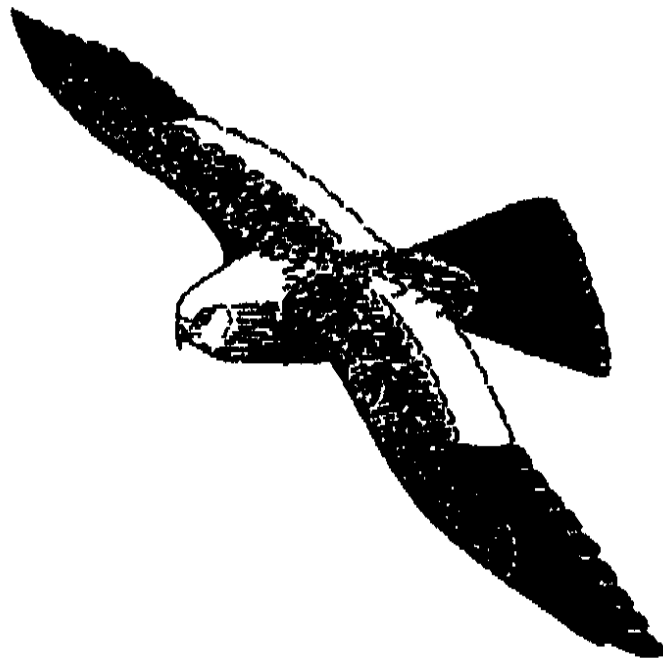


MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 49, Number 1

January 2004



Ictinia mississippiensis

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MOS OFFICERS

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Marion Schiefer

AMERICAN BIRDS: Terence Schiefer

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD

DAYS: Mary Stevens

MOS COLONIAL WATERBIRD COUNT

COORDINATOR: Mary Stevens

**ATTENTION ALL
MOS MEMBERS !**

**DUES ARE PAYABLE IN
JANUARY OF EACH YEAR.**

**PLEASE SEND CHECK AND
REGISTRATION FORM ON
BACK OF NEWSLETTER TO:**

**JAN DUBUISSON
22410 GLAD ACRES
PASS CHRISTIAN, MS 39571**

MISSISSIPPI BIRD INFORMATION

GULF COAST HOTLINE: 228.539.0249

Or eaglesi@bellsouth.net

ONLINE: MISSBIRD@olemiss.edu



**Roseate Spoonbill at St. Catherine NWR
8-10 August, 2003**

PRESIDENTS' CORNER

By Margaret Copeland
M.O.S. Co-President

With past coast Christmas Bird Counts having totals of more than 140 species, MOS folks are preparing for a treat (winter hummingbirds particularly) on the weekend of February 27-29, 2004, on the Mississippi Gulf Coast headquartered at the Seashore United Methodist Assembly in Biloxi.

We have made special arrangements to have an "affordable" weekend; we hope that you will make your plans and reservations quickly. Please also note the "rules" that we must follow in order to use the Seashore Assembly. Coastal birders will lead field trips to the "hot spots" and hummer havens. We are looking forward to hearing Gerry Morgan on Friday night and Frank Moore's program on Saturday night. Coast folks tell us the new coast birding book will be available on Friday night. Judy Toups, Jerry Bird, and Alison Henry will be there to sell them for the coast Audubon group. The meeting details are at the end of this newsletter.

Our August meeting in Natchez was spectacular! We had the largest attendance (65) in recent memory. The birding was excellent, the numbers of wood storks, roseate spoonbills, white ibis, night herons, etc. were remarkable. The "close-up" views were astounding! Many members suggested that the Natchez shorebird count should be an annual event! Special thanks to Bill and Dottie McGehee, Mary Stevens, and St. Catherine's Creek Refuge staff for making the weekend so memorable. Folks thought the Saturday evening catered supper at the McGehee's and the Wood Stork Stalk were unforgettable. The food was delicious; the fellowship was great; and the numbers of at sunset provided a birder's paradise! One member commented she thought she was in "heaven."

Thanks to all the diligent folks working to make birding better in Mississippi. IBA work is progressing, the atlas is nearing completion, and local counts and surveys continue. Special thanks to Gene and Shannon Knight for editing and publishing the newsletter. Thanks to Mark Woodrey who has been Editor of the Mississippi Kite for the past several years and is working hard to get it caught up for us by the time we meet in February. After that, he would like to "retire" and turn the Kite over to someone else. Whoever takes on the responsibility will be looking for help from all of us. What could you write about to put in the Kite? The new editor will help you "polish" your article, so don't be afraid to submit something! Also, the Knight's are always looking for articles for the newsletter. You could be published if you will contribute!!

We're looking for suggestions for the future meeting sites; let us know if you have a favorite place you want MOS to visit. MOS continues to look for a fund-raising project. Ideas should be submitted to the board. Our publishing endowment is not drawing the interest we need to be able to publish the newsletter and the Kites. Please note there is a line for your donation on the meeting registration form. Any extra money we make from our meetings also goes into the treasury to help.

