippi
Ornithological
Society
NEWSLETTER

Vol. 44 (No. 1)
Spring (1 March) 1999



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“CALL NOTES”

by Shannon Knight
M.O.S. President

When I got the call from Jerry last week telling me that he would be leaving Mississippi and starting a new job in Florida on June 1, I went into shock—then panic! Dr. Jerome A. Jackson has been such a mainstay in our organization for nearly thirty years. He has filled so many shoes for M.O.S.—serving as the Editor of our MISSISSIPPI KITE for twenty-eight years, M.O.S. President, Board member, Bird Records Committee member, Tucker Award winner, bird-banding, advisor—just to name a few.

Jerry will be honored at our Spring meeting. We are extremely appreciative of all his efforts and contributions on behalf of M.O.S. He, Betty, and the boys will be greatly missed, but we wish you all the best as you meet new challenges.

The Board has unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Mark S. Woodrey, Ornithologist for the Museum of Natural Science in Jackson, and Mississippi Coordinator for Partners in Flight, as Editor of the Mississippi Kite. Mark is an M.O.S. member, Bird Records Committee member, and has been a program presenter. In talking with Mark, his eagerness and expertise are evident. We are confident that he will “do us proud” as the new editor of the KITE.

Again let me invite everyone to attend the Spring Meeting in Ocean Springs. JoRee has put together a wonderful weekend for us. See you all there!

M.O.S. FOLKS WE’VE SEEN “IN PRINT”

Guess who?

- (1) J. A. Jackson, “Backyard Survivor” [Red-bellied Woodpecker profile] in *Birder’s World*, 11(5): pp. 54-58, October 1997.
- (2) J. A. Jackson, “The Blue Jay Way” in *Birder’s World*, 12(5): pp. 18-22, October 1998.

LOOKING AHEAD:

MOS SPRING MEETING--April 30-May 2, 1999--RESERVE THE WEEKEND! Ocean Springs on the Gulf Coast will be the site for this event. There will be a nominal \$5 registration fee. The usual Friday night get-together will be at the Super 8 Motel just north of Exit 50 on Interstate Rte.10. Go north from the interstate and make a right turn onto Seaman Road. Just before the service station make a sharp right turn onto the service drive, which leads to the motel. The time is 7:30 to 9:30. A projector will be available for showing of members' slides if desired. Bring your bird slides!

Saturday morning field trip destinations, times, and leaders will be announced on Friday night. Charley Delmas and Janet Peterson are in charge of arranging the trips. Sunday morning trips will be arranged if desired.

The Saturday night dinner meeting will be at Aunt Jenny's restaurant in Ocean Springs. It is on the right just north of Highway 90. There will be a choice of chicken, fish, or shrimp, or a combination platter, with a price range from \$13 to \$17, including french fries or sweet potato, coleslaw, biscuits, hushpuppies, drink, tax and tip. They need a head count two weeks in advance. After-Dinner Speaker will be Scott Herford, biologist at the Mississippi Sandhill Crane Refuge.

Janet Dubuison will take handle reservations for the Saturday dinner--fill out form, **page 7**, send with your check for registration and dinner(s) to 22410 Glad Acres, Pass Christian, MS 39521. Sending your registration early will be a BIG HELP to those making arrangements. Please make room your reservations as soon as possible to ensure having a room.

Area motels:

Days Inn	228-872-8255	\$89 + tax
Holiday Inn Express	228-875-7555	\$109 + tax (less 10%, AARP or AAA)
Super 8 Motel	228-875-2288	\$59 + tax
Sleep Inn	228-872-0440	\$69 + tax (\$62.10 + tax, AARP or AAA)

Camping: Gulf Islands National Seashore \$16 - no reservations needed, 228-875-0074

Commercial Campgrounds: KOA 228-875-2100 or Mazalea 228-392-8575

Looking Ahead to SPRING MIGRATION COUNT!

