

# MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

*Founded in 1955 to promote scientific research and encourage greater appreciation of native birds.*

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*Ictinia mississippiensis*

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**AMERICAN BIRDS:** Terence Schiefer, State Editor

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAYS:** Mary Stevens, MMNS

**MISSISSIPPI BIRD INFORMATION**

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**HOTLINE:** 228-435-7227

**ONLINE:** [MISSBIRD@olemiss.edu](mailto:MISSBIRD@olemiss.edu)

# “CALL NOTES”



BY SHANNON KNIGHT  
M.O.S. PRESIDENT

As some of you may have noticed, you did not receive a newsletter in June. You will receive a spring (March) and a late summer (September) newsletter, rather than the four seasonal newsletters of the past.

Our spring meeting in Bay St. Louis was delightful, thanks to Tish Galbraith and the Mississippi Coast Audubon Society. It was a treat to hear Judy Toups speak and to bird with her. We also want to extend best wishes to Stacy Peterson and family as they move on to a new home and new jobs. They will surely be missed!

The fall meeting in the delta had to be set at the end of September rather than in October. Delta State football and Oktoberfest filled up the calendar for that month. We will be in Nona and J.C.'s territory near the Great River Road State Park. Ronnie Yarborough has also agreed to help us get in or near some of the rice fields to look for rails. Only Sora have been reported in the past, but maybe we'll get lucky and turn up a yellow or black rail! Keep your fingers crossed. We are looking forward to hearing Paul Hamel speak to us again.

Since we felt that our 19-year-old cat might stress out at being boarded at the vet for three weeks, we did not venture out for a birding trip this summer. We have, however, been royally treated to observations and antics of parents and young resident birds this summer.

Our Carolina Wrens nested twice in Gene's shop. We were able to watch both clutches from eggs to fledging. How cute! We had some concern for three young Red-bellied Woodpeckers with only Papa Red-Belly busily

feeding them and no sign of Mama. He diligently fed and cared for the three and now they are coming to the feeder on their own.

We've had oodles of baby Cardinals, Blue Jays, Titmouse, and Chickadees, along with young White-breasted Nuthatches, Summer Tanagers, and Wood Thrushes. Observing the development of the gorget feathers of young male hummingbirds has been an interesting pastime. We've seen everything from a red dot to fine streaks to red only on one side.

Gene added another pool to our birdbath, making it a three-level drinking and bathing hole for birds, turtles, frogs, dogs, and cats by day and raccoons, possums, fox and deer by night! Some exceptional summer bathing beauties have been Kentucky Warbler, Wood Thrush, Black-and-white Warbler, male and female Summer Tanagers, White-eyed Vireo, and Worm-eating Warbler.

There was a wonderful tribute to the late Mr. Bill Turcotte in the March-April 2001 *MISSISSIPPI OUTDOORS* Magazine. The article was entitled "A Birding Pioneer Remembered" by editor David Watts. We MOSers remember him well as a vital part of our organization. We hope that Mrs. Turcotte continues to do well.

We look forward to seeing all of you at our fall meeting and extend a special invitation to those who have not previously attended. Mr. Calvin Robinson, the manager at Great River Road State Park has been very gracious in making arrangements and looks forward to our group being there. See you on September 28!

*Long time MOS member Cecil Kersting of Metairie, Louisiana relates the following account of one of his birding experiences. Cecil is a retired geologist with Mobil Oil. His work took him to Venezuela, Turkey, Libya, and Sumatra, Indonesia. He did various studies on marine microfossils that came up with the drills. Cecil has observed birds on every continent and about sixty countries.*

### **THE GOONEY BIRDS OF MIDWAY BY CECIL KERSTING**

Midway is an atoll in the mid-Pacific, 1200 miles NW of Honolulu. Veterans may know it if they served in the Pacific or Asia. It is made up of a couple of islands surrounded by a ring of coral reefs. Midway was under Navy control from WWII until 1998. Now, there is no military presence and the whole atoll complex has been designated a National Wildlife Refuge.

