

MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Organized April 30, 1955

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Short-eared Owls

Short-eared owls were observed on three visits using as common roosting grounds a 30-acre Johnson grass field about five miles southeast of Fidler, Mississippi, Issaquena County. On the first observation on January 23, 1964, seven were flushed and one specimen collected for the Wildlife Museum. Two of the same, or others, were seen later in the afternoon flying low over fields near the vicinity of the roost. On February 28 in walking over the same roosting area 12 were flushed. Again on March 10, eight (8) were flushed from the same roosting ground.

Large acreages of surrounding land owned by Crown-Zellerback Paper Company have been cleared or planted in recent years to cottonwood plantations. Succession of natural vegetation these plantings to Johnson grass, weeds, and other vegetation have apparently favored cotton rat and other rodent populations. Numerous red-tail and marsh hawks were also seen in this area. Examination of regurgitated short-eared owl pellets found at roosting places showed that cotton rats made up most of the diet of these birds. W. H. Turcotte

Western Meadowlarks

Three Western meadowlarks were observed on April 1 about two miles west of Holly Bluff, Mississippi, in Sharkey County. They were observed carefully at close range and identified by extremely light coloring and song. W. H. Turcotte

Pine Siskins at Jackson

Mrs. William G. Wills, Jr., observed and positively identified 4 pine siskins feeding on the ground in her yard on Poplar Boulevard in northeast Jackson, Mississippi, on December 2, 1963. Again, in December from 4 to 6 were seen at the same place. The siskins were associating with goldfinches one or more times they were seen. Reported by Mrs. William G. Wills, Jr.

Purple Martin Arrival - 1964

Two purple martins arrived at my house west of Jackson this year on February 16, 1964, the earliest arrival date in the past eight years of record-keeping.

W. H. T.

Horned Larks

On December 22, 1963, following a snowfall and low temperatures approximately 50 horned larks were observed in one flock along Highway 80 right of way about one-half mile east of the city limits of Clinton, Mississippi. This was my first Hinds County observation of this species.

Clarence E. Morgan, Jr., Kosciusko, Mississippi, reported the occurrence of horned larks observed in fields near Kosciusko, Mississippi, Attala County, during the same time. The snowfall and extreme cold apparently precipitated the movement of horned larks into areas not usually frequented by them. G. H. T.

White-fronted Geese at Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge

A wintering flock of from 23 - 29 white-fronted geese arrived on Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge the last week in November, 1963, and remained there until the second week in February, 1964. The flock was frequently seen around ryegrass fields planted for geese and around cleared portions and mud flats of Bluff Lake on the refuge. Burton S. Webster, Refuge Manager, Brooksville, Mississippi.

Gray Kingbird

On July 21, 1963, Dr. and Mrs. Bedford Floyd observed a gray kingbird at Belle Fontaine Beach, Jackson County. This is our first observation of this species and the third state record. Mrs. Bedford Floyd.

A New York State Vacation Trip

In June, 1963, we enjoyed a 3 weeks' vacation in New York State. As we drove up the Trace in the early dawn hours of June 6, we began recording birds. It was a happy send-off on our long journey.

At our breakfast stop that first morning we were delighted to see and hear a male Indigo Bunting. How could anything go wrong after that?

At our motel in Kentucky our first night we were entertained out our back window by another bunting and a pair of Orchard Orioles. They almost took precedent over the swimming pool!

I'm convinced that all shopping centers are guarded by nighthawks. We heard them nearly every night.

Our most exciting birding was done in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York around Piseco Lake. Some of the birds we enjoyed were chipping sparrows, juncos, white throated and song sparrows, red-winged blackbirds, flickers, fox sparrows, wood thrushes, purple finches, nuthatch, veerys, red-eyed vireos, phoebes, pee wees, least flycatchers, kingbirds, red-bellied woodpeckers (we rescued one from a screen porch), many lovely barn swallows. A pair of red starts were a real thrill to us. We were able to get close to their nest in a canoe. We saw one loon, a black duck, Great blue heron, a few bobolinks and a rose-breasted grosbeak, and a few more indigo buntings, very few blue birds, martins, gulls, killdeer, sandpipers we couldn't identify, and many many robins, bluejays and, of course, starling and grackles. Meadow larks were numerous all along our trip.