The 1999 North American Migration Count this year is to be held all across the USA on Saturday May 8. This involves as many folks as possible identifying and counting birds in their yards at feeders, or by "beating the bushes" in your favorite haunts. There is a format for collecting and submitting the results. Marion Schiefer is the State Coordinator and Compiler. If you are interested in making a county-based census on that date, and are not already on her list and familiar with the setup, never having done it before, call Marion (evenings) at 601-324-3748. She will send you the full info, and you can start recruiting observers from YOUR county for a count. To see what happened in Spring 1998, just turn to the next page for the roundup of results from the eight participating counties last year. Notice that the Boliar report was based on a single party of two observers (Good show, J.C. and Nona Herbert) and likewise Newton Co. (Joe Magee?)!

Reports from Field and Yard:

[Reproduced from BirdChat, with the author's permission, as a call for caution in the field:]

“Was My Observation Biased, or WHAT?”

by Diane Porter, Fairfield, Iowa,
3 Nov 1998, dporter@birdwatching.com

If I ever doubted that I could be fooled into seeing what I "knew" was there, that doubt was dispelled the day my husband and I went for a drive in the countryside with our brand new video camera with long lens for birds. When Michael handed over the camera for my first try with it, I aimed at a male Northern Cardinal that was singing from a treetop.

Zooming in on the bird while watching it through the viewfinder, I was admiring the bird's bright red plumage and the equally bright blue sky. Then, without taking my eye off the bird, I remarked to my husband, "Gee, I thought you said the view finder was going to be black and white, but it's color, isn't it. This is really great!"

There was a silence from the other side of the car, and then came the puzzled reply, "What do you mean? Of course it's black and white."

Just as puzzled, I kept on looking at the red bird. Red. Bright red. It seemed to take a while to soak in that if this was a black and white monitor, I could not be seeing the bird in color. And then the color suddenly faded away, like a special effect in a movie, and I was left looking at a medium gray bird against a darker gray background.

This was a sobering experience. Of course, knowledge is part of perception, and without knowledge our visual impressions would be meaningless to us. But it did make me realize that the concept can sometimes overwhelm the data. It's a useful caution for a birder.

[For more on the knowledge vs. perception issue, see: <http://www.birdwatching.com/stories/plato.html>]

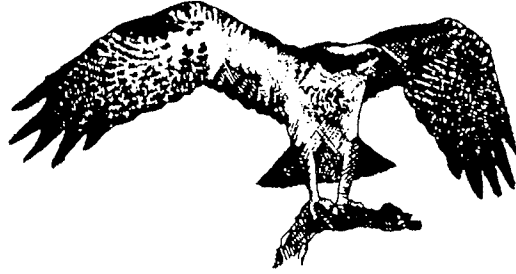
“FISH-EATING OSPREY TRIES A MAMMALIAN DIET?”

by Connie Norris, Batesville, MS

Although Ospreys are seen fairly often, we have been especially enjoying our frequent visitor this fall here on the south shore of Sardis Lake. We first noticed this Osprey Sept. 23. He and/or his mate or offspring have been seen nearly every morning this season.

One morning, my husband Jeff and I were out front watching the Osprey circling the vicinity. We didn't think much of a squirrel's crazy chattering nearby. It was in the top of a severely-trimmed pine tree at the edge of our road (trimmed for power lines). Suddenly, I saw the shadow of a large bird coming up the road and heard it CRASH into the tree occupied by the squirrel. The sun was in my eyes, so I could not see what was happening on, as curious as I was. My only glimpse was a messy mass of feathers. It was fairly obvious that this was an unpracticed activity. The Osprey was in the tree perhaps eight seconds while gathering its wings to take off again from its apparent attack maneuver. There were loud and prolonged sounds of the bird's contact with the branches and twigs--wings and body strewn everywhere, as the bird seemingly failed to gain a steady perch.

My husband, at a better vantage point, actually saw the Osprey smash into the tree, then fly off low through the woods. We both wondered how it recovered from the impact so quickly. I grabbed my binocs, but the Osprey was out of sight, so I quickly examined the tree for the seemingly now-silent squirrel. He was gone from sight, and I couldn't hear sounds of a squirrel anywhere. Although I can't say for sure that the Osprey got the squirrel, circumstantial evidence says that it did. All I do know is that the squirrel certainly disappeared at about the time that the Osprey crashed into the tree.