One of the great spectacles of the natural world occurs here beginning in November when nearly 1 million Laysan Albatross arrive on these islands to nest. Being accustomed to the open ocean, they are ungainly upon land. They crash into cyclists and I witnessed a mid-air collision between two birds—they were OK. Also, they are totally unafraid and unconcerned about man and his activities. Thus, during the time military aircraft used the runways on Midway the albatross' habit of wandering around the runway earned them the nickname of Gooney Birds.

Albatross are everywhere on Midway. The air is full, and the grounds were filling up with birds re-establishing their pair-bonds. It is an impressive sight. Most pairs have established their nests and are incubating one egg by December. The egg hatches in February and the young can fly off over the Pacific by June-July, where they remain for about 5 years before they come back to Midway to find a mate and nest.

Midway is reached by Midway Phoenix charters weekly from Honolulu. There is a fine French restaurant near the beach. Bicycles and golf carts can be rented to get around the 1 by 2 mile main island called Sand Island. The wildlife personnel conduct special walks. Besides birds, fishing and military history are other attractions on Midway.

Midway just seems to beckon one to return to this peaceful and relaxing speck in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

# MONITORING NEOTROPICAL MIGRANTS

by Gene Knight

As you know, over the last several years there has been much concern about neotropical migrants. These species winter in Central and South America. Most of them have to fly across the Gulf of Mexico on their journey to and from their nesting grounds. Habitat destruction at both ends of their migratory journeys has scientists concerned. Situated on the Mississippi River in the middle of one of the main migratory flyways in North America, gathering data on these species will be easy. This project has been designed to **ignite interest** from the members of M.O.S. and everyone is encouraged to participate.

In the last issue of the MOS newsletter we started this project of keeping arrival and departure dates for migrating neotropical migrants. The first group listed as TRANSIENTS move through our state for a short period of time. For this group we are seeking **arrival** and **departure** dates. This means that this fall, birds in this category will again fly through our state south to their wintering grounds. The shorebirds will begin as early as July and the warblers in August. Write down the earliest and latest date you see these species in the blanks before and after their names.

The second group listed as NESTERS has spent the summer with us and some time this fall will depart for their wintering grounds also. Write down the latest date you see species of this group in the blank after their names.

If you see other species that I have not listed here, write them down and send dates along with the rest. If you do not have dates for all or even half of the species still send what you get, even if you only have ten dates. Please send this form to Gene and Shannon Knight, 79 Hwy. 9W, Oxford, MS 38655. Good luck and have fun birding!

## TRANSIENTS

\_\_\_\_ American Bittern \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Blue-winged Teal \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ American Golden Plover \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Piping Plover \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Semipalmated Plover \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Greater Yellowlegs \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Lesser Yellowlegs \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Solitary Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Willet \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Spotted Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Upland Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Whimbrel \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Marbled Godwit \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Red Knot \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Sanderling \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Semipalmated Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Western Sandpiper \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Least Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ White-rumped Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Baird's Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Pectoral Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Dunlin \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Stilt Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Buff-breasted Sandpiper \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Short-billed Dowitcher \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Long-billed Dowitcher \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Wilson's Phalarope \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Franklin's Gull \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Caspian Tern \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Forster's Tern \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Black Tern \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Black-billed Cuckoo \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Olive-sided Flycatcher \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Least Flycatcher \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Alder Flycatcher \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Willow Flycatcher \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Philadelphia Vireo \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Warbling Vireo \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Bank Swallow \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Veery \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Gray-cheeked Thrush \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Swainson's Thrush \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Blue-winged Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Golden-winged Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Tennessee Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Orange-crowned Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Nashville Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Yellow Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Chestnut-sided Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Magnolia Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Black-throated Green Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Blackburnian Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Palm Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Bay-breasted Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Blackpoll Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Cerulean Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Ovenbird \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Northern Waterthrush \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Mourning Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Wilson's Warbler \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Scarlet Tanager \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Rose-breasted Grosbeak \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Lincoln's Sparrow \_\_\_\_

