

MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 61, No. 2

AUGUST 2016



2016 MOS Fall Meeting to be held in Starkville

The fall meeting is being hosted by the Oktibbeha Audubon Society and MOS members in the Starkville-Columbus area. The Friday night meeting will be held in one of the meeting rooms at the Holiday Inn Express in Starkville (see directions below). Field trips on Saturday will go to Noxubee Refuge (\$5 per vehicle fee required) and areas in and near Columbus, including Columbus Lake and Plymouth Bluff, and possibly one field trip will go south to prairie areas near Brooksville and Macon. If there is shorebird habitat anywhere close by at the time of the meeting, one field trip will include that area. The Saturday evening banquet will be held at Harvey's Restaurant, 406 Hwy. 12 East, 1-1/2 blocks east of the hotel. Advance reservations for the fall meeting will be required no later than September 15.

OUR GUEST SPEAKER



Our guest speaker at the fall meeting will be Dr. Scott Rush, an assistant professor in the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Aquaculture at Mississippi State University and a specialist in Wildlife Ecology and Management. Dr.

Rush received his Ph.D. from the University of Georgia in 2009, where his research focused on indicators of ecosystem properties within northern Gulf of Mexico tidal marshes. Dr. Rush and his graduate students are conducting research on a wide range of topics involving several different species of wildlife. Some of their current research

projects are related to the effects of climate change on the timing of migration in avian populations and the importance of habitat management to foster the conservation of ecological communities. The past few winters, he and his students have been part of a study related to documenting the occurrence of Golden Eagles in the eastern part of the U.S., and his presentation to us will include a report on this research at Noxubee refuge.

ACCOMMODATIONS

A limited block of rooms under the name of MOS have been reserved at the following hotel, but will be held only until September 10 (advance reservations are recommended because of limited availability and better rates): Holiday Inn Express - 110-B Hwy. 12 West (behind Ruby Tuesday Restaurant) - 662-324-0076. Rooms available: Double Queens - \$98 plus 9% tax, total of \$106.82. King rooms - same price as above.

DIRECTIONS

Driving east on Hwy. 82 from Winona, take Hwy. 25 South exit, then Hwy. 12 exit. Go east on Hwy. 12 through several lights until you come to the intersection of Hwy. 12 and Old Hwy. 25/Louisville Street; then continue on Hwy. 12 east and watch for Ruby Tuesday Restaurant on your left. Hotel is behind Ruby Tuesday's. Driving west on Hwy. 82 from Columbus or Hwy. 45, take Hwy. 12 exit. Go south, then west on Hwy. 12 until you come to the intersection of Hwy. 12 and Jackson Street; then continue on Hwy. 12 west and watch for Ruby Tuesday's on your right. Coming from Jackson north on Hwy. 25, take the Hwy. 12 exit off Hwy. 25 and continue with directions given above driving east on Hwy. 12.

SCHEDULE

Friday Evening, September 30

- 4:00-5:00 p.m. MOS Board/Officers' Meeting
- 5:30-6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet with light refreshments
- 6:30-7:00 p.m. Discussion of choices for Saturday Field Trips

Saturday, October 1

- 6:30-7:30 a.m. For those staying at the Holiday Inn Express, breakfast is provided in the Breakfast Room
- 7:30 a.m. Field Trips: All field trips will meet in the back parking lot of the Holiday Inn Express
- Lunch On your own
(Remember, NO places to eat near Noxubee NWR)
- 6:30 p.m. Banquet: Harvey's Restaurant Banquet Room, 406 Hwy. 12 East, Starkville
- 7:30 p.m. Business Meeting and Species Tally
Guest Speaker: Scott Rush, "Recent Avian Research in Mississippi and Beyond"

Sunday, October 2

- 6:30-7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 7:30 a.m. Field Trips: Meet in the back parking lot of the Holiday Inn Express

COSTS

Meeting Registration

The registration fee for the fall meeting is \$25. This includes the Friday Meet & Greet and Rush presentation. Price of the Banquet is variable, depending on menu choice. See the registration form on page 8.

How to Register

You may register by mailing in the attached form with payment OR using PayPal online at www.missbird.org/Meetings.htm.

Visit MOS on the web! www.missbird.org

MOS Officers and Board Members

President.....	Ken Hackman
Vice President.....	Chris King
Secretary.....	Martha Swan
Treasurer.....	Wayne Patterson
Past President.....	Tom Pullen
Editor, <i>Mississippi Kite</i>	Nick Winstead
Editors, <i>MOS Newsletter</i>	Gene and Shannon Knight
Web Committee Chair.....	JR Rigby
Membership Committee Chair.....	Gene Knight
Newsletter Design.....	Tom Hoar



Spotted Sandpipers • Larry Pace

Submitting Articles and Photos for the 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 and/or photographs for possible publication. Some suggestions for articles might be:

- Birding trips: in-state, out-of-state, or out-of-country
- Life bird experiences
- Bird locales or special birding events
- Any interesting story about birds or bird behavior

Articles: 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.

Photos: Please send images in jpeg format, at least 180dpi, to the email address listed below.

Articles and photos may be sent in any time of the year, but if you would like for 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 and/or photos to:
Gene and Shannon Knight, 79 Hwy 9W, Oxford, MS 38655
662-236-2413 or gsknight@hughes.net

★ ATTENTION ALL MOS MEMBERS! ★

Digital Delivery of Newsletter and Mississippi Kite

In order to cut down on printing and mailing costs of the Newsletter and the MOS Journal, we are asking any of you who would be willing to receive your copy by email to please contact us at gsknight@hughes.net. **Members who receive issues by email (PDF) will receive a FULL-COLOR version.** Due to high printing costs, there can be only limited color in mailed copies. Thanks for your help!

President's Corner

By Ken Hackman, MOS President



The Dog Days have come and are slowly slipping away. Already, the migrants are moving south. Rufous Hummingbirds are being seen, the wind birds are arriving in greater numbers, Roseate Spoonbills, Wood Storks and more are being seen outside their normal ranges as post-breeding dispersal takes hold. Yes, the onset of Fall is nearly upon us. As we all pause from our regular jobs long enough to witness all that fall brings, I too, have taken pause.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your president these last couple of years. I'd like to think a lot has happened, but it has really happened because of an influx of new blood; a moving of the leadership toward a new direction. More young birders are joining the organization. More so, they appear to be staying. We have had college educators come, participate strongly, and then go, after giving infusions and new ideas to a wonderful group with wonderful goals. There are exceptions, of course, fantastic birders that have been stalwarts for years, and where would we be without them? These newer folks have been responsible for bringing in top speakers, helping us reach out to more birders; adding more members.

As I leave office, I have a favor to ask. Help us continue the growth. As the fall movement continues, take a younger person out with you. Introduce them to the beauty birds give us. Show them the numbers of shorebirds, warblers, and others soon to be moving through. Maybe, just maybe, the next generation of Mississippi's top birders will stay to lead us into the future. A future that involves preserving our feathered friends.

Thank you for everything. Special thanks to those who really did the lion's share to make this a stronger organization.

Ken

Madison, Mississippi

New Members

The Mississippi Ornithological Society welcomes new members Clyde and Larcie Burnett, Theresa Levitt, Andrew Bell, Carol Fields, and Drs. Jon Meyer and Cynthia Allen!

Black-necked Stilt
with Stilt Sandpipers
• Jason Hoeksema



BIRDS TO WATCH FOR: Vaux's Swift

By Ned Boyajian

This species has yet to be officially recorded in Mississippi but there are winter records on the north gulf coast from both Louisiana and the Florida panhandle. Considering that there are no satisfactory winter records for Chimney Swift anywhere in the U.S. one might conclude that it is quite probable that any *Chaetura* seen in Mississippi, say between mid-late November and mid-February, would likely be a Vaux's.

In that regard, a swift was seen at dusk at Pascagoula River Marsh 29 November 1961 by Henry Haberyan (MOS Newsletter Vol 7, 1962). Based on the date, it was presumed by the observer to be "probably Vaux's" – a conclusion that seems in accord with available data from Louisiana (ebird.)

In any case, bridging the gap between probability and certainty may take a bit of doing. The best established records so far (at Baton Rouge, Louisiana and at Apalachicola and Gainesville, Florida in the mid '90s) were at established winter roosts. Evidence included specimens, analysis of recordings, and series of photos. Also at the Florida sites, as the season progressed there was direct comparison with returning Chimney Swifts using the same roosts.