LOOKIN' WAAAY BACK!-A HISTORICAL FEATURE ON MISSISSIPPI BIRDS

"The First National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count from Mississippi"

by Marvin Davis

The historical CBC record, as best I've been able to trace it, begins on December 26, 1930. First, by merely one day, was a count taken alone by Townsend Boyer at "Indianola, Sunflower Co., Miss. (delta or swamp section of the state)," as he broadly described it, but without further habitat specifics. Boyer counted from in a leisurely manner, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 5:30 p.m., while enduring a day that was "Cloudy, no sun at all" with a "wind northwest, penetrating, damp; temp. 42° at noon, dropping to 37° at 5:30." Besides the list of 28 species and 636 individuals, (presented below in the order used by the observer), those are all the details provided. Does anyone have more information about this observer, who predates my time?

INDIANOLA, MS 1930 CBC list

Black Vulture, 2	Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2
Bob-white, 13	Brown Creeper, 2
Mourning Dove, 1	Mockingbird, 5
Barred Owl, 1	Brown Thrasher, 4
Belted Kingfisher, 2	Loggerhead Shrike, 1
Downy Woodpecker, 1	Cardinal, 5
<i>Red-cockaded Woodpecker, 1 [an incredible</i>	Goldfinch, 7
<i>location -JAJ] Confused with Hairy?</i>	White-throated Sparrow, 30
Red-headed Woodpecker, 1	Song Sparrow, 12
Flicker, 4	Fox Sparrow, 1
<i>tiny unidentified flycatcher</i>	<i>unidentified sparrows, 15 [he needed help</i>
Blue Jay, 10	<i>from Gene K.!]</i>
Carolina Wren, 3	Meadowlark, 1
Winter Wren, 2	Purple Grackle, 500
Chickadee, 3	Cowbird, 1
	English Sparrow, 5

NOTE: The following is a description, and an abridged sample from the Online Version, of the new Mississippi Bird Hotline, which is available to ALL for a phone call to--(228) 435-RBA7 (435-7227)

MISSISSIPPI BIRD HOTLINE Issue # 26

Current Sponsors: Jerry & Debbie Bird, and Stacy & Laura Peterson
 Date: February 28, 1999 Phone: (228) 435-RBA7 (435-7227)
 To Report (same as above) or email: SJPeterson@aol.com

To immediately report very rare birds, PAGE Stacy at 228-880-5179
 enter your phone number, and wait for a quick call right back--if I'm in the area!

Compiler: Stacy Peterson, Biloxi

Coverage: While the hotline is centered on the Mississippi Coast, we encourage and
 solicit reports from the rest of the state as a service to all callers / readers.

More MS bird info online at: <http://members.aol.com/BirdsInMs/Misslist.html>

Birds Mentioned by Region of Mississippi

Lower (six southern counties; town of Wiggins south to the coast)

possible Pacific Loon -- MOS-RS Marbled Godwit -- 3X5 -- S American Oystercatcher
 Buff-bellied Hummingbird -- 3X5 -- S Rufous Hummingbird -- 3X5 -- S Black-chinned
 Hummingbird? -- 3X5 -- S WINTER WREN -- 3X5 -- C

Middle (Hattiesburg north to Yazoo City)

Northern (rest of state north of Yazoo City)

Prairie Falcon -- MOS-RS American Woodcock Short-eared Owl -- 3X5 -- S

**A quick announcement: PLEASE report your success or failure in finding any birds mentioned on this tape. Your updates are valuable for others who may wish to see any particular bird -- IF it's still around! Indeed, your updates are the very essence from which this hotline gains strength! [COMPILER'S NOTE: Birders with email access can send bird reports or comments directly to me. Also, if you would like private copies of this transcript emailed to you directly, please email me and request so.]

RECENT REPORTS FROM FIELD AND YARD

Lillie Easterling & Charley Delmas had the first BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER record for MS in 1999. They saw this bird on Fri. Feb. 26th at Gulf Islands Natl. Seashore in Ocean Springs. At the same time Janet Peterson reported a continued presence of MARBLED GODWITS in the Moses Pier area at Gulfport, just east of the Gulfport Yacht Harbor at the S end of 20th Avenue.