## **NESTERS**

Anhinga \_\_\_\_  
Least Bittern \_\_\_\_  
Cattle Egret \_\_\_\_  
Green Heron \_\_\_\_  
Black-crowned Night-Heron \_\_\_\_  
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron \_\_\_\_  
White Ibis \_\_\_\_  
Osprey \_\_\_\_  
Swallow-tailed Kite \_\_\_\_  
Mississippi Kite \_\_\_\_  
Broad-winged Hawk \_\_\_\_  
Least Tern \_\_\_\_  
Yellow-billed Cuckoo \_\_\_\_

Common Nighthawk \_\_\_\_  
Chuck-wills-widow \_\_\_\_  
Whip-poor-will \_\_\_\_  
Chimney Swift \_\_\_\_  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird \_\_\_\_  
Eastern Wood-Pewee \_\_\_\_  
Acadian Flycatcher \_\_\_\_  
Great Crested Flycatcher \_\_\_\_  
Eastern Kingbird \_\_\_\_  
White-eyed Vireo \_\_\_\_  
Yellow-throated Vireo \_\_\_\_  
Red-eyed Vireo \_\_\_\_  
Purple Martin \_\_\_\_  
Tree Swallow \_\_\_\_  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow \_\_\_\_  
Cliff Swallow \_\_\_\_  
Barn Swallow \_\_\_\_  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher \_\_\_\_  
Wood Thrush \_\_\_\_  
Gray Catbird \_\_\_\_  
Northern Parula \_\_\_\_  
Yellow-throated Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Prairie Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Black-and-white Warbler \_\_\_\_  
American Redstart \_\_\_\_  
Prothonotary Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Worm-eating Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Swainson's Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Louisiana Waterthrush \_\_\_\_  
Kentucky Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Common Yellowthroat \_\_\_\_  
Hooded Warbler \_\_\_\_  
Yellow-breasted Chat \_\_\_\_  
Summer Tanager \_\_\_\_  
Blue Grosbeak \_\_\_\_  
Indigo Bunting \_\_\_\_  
Painted Bunting \_\_\_\_  
Dickcissel \_\_\_\_  
Bachman's Sparrow \_\_\_\_  
Lark Sparrow \_\_\_\_  
Grasshopper Sparrow \_\_\_\_  
Orchard Oriole \_\_\_\_  
Baltimore Oriole \_\_\_\_

**MINUTES OF THE MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
SPRING MEETING APRIL 20-22, 2001**

The Mississippi Ornithological Society held its spring meeting in Bay St. Louis (Hancock Co.) on April 20-22, 2001.

Members gathered on Friday night at the Waveland Methodist Church for a potluck supper hosted by the Mississippi Coast Audubon Society. MOS President Shannon Knight thanked the Audubon members for a most delicious meal and announced that field trips on Saturday morning would be to Logtown, Spence's Woods, and Ansley. The afternoon would be spent at Clower-Thornton Nature Study Area in Gulfport.

Jerry Bird, president of MCAS, introduced the evening's speaker, Stacy Peterson, who presented slides and spoke about the use of oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico by migrating birds. Stacy was part of a three-year study by Louisiana State University to monitor these platforms and determine how migrants interacted with them.

Members of the board met immediately after the general meeting.

On Saturday evening the banquet and business meeting was held at the Bay St. Louis Depot. Shannon welcomed everyone and thanked MCAS for their hospitality and Tish Galbraith for being the local organizer. Treasurer Jan Dubuisson gave her report, including the fact that MOS has a net worth of \$23,778.64.

Committee reports were given as follows:

Mississippi Bird Records Committee Chairman Terry Schiefer reported that the terms of Marvin Davis and Mark Woodrey had expired and that Paul Hamel and Philip Barbour would replace them. Terry also expressed concern that MOS members keep track of bird records. He urged everyone to send him bird record cards and rare bird report forms which he would have available after the meeting.

Marion Schiefer announced that Migration Count Day would be May 12, 2001, and asked for help from the membership. Packets would be available for the counters. Surveys would take place all over the United States on the same day.

Bruce Reid, director of bird conservation for the Mississippi state office of the National Audubon Society, reported that Keith Kimmerle would be taking over the Breeding Bird Atlas. He also noted that Allan Mueller and Mark Woodrey had prepared a handout on the best bird areas in Mississippi. Bruce concluded by mentioning plans for an anniversary celebration for the Wildlife Management Area on the Pascagoula River in the fall.