We look forward to seeing you on the Coast on February 27, 2004!

FRANK MOORE TO SPEAK AT MOS FEBRUARY MEETING

Dr. Frank Moore, Professor and Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Southern Mississippi and a noted ornithologist, will be the speaker at the Saturday night meeting of MOS in February. In both his teaching and his research, Dr. Moore has concentrated on the behavior and ecology of animal migration. Much of the research that he and his graduate students conduct relates to migrating birds. They are concerned, as we are, that many migrating songbirds are on the decline.

As a background for his talk and some "food for thought," Dr. Moore wrote the following and sent it to us to include in the newsletter:

Populations of many forest-dwelling songbirds have declined over the past quarter century, and several factors appear to be responsible for the population declines. Destruction of tropical wintering habitat and changes in the suitability of breeding areas, especially in relation to forest fragmentation, have received much attention from Ornithologists. Yet, the persistence of migrant populations depends on the bird's ability to find favorable conditions for survival throughout the annual cycle and each of the habitats encountered during the migrant's annual journey faces different threats of degradation and destruction.

For a Red-eyed Vireo or Yellow-billed Cuckoo the choice of habitat is made in tropical wintering quarters, temperate breeding areas and repeatedly during migration. Consequently, factors associated with the stopover ecology of migrants must figure in any analysis of population change and in the development of a comprehensive conservation "strategy" for intercontinental landbird migrants. Protect all the breeding woodland in North America and all of the appropriate habitat on the wintering grounds and populations of those migrants will still decline unless habitat requirements during migration are factored into the conservation equation.

What types of habitat are most important to migrating songbirds? Where do they occur, and how is their distribution and abundance changing as a result of development and land conversion? The movement of birds across the Gulf of Mexico each spring and fall is arguably the most conspicuous feature of the Nearctic-Neotropical bird migration system. The coastal woodlands and narrow barrier islands that lie scattered along the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico probably provide important stopover habitat for Neotropical landbird migrants. They represent the last possible stopover before fall migrants make a nonstop flight (18-24 hr) of greater than 1,000 km, and the first possible landfall for birds returning north in spring.

Migrating birds are likely to solve en route problems if they settle in high quality habitat, and coastal woodlands of SE Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama are important places to stopover following a trans-Gulf flight. Yet, the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico is experiencing dramatic human population increases. The southward migration of industry coupled with changing demographics will increase development pressure on stopover habitats in the decades ahead. As stopover habitat is transformed or degraded, the cost of migration increases and the potential for a successful migration is jeopardized. As coastal areas are developed, there is a commensurate increase in the value of unaltered habitat to migratory birds, which makes the creation of new habitats to replace those lost to coastal development a major conservation challenge in the next century.

MINUTES OF THE FALL AUGUST 8-10, 2003 MEETING

By Frances Henne, Secretary

The Fall 2003 meeting of MOS was held in Natchez, Mississippi, and nearby St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge August 8-10. The first gathering was Friday night at the Natchez Visitors Center. It was well attended with approximately 60 members present. There were many new faces in the crowd. Delightful and tasty refreshments were served to the group by the Visitors Center staff.

Co-President Margaret Copeland started the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing Tom Pullen, who is in charge of the Great River Birding Trail for Mississippi. Tom talked to the group briefly about the project and handed out some Great River Birding Trail Fact Sheets, asking that anyone who knew a good birding site along the Mississippi River see him after the meeting to get a birding site nomination form to fill out.

Then a slide presentation was given by Steve Dinsmore to prepare and help us in shore bird identification on our Saturday field trips. Different departing times for the Saturday field trips were announced. Time, place and directions were given for the Saturday afternoon picnic to be held at the home of Bill and Dottie McGehee. Margaret Copeland asked that Board members remain for a brief meeting after the meeting was adjourned.

On Saturday evening, after a very nice picnic at the McGehee's home, MOS held its annual business meeting. Co-President Marion Schiefer called the meeting to order. She gave special thanks to the McGehees and to Mary Stevens for organizing the picnic and the field trips at St. Catherine Creek NWR. Minutes from the last meeting were approved as published in the newsletter. Jan Dubuisson read the treasurer's report, and it was approved as read. Gene Knight conducted the species tally for Friday and Saturday and it was determined that 100 different species had been seen so far. Gene asked that he be contacted if anyone should see a species new for the list on Sunday's field trips. Co-President Margaret Copeland announced that the next meeting would be held February 27-29, 2004, at the Seashore United Methodist Assembly in Biloxi. Carl Smith, Vice President, reported on the MOS web site which will soon be in operation. Marion said that Mississippi State University is providing the space for the website and has granted us the address of www.msstate.edu/org/mos. Margaret Copeland discussed the need the organization has to raise money, since the endowment used in the past to pay for publishing the newsletters and the Mississippi Kites is currently not earning very much interest. She asked for volunteers for both a Fund Raising Committee and a Publishing Committee to help with finding sources for publishing that would offer better rates than we have been getting. A door prize donated by the Natchez Visitors Center was won by Jackie Henne-Kerr. The meeting was adjourned and the members returned to St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge to view the many water birds returning to their roost.