Upon returning home, we were pleased to find most of our yard birds still here. There was a family of mockingbirds in our pine tree, the martins ready to leave, and a noisy hungry colony of red-headed woodpeckers that park on our feeder. The cardinals and thrashers are returning more discreetly. Mrs. Robert Baker, 1712 Gibraltar Drive, Jackson 4, Mississippi.

PAY YOUR 1964 DUES

The following MOS members' dues are paid for the calendar year 1964. If your name does not appear on the list, you owe \$2.00 dues for 1964.

Life Members

Mr. Ben B. Coffey, Jr.
Mrs. Ben B. Coffey, Jr.
Miss Fannye A. Cook
Dr. Henry D. Haberyan

Paid for 1964

Rev. J. L. Dorn
B. E. Gandy
Mrs. Earle R. Glenn
Mrs. S. J. Greer
Mr. S. J. Greer
Mrs. T. H. Hannah
Mr. John E. Hangrove
Raiford L. Holmes
Mrs. F. C. Laskey
Mr. Clarence Morgan, Jr.
Mrs. Mayo Tolman
A. E. Torres
W. H. Turcotte

The following are paid to July 1, 1964, and at that time, or now, should remit \$1.00 for the rest of 1964: Miss Christine Berry, Mrs. S. E. Moreton, Billy Smith-Vanez.

It is not necessary to pay back dues unless you so desire. Unless otherwise designated, your \$2.00 will be credited for the current calendar year.

Please make check payable to the MOS and remit to B. E. Gandy, Secretary-Treasurer, 261 Woody Drive, Jackson, Mississippi.

First Arrival Notes: Orchard oriole - 2 adult males in full plumage 2 1/2 miles east of Clinton, Hinds County, Mississippi, frequenting flowering quince shrub in full bloom over period of several days on and after March 25, 1964.

Chuck-Will's widow - first singing bird at my home (above location on April 5, 1964). Several others were heard before daybreak April 7 about four miles north of Braxton, Mississippi, in Rankin County. Broad-winged hawk - A fairly early arrival seen at same location north of Braxton later in morning of same day. WHT.

White Pelicans - Between 450 and 500 white pelicans were observed on April 6, 1964, on Copiah County Lake, west of Gallman, Mississippi. The birds were carefully studied at rest and in flight with telescope. Fannye A. Cook.

Annual MOS Meeting and Spring Field Trip Plans

Plans for the annual MOS Meeting and field trip are announced as follows by Miss Fannye A. Cook, President, MOS.

The annual business meeting of the Mississippi Ornithological Society will be held at 7:30 P. M., Saturday, May 2, 1964, at Leroy Percy State Park about 7 miles west of Hollandale, Mississippi. An organized field trip will be conducted on Saturday beginning at 3:00 A. M., from Bud's Highway 61 Restaurant at the intersection of Highway 61 and Highway 3 north of Vicksburg and just south of the Yazoo River-Highway 61 Bridge. The party will proceed north, turn west (Highway 465) just above the Yazoo River Bridge on the new Eagle Lake Road. Stops will be made along this road and on and around Eagle Lake. We then proceed on Highway 465 up the main levee to Alexander's Boat Camp on Chotard Lake, then up the main levee to Highway 1 and to Rolling Fork for lunch 12:00 Noon to 1:00. We then proceed on Highway 14 and Highway 1 to Glen Allen, Mississippi, and visit the Lake Washington area. From there the party will tour the Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge and proceed on to Hollandale, Mississippi, and Leroy Percy State Park, arriving in late afternoon.

We should see warbling vireos, painted buntings, Mississippi kites, dickcissels, bobolinks (possibly), Baltimore orioles, swallows, herons, anhingas, etc., on the field trip.

Please advise Miss Fannye A. Cook, Crystal Springs, Mississippi, prior to April 24, concerning reservations desired for overnight cabins at Leroy Percy Park. Cabins accommodate 4 persons with cooking facilities.

Members will find enclosed a schedule of other organized field trips planned for Tishomingo County and Jackson - Pearl River Reservoir areas.