Gene Knight noted that the new checklist was ready with its changes in some names and sequencing and would be on sale after the meeting for \$.25 each or five for one dollar.

On behalf of the Tucker Award Committee, Gene gave a history of the Tucker Award, noting that it was named for J.W. Tucker, a friend and supporter of Fannie Cook. Ms. Cook, who was the first director of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, received the initial award in 1956.

This year's recipients were Lydia Schultz and Jan Dubuisson. Gerry Morgan presented the award to Lydia, who has first state records for four hummingbirds and the Shiny Cowbird. She has also had a nature-oriented store on the coast for fifteen years and has promoted birding and environmental interests. Judy Toups presented the second Tucker Award to Jan, who has been a member of MOS for fifteen years and is the current treasurer. Her most notable achievement, however, is her stewardship of the least terns and their areas on the coast.

Teri Jacobson-Manzo, the new vice-president, conducted the species tally and recorded a total of 122 species.

Don McKee introduced the evening's speaker, Judy Toups, who shared her joy of discovering new birds and her adventures with MOS and MCAS members through the years.

Tish thanked everyone for coming and awarded the door prize of a bird feeder. Shannon announced that the fall meeting would be in Cleveland or Greenville. In conclusion, the field trips for Sunday morning were announced, being led by Judy Toups and Stacy Peterson.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsie Croft, Secretary

<b>FALL MEETING                      SEPTEMBER 28-30, 2001</b> <b>GREAT RIVER ROAD STATE PARK</b>
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**LOCATION:**

Great River Road State Park is located in Rosedale off MS Hwy. #1, about 35 miles north of Greenville and about 20 miles west of Cleveland on Hwy. #8. The park's four level observation tower offers great views of the mighty Mississippi. The Visitor Center provides fast food meals, meeting rooms, and catering service. There are 61 camping pads available.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Camping at GRRSP, Rosedale	662-759-6762
Motels in nearby Cleveland:	
Best Western Cleveland Inn, Hwy 61S	662-846-5404
Hampton Inn, Hwy. 61N	662-846-1525
Comfort Inn, Hwy. 61N	662-843-4060

**FRIDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 28**

6:00-7:30	Visitor Center - Social Hour - discuss field trips, light supper consisting of sandwiches, chips and dip, vegetable tray, and cookies.
7:30-8:30	Board Meeting

**SATURDAY- SEPTEMBER 29**

7:00 am	Field trips - All field trips will meet at the Visitor Center parking lot.
12 :00 am	Meet at the Visitor Center for lunch
6:30 pm	Banquet (catfish plate) – Visitor Center
7:30 pm	Business Meeting
	Species Tally
	Speaker – Paul Hamel, Research Wildlife Biologist with the Forest Service Lab in Stoneville, will talk on the subject, “Restoring Winter Bird Habitat to the Delta Environment.”

**SUNDAY- SEPTEMBER 30**

7:30 am	Field Trips to be announced
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## FALL 2001 MEETING – REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration: \$5.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet: \$10.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to M.O.S. Mail check and registration form to:**

Jan Dubuisson, MOS Treasurer  
22410 Glad Acres  
Pass Christian, MS 39571

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### ORDER FORM – MOS ITEMS FOR SALE — PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE CHARGES

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 BIRDS 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.

**PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO M.O.S. MAIL CHECK AND ORDER FORM TO:**

Jan Dubuisson, MOS Treasurer  
22410 Glad Acres  
Pass Christian, MS 39571

**Mississippi Ornithological Society**

**Membership Form**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Individual, \$15 yr.

\_\_\_ Subscribing (libraries), \$10 yr.

\_\_\_ Family, \$25 yr.

\_\_\_ Sustaining, \$30 yr.

\_\_\_ Student/Senior, \$10 yr.

\_\_\_ Life, \$300

Make check payable to: MOS

Send to: Janet Dubuisson, MOS Treasurer

22410 Glad Acres

Pass Christian, MS 39571

*Dues are payable in January of each year. Check mailing label for your dues status.*

Mississippi Ornithological Society

79 Highway 9 W

Oxford, MS 38655

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