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# Mississippi Ornithological Society



Volume 53 Number 1

NEWSLETTER

February 2008

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**2008 MOS FEBRUARY MEETING  
February 22-24  
GEORGE PAYNE COSSAR STATE PARK**

George Payne Cossar State Park is located 5 miles east of I-55 off MS Hwy. 32 between Grenada and Batesville. Cossar is a 982 acre park situated on a peninsula-like arm jutting into Enid Reservoir. Cossar has 13 cabins, 84 camping pads, group camp, visitor's center, and nature trails. Call 662-623-7356 for information. Nearby Batesville and Grenada have motels right off I-55 if there are no vacancies at the park. **REGISTRATION FORM IS ON BACK PAGE.**

**FRIDAY EVENING – FEBRUARY 22**

6:30-7:30 p.m.	Visitor Center – Social Hour – Light Supper
7:30-8:00 p.m.	Plans for field trips on Saturday and Sunday
8:00 p.m.	Board Meeting

**SATURDAY – FEBRUARY 23**

6:45-7:00 a.m.	Gather at the parking area in front of the restaurant for field trips to depart promptly at 7:00 a.m. Field trips include a trip to the north delta area and local area lakes.
6:30-7:30 p.m.	Banquet in the Visitor Center
7:30-8:00 p.m.	Business Meeting and Species Tally
8:00 p.m.	<b>SPEAKER</b> – Randy Wilson of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Randy works in the FWS Migratory Bird Program and handles migratory bird habitat planning and monitoring issues as well as delivering habitat improvements and enhancements and providing technical assistance to private landowners.

**SUNDAY – FEBRUARY 24**

7:00 a.m.	Field trips – meet at the Visitor Center parking lot
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**KITE EDITORS SOLICIT ARTICLES**

The KITE editors need articles for inclusion in the Mississippi Kite. The articles could be about bird sightings or studies from previous years if the information has never been published. These articles could also be about any bird sighting or bird study that would advance the study of birdlife in the state of Mississippi. Submission of articles describing species occurrence and distribution, descriptions of behaviors, notes on the identification of Mississippi birds, as well as scientific studies from all fields of ornithology are encouraged.

All articles should be submitted to Marion Schiefer, P. O. Box 1505, Starkville, MS 39760-1505, or via e-mail to Marion at [marion\\_schiefer@hotmail.com](mailto:marion_schiefer@hotmail.com). For more information about the format of articles, please see the MOS website at <http://www.msstate.edu/org/mos/Officers.htm> and click on the link information for authors.

**MOS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS**

**PRESIDENT:** Bill McGehee  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Sarajane Smith  
**SECRETARY:** Francis Henne  
**TREASURER:** Jan Dubuisson  
**PAST PRESIDENT:** Carl Smith  
**MISSISSIPPI KITE EDITORS:** Margaret Copeland, Marion Schiefer, and Nick Winstead  
**MOS NEWSLETTER EDITORS:** Gene and Shannon Knight

**MOS ON THE WEB**

[MISSBIRD@olemiss.edu](mailto:MISSBIRD@olemiss.edu)  
[www.msstate.edu/org/mos](http://www.msstate.edu/org/mos)

**ATTENTION ALL MOS MEMBERS**  
**ELECTRONIC MOS NEWSLETTER**

**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 email to please contact us at: [gsknight@dixie-net.com](mailto:gsknight@dixie-net.com)**

**Thanks for your help**

<b>MOS MEMBERSHIP FORM</b>	
Name _____	
Address _____	
City, State, Zip: _____	
RENEWAL _____	NEW MEMBER _____
<b>DUES:</b>	
___ Individual	\$15 yr.
___ Family	\$25 yr.
___ Student/Senior Citizen	\$10 yr.
___ Subscribing (Libraries)	\$15 yr.
___ Sustaining	\$30 yr.
___ Life	\$300 yr.
<b><u>DUES ARE DUE</u></b>	
<b>And payable in January of each year. Send check to: Jan Dubuisson, 22410 Glad Acres, Pass Christian, MS 39571</b>	

**President's Corner**

**By Bill McGehee  
MOS President**

Nothing lasts forever – especially good things! After a great run as Co-Editors of the MOS Newsletter, Gene and Shannon Knight have asked to be relieved of this labor of love. This is completely reasonable and understandable but it presents us with a void to be filled as soon as possible. With the possible exception of Treasurer none of our officer positions is more vital to our organization than those of Editors of our Newsletter and The Mississippi Kite. These publications help us distinguish MOS from being just a “bird club”. Their importance is reflected in our Constitution which provides that the Editors be officers appointed by majority vote of the Board of directors, not the general membership which elects the other officers.

Gene and Shannon have kindly offered to prepare this issue of the Newsletter. We need each of our members to give careful and serious consideration to volunteering to be considered for this position, at least for a while. This is not like being Editor of the *New York Times*, but it does require a donation of several weeks of time twice a year. Your award will be the appreciation of your fellow members and the satisfaction of knowing that you have made a significant contribution to moving MOS forward through its sixth decade.