Species List
M.O.S. Fall Meeting - Natchez, MS
August 8-10, 2003

Pied-billed Grebe	Solitary Sandpiper	A. Crow
A. White Pelican	Spotted Sandpiper	Fish Crow
Neotropic Cormorant	Upland Sandpiper	Carolina Chickadee
Double-crested Cormorant	Semipalmated Sandpiper	Tufted Titmouse
Anhinga	Western Sandpiper	Carolina Wren
Great Blue Heron	Least Sandpiper	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Great Egret	Pectoral Sandpiper	E. Bluebird
Snowy Egret	Stilt Sandpiper	Wood Thrush
Little Blue Heron	Long-billed Dowitcher	N. Mockingbird
Tricolored Heron	Least Tern	Brown Thrasher
Cattle Egret	Eurasian Collared-Dove	E. Starling
Green Heron	Mourning Dove	N. Parula
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Yellow Warbler
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	E. Screech-Owl	Prairie Warbler
White Ibis	Barred Owl	Prothonotary Warbler
Glossy Ibis	Chimney Swift	Worm-eating Warbler
White-faced Ibis	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Louisiana Waterthrush
Roseate Spoonbill	Belted Kingfisher	C. Yellowthroat
Wood Stork	Red-headed Woodpecker	Hooded Warbler
Black Vulture	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Summer Tanager
Turkey Vulture	Downy Woodpecker	E. Towhee
Canada Goose	Hairy Woodpecker	Chipping Sparrow
Wood Duck	Pileated Woodpecker	N. Cardinal
Mallard	E. Wood-Pewee	Blue Grosbeak
Mississippi Kite	Acadian Flycatcher	Indigo Bunting
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Great Crested Flycatcher	Painted Bunting
Cooper's Hawk	E. Kingbird	Dickcissel
Red-shouldered Hawk	Loggerhead Shrike	Red-winged Blackbird
Broad-winged Hawk	White-eyed Vireo	E. Meadowlark
Red-tailed Hawk	Red-eyed Vireo	Brown-headed Cowbird
Wild Turkey	Purple Martin	Orchard Oriole
N. Bobwhite	Tree Swallow	House Finch
Semipalmated Plover	N. Rough-winged Swallow	House Sparrow
Killdeer	Bank Swallow	
Black-necked Stilt	Cliff Swallow	
Greater Yellowlegs	Barn Swallow	
Lesser Yellowlegs	Blue Jay	
		Total Species: 107

ATTENTION

ALL MOS MEMBERS

IN ORDER TO CUT DOWN ON OUR PRINTING AND MAILING COSTS OF THE NEWSLETTER, WE ARE ASKING ANY OF YOU WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL TO PLEASE CONTACT US AT gsknight@dixie-net.com.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP.

Gene and Shannon Knight, Editors

MOS MEETING--- FEBRUARY 27-29, 2004
SEASHORE UNITED METHODIST ASSEMBLY, BILOXI

The MOS "Late Winter" meeting (rather than a "Spring Meeting") will be headquartered at the Seashore United Methodist Assembly in Biloxi, Mississippi, February 27, 28, and 29, 2004. We are highlighting winter gulf coast birds, especially the numerous hummingbirds that visit coastal yards each winter. Hummer species already reported include Buff-bellied, Rufous, Black-chinned, and Calliope.

All meeting activities will be held on the campus (cafeteria and Casey Center) of Seashore Assembly. Field trips will leave from the parking lot. Reservations for Frazier Hall (a limited number of motel-like accommodations) need to be made quickly (no later than January 31) to enjoy the convenient lodging and great rates offered by the Seashore United Methodist Assembly. A double room with bath is \$38 per night for 2 people. A suite arrangement can offer two rooms for \$58 per night for four people (then, \$4 for each additional person). That "other room" will not be rented if you desire a "private bath" with your room. Rooms are limited, so we encourage same-sex groups to share a suite. Roommate suggestions/arrangements can be coordinated with Margaret Copeland (662-323-1445 at night) if you need help finding someone to share the suite. Room reservations should be made by each person/group making reservations at 228-436-6767. Payment by check (following called reservation) should be sent to Seashore United Methodist Assembly, Inc., 1410 Leggett Drive, Biloxi, MS 39530-3554. (If Frazier Hall fills up, there may be some private rooms with baths in Arlean Hall (same rules and rates) run by the United Methodist Women and adjacent to Seashore Assembly. To make reservations there, contact 228-432-1761.)