On Sunday, February 21, Keith Kimmerle reported a female BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD at the home of Inger Phillips in Bay St. Louis. If you want to see this bird, which has been present since December 4, call Inger at 228-467-6223. Keith also reports that a male RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD is still coming to Sybil Hall's feeder by the driveway at her Gulfport home. She welcomes visitors, so feel free to drop by. Her address: 2114--19th St., ca. 1/2 mile N of Gulfport Harbor an east of US 49. This hummer has been present since mid-Nov.

Sun., Feb. 21 several AM. OYSTERCATCHERS were visible on sand bars at East Beach Blvd. and Holcomb Street in Ocean Springs. Nearby, Keith reported an *Archilochus* hummingbird that had been identified by several birders as BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD at the home of Janice Zuleg, 210 White Ave., W of Holcomb and S of Government Sts. Janice has kindly given permission for birders to seek the bird, and she will let her neighbors know to expect visitors in

the yard. The bird uses a feeder on the corner of the house (not directly in front). The driveway nearest the feeder is the neighbor's; please avoid their property.

PRAIRIE FALCON was reported at George P. Cossar State Park on Enid Lake on Mon., Feb. 22. Also from Keith K. on the same day were 2 SHORT-EARED OWLS and displaying AM. WOODCOCKS by the Grenada Airport. One owl was easily observed across the street from the Cryovan factory on Air Industrial Park Road. Take I-55 to exit 208 and turn east. Continue on this road until the T-intersection near the north end of the north-south runway, then turn right. View the grassy area to the east toward the runway.

cut below

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Send Me:

MOS T-SHIRTS (with flying Miss. Kite), SIZES S, M, L, XL, 17.00 ea. # _____ \$ _____

MOS MS KITE LOGO PATCHES (for your cap or jacket), \$5.00 ea. # _____ \$ _____

MOS FIELD CHECKLISTS OF BIDS OF MISSISSIPPI, \$0.50 ea. # _____ \$ _____

BEN COFFEY'S MID-SOUTH BIRD NOTES, (reprint collection) \$10.00 # _____ \$ _____

BACK-ISSUES, THE MISSISSIPPI KITE JOURNAL, @\$2.50 ea., inquire for Years and Nos. Available.

MAIL THIS FORM WITH CHECK (TO MISS. ORNITHOL. SOC.) TO: Janet Dubuisson, 22410 Glad Acres, Pass Christian, MS 39571

REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION FORM - MOS SPRING MEETING, April 28-May 2, 1999

Please send your registrations early. Make the check payable to Mississippi Ornithological Soc. and mail with this form to: Janet Dubuisson, 22410 Glad Acres, Pass Christian, MS 39521.

[NOTE: Lodging reservations should be made from the sources on page 2.]

[Sorry, a late change from p.2]

Name: _____
Phone: () _____
Address: _____
e-mail: < _____ >

Dinner Choices:
chicken: no. _____
fish no. _____
shrimp no. _____

Dinner Reserv's., Saturday Eve. Meeting--no. _____ @ \$16.50 = \$ _____
Pre-registration Fee \$ 5.00

TOTAL \$ _____

NOTE: a visit to the Walter Anderson Museum will be arranged if enough interest is shown; please check: Yes, put down _____ of us for such a trip; No, not me/us _____

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Organized 30 April 1955

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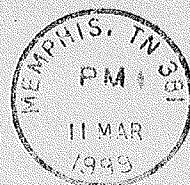
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All persons interested in Mississippi bird life are invited to join the **MOS**. **Annual dues:** Sustaining, \$30; Family, \$25; Individual (regular), \$15; Student/Senior, \$10; Subscribing (libraries only), \$10; Life Membership, \$300. All membership classes receive the Mississippi Kite semi-annually, and the quarterly MOS Newsletter on seasonal basis. **Please send dues OR address changes to:** Janet Dubuisson, 22410 Glad Acres, Pass Christian, MS 39571.

RETURN ADDRESS:
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P.O. Box 515
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FEATURED IN SPRING '99 ISSUE:
Final Word on Spring '99 MOS Mtg.
News of Bird Hotline for Mississippi
Spring N. Am. Migration Count Data and Reminder
Red Star on Your Label = Dues are Overdue!