**Submitting Articles For the MOS Newsletter**

The MOS Newsletter is published biannually to inform members of upcoming meetings and birding events. The editors invite you to participate by submitting articles for possible publication in the newsletter. Some suggestions for articles might be:

- \*Birding trips—in-state, out-of-state, or out-of-country
- \* Life bird experiences
- \*Bird locales
- \* Special birding events
- \*Any interesting story about birds or bird behavior

Please submit neatly handwritten or typed articles, not to exceed two single-spaced typed pages. You may contribute as many articles as you would like. Articles may be sent in any time of the year, but if you would like it to appear in a specific issue then it must be sent in on the following deadline dates.

- Summer Issue - June 30
- Spring Issue - December 31

Please mail or e-mail your articles to: Gene and Shannon Knight, 79 Hwy 9W, Oxford, MS 38655

662-236-2413 or [gsknight@dixie-net.com](mailto:gsknight@dixie-net.com)

## **Southeast Arizona**

**By JoRee Pease**

Warren and I made a trip to Southeast Arizona in early August, during the monsoon season. During this season there is an unusual amount of rain and many of the birds nest during this time. The area was green because of the rain, and the blooming cacti were beautiful. We flew from Connecticut to Tucson and had a local guide who furnished expertise, transportation and lunch. This made it possible to adjust our schedule around the frequent thunderstorms and flash floods.

Our stops on the first birding day included the rest stop at Sarita, Patton's yard in Patagonia, Patagonia rest stop, Patagonia Lake State Park, and Kino Springs golf course. At Patton's we sat comfortably under a canopy and watched violet-crowned, black-chinned, and broad-tailed hummers swarming the feeders. We also saw Gambel's quail; Eurasian collared, white-winged and mourning dove; yellow-billed cuckoo; acorn, Gila, and ladder-backed woodpecker; vermilion flycatcher; Cassin's, thick-billed and western kingbird; northern mockingbird; curve-billed thrasher; phainopepla; yellow-breasted chat; summer tanager; canyon and Abert's towhee; hooded oriole; and lesser goldfinch. Other species for this wonderful day included neotropical cormorant; gray, Swainson's, red-tailed hawk; kestrel and peregrine falcon; roadrunner; several loggerhead shrikes; many Chihuahuan raven; cliff and barn swallow; Botteri's, chipping, lark, black-throated, grasshopper and song sparrow; and blue grosbeak. At Kino Springs we saw a white-collared seedeater, but decided it was an escaped bird. More exciting for us was a family of three gray hawks.

Day 2 took us to Madera Canyon to search for black-capped gnatcatcher, unsuccessfully. We did see a beautiful pair of varied buntings. A short-cut through Box Canyon road - not for the faint-hearted - took us to Sierra Vista and the Beatty's hummingbird station in Miller Canyon. We saw eight species of hummingbirds, including the male white-eared that I thought was the most beautiful bird I had ever seen. We added to our hummer list white-eared, magnificent, rufous, Anna's, broad-tailed, and Allen's. Next to Ash Canyon B&B where a pair of Lucifer's put on a show for us, the beautiful female too close to focus our binoculars on. We made a brief stop at Ramsey Canyon where a berylline hummer had been reported but did not find it.

A report of a nesting berylline at Portal led us to make the two hour drive on Wednesday. Going through Wilcox we added crissal thrasher and pyrrhuloxia to our list. After a bumpy ten mile shortcut to Paradise we were forced by an overflowing wash to take another route. Once there the hummer was on the nest within twenty feet of the road, so easy we almost felt guilty! From there we went down the back road to Wilcox without many birds. A stop at the water treatment facility netted most of the water birds for the trip, including many migrating Wilson's phalaropes. The town has made this a birder friendly place with observation platforms. Later we learned that we had just missed a violent thunderstorm with hail.

The most memorable day of our trip was the ride into California Gulch for the five-striped sparrow. Recent flash floods had almost destroyed the already primitive road and we would never have made it without 4-wheel drive, high clearance, a good driver, and plenty of luck. The search for the sparrow required a wade up the creek, but it was worth it when we saw three birds. The border patrol checked us out thoroughly on the way out, but apparently decided we were legal.

Our final day we went back to Madera Canyon but again struck out on the black-capped gnatcatcher. Mt. Lemon was our next destination. We heard our first common raven and northern pygmy-owl; saw Cassin's, warbling, and Bell's vireo; Steller's jay; mountain chickadee; brown creeper; hermit and red-faced warbler. On the outskirts of Tucson, with the temperature rapidly going from 60 to 100, we had a fantastic look at a soaring zone-tailed hawk. What a finale!

Our species total for the trip was 118. For those who might be interested our guide was Melody Kehl. She has a website, [melodybirdingadventures.com](http://melodybirdingadventures.com), that gives all the information needed to contact her.

<b>WELCOME NEW MEMBERS</b>	
<b>MELISSA BECK</b>	<b>HARLEY METCALFE, III</b>

**Minutes of the MOS Board and Business Meeting  
September 21 and 22, 2007  
Roosevelt State Park**

The MOS Board meeting was called to order by President Bill McGehee. He announced the speaker for the general meeting Saturday night would be John Davis, the subject "Birds Connection to Dinosaurs."

Margaret Copeland discussed the possible need to change the routine for meetings due to the decrease in attendance at meetings.

Several ways to boost attendance and membership were discussed, such as advertising more.

Pres. McGehee announced the Spring MOS meeting would be at George Payne Cossar State Park on February 22-24, 2008.

Ideas for the Fall 2008 meeting were discussed. Possible places were Pascagoula or Pearl River regions and the Ocean Springs area. The group consensus was somewhere on the Gulf Coast. Vice-President Sarajane Smith will discuss it with some Gulf Coast members and try to formalize plans for the Fall meeting.

Gene Knight, a member of the Bird Records Committee, reported that the chairperson of the committee has been ineffective. Margaret Copeland moved to have the MOS Board support the other committee members action to address this problem and take the necessary steps to reorganize the Bird Records Committee. Shannon Knight seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Margaret Copeland raised the question of permanent storage for the Bird Records which are now stored in a private home. Nick Winstead thought the records could be permanently stored at the Museum of Natural Science. Margaret asked if a written confirmation could be given to that effect.

The KITE editors gave a report on the status of the publications. One edition of the Kite would be distributed at Saturday's meeting. They discussed the Judy Toups KITE issue. There will also be a change in the KITE issue timetable to organize page numbers. A change in format may be done. It was suggested to put the KITE online. Margaret Copeland made a motion to give permission to scan and put all back KITE issues online. Gene Knight seconded this motion. The motion carried. The President adjourned the meeting.

**Minutes of the Business Meeting**

The Fall MOS business meeting was called to order by President Bill McGehee. The minutes were approved as written. Jan Dubuisson gave the treasurer's report. It was approved as read.

Marion Schiefer gave a report on the status of the KITE to date. She stated that the December 2004 issue was almost completed. The Judy Toups issue will possibly be finished by spring. Also the KITE volume 35 (1) July 2005 would be distributed to members after the meeting.

President McGehee announced that the spring meeting would be held on Feb. 22-24, 2008 at George Payne Cossar State Park.

Gene and Shannon Knight stated their desire to retire as editors of the MOS Newsletter. This position is open to volunteers.

The program speaker was John Davis. He gave an interesting and amusing presentation on the theory of birds being descendants of dinosaurs.

Times were announced for bird walks on Sunday morning.

The number of bird species seen for the weekend was 94.

**Species List**  
**Roosevelt State Park, Ross Barnett Reservoir, and Surrounding Areas**  
**MOS Fall Meeting 21-23 September 2007**

Canada Goose	Acadian Flycatcher
Wood Duck	White-eyed Vireo
Mallard	Yellow-throated Vireo
Blue-winged Teal	Red-eyed Vireo
Northern Shoveler	Blue Jay
Pied-billed Grebe	American Crow
Double-crested Cormorant	Fish Crow
Anhinga	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Great Blue Heron	Carolina Chickadee
Great Egret	Tufted Titmouse
Snowy Egret	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Little Blue Heron	White-breasted Nuthatch
Cattle Egret	Brown-headed Nuthatch
Green Heron	Carolina Wren
Black Vulture	Marsh Wren
Turkey Vulture	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Osprey	Eastern Bluebird
Bald Eagle	Gray-cheeked Thrush
Northern Harrier	Swainson's Thrush
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Wood Thrush
Cooper's Hawk	Gray Catbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	Northern Mockingbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Brown Thrasher
American Kestrel	European Starling
King Rail	Tennessee Warbler
Purple Gallinule	Northern Parula
Common Moorhen	Yellow Warbler
American Coot	Magnolia Warbler
Killdeer	Pine Warbler
Spotted Sandpiper	Palm Warbler
Greater Yellowlegs	Black-and-white Warbler
Lesser Yellowlegs	American Redstart
Black Tern	Kentucky Warbler
Rock Pigeon	Common Yellowthroat
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Hooded Warbler
Mourning Dove	Summer Tanager
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Eastern Towhee
Great Horned Owl	Northern Cardinal
Chimney Swift	Indigo Bunting
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Red-winged Blackbird
Belted Kingfisher	Common Grackle
Red-headed Woodpecker	Baltimore Oriole
Red-bellied Woodpecker	House Finch
Downy Woodpecker	American Goldfinch
Hairy Woodpecker	House Sparrow
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	<b>Species Total: 94</b>
Northern Flicker	
Pileated Woodpecker	
Eastern Wood-Pewee	