MOS will handle food reservations/payments. Breakfast (offered Saturday and Sunday morning) is \$5 per person for each breakfast ordered, and Friday night (\$7) and Saturday night (\$8) supper reservations will go through our treasurer. MOS will "guarantee" your meals if reservations and payment are made to MOS; and, then MOS will be responsible for paying the total food bill. Breakfast is served cafeteria style at 7 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The Friday night (5:30 p.m.) and Saturday night (6:00 p.m.) suppers will also be cafeteria style; we will move to Casey Center (meeting room) for each night meeting. You may plan to eat elsewhere; but remember our programs will start on time and you should be there to be a part of MOS happenings!

Because we are dealing with a church, their rules include "no smoking, no alcoholic beverages, and no food in the rooms." Please respect their rules or arrange to stay somewhere else. We are excited to have these lovely facilities available to MOS; It makes our weekend affordable to everyone.

Make your plans NOW. A limited number of rooms are available first-come, first-served; and food must be ordered well in advance of our meetings. Mail the form to Jan for the registration and meals and make your call to Seashore Assembly as soon as you receive this newsletter. Last minute folks may come to the Friday and Saturday night programs (pay your registration fee); but food will not be available without a prior, paid reservation. You will not find these rates anywhere else on the coast! We urge you to be prompt.

The Friday night program (at the Casey Center) will be Gardening for Winter Hummers; a topic that everyone seems to be interested in and will be presented by Gerry Morgan (top-notch coastal birder, gardener, and hummer host!).

Saturday night will feature Dr. Frank Moore, ornithologist at the University of Southern Mississippi. His topic will be "Stopover Ecology of Landbird Migrants: Finding a Safe Place to Land." (See additional information about Dr. Moore and his subject elsewhere in this newsletter.)

DIRECTIONS TO SEASHORE UNITED METHODIST ASSEMBLY

The Seashore Assembly is located in the 1400 block West Beach Boulevard, Highway 90, in Biloxi. It faces the Gulf of Mexico and is clearly marked by green highway signs located in the median and visible from both the East and West bound lanes.

If you arrive by traveling South from Jackson or Hattiesburg on Highway 49, the Assembly is approximately eleven miles East of the Gulfport Hwy. 49 and Hwy 90 intersection.

If you arrive via Interstate 10, take Exit 46A (Biloxi and Keesler AFB Exit), which is the I-110 connecting corridor to Hwy 90. Traffic will merge on Hwy 90 West.

MOS WEEKEND SCHEDULE:

FRIDAY EVENING - FEBRUARY 27

5:30 p.m. Cafeteria - Supper
6:30 p.m. Casey Center - Fellowship, Field Trip plans, and Program:
Gardening for Hummingbirds - Gerry Morgan
Board meeting will follow the program

SATURDAY - FEBRUARY 28

7:00 a.m. Cafeteria - Breakfast
7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. Parking Lot - Field trips depart
(Mad Dash, Slow Poke, & Hummer Havens variety)
12:00 Noon Lunch - on your own
6:00 p.m. Cafeteria - Supper
7:00 p.m. Casey Center - Meeting
Bird species compilation and Program: Stopover Ecology of
Landbird Migrants: Finding a Safe Place to Land - Dr. Frank
Moore
Board meeting will follow the program (if needed)

SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 29

7:00 a.m. Cafeteria -Breakfast
7:45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. Parking Lot- Field Trips depart

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 #___ \$___
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

MOS WINTER MEETING - REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Additional Person (s):

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____

Registration \$10.00 per person ___ Person (s) X \$ 10.00 = \$ _____

Supper Friday night, 5:30 p.m., \$7 per person ___ Person (s) X \$ 7.00 = \$ _____
(Baked Chicken)

Breakfast Saturday 7:00 a.m., \$5 per person ___ Person(s) X \$ 5.00 = \$ _____

Supper Sat. night 6:00 a.m., \$8 per person ___ Person(s) X \$ 8.00 = \$ _____
(Pot Roast)

Breakfast Sunday 7:00 a.m., \$5 per person ___ Person(s) X \$ 5.00 = \$ _____

Additional contribution to help with publications (\$5.00 per person suggested) \$ _____
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

Mail the registration form to reach Jan no later than February 13

Mississippi Ornithological Society

Membership Form

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____

Renewal: _____

New Member: _____

___ Individual, \$15 yr.

___ Subscribing (libraries), \$15 yr.

___ Family, \$25 yr.

___ Sustaining, \$30 yr.

___ Student/Senior, \$10 yr.

___ Life, \$300

Make check payable to: MOS
Send to: Jan 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 Hwy 9W
Oxford, MS 38655**

Check your expiration date >>>>>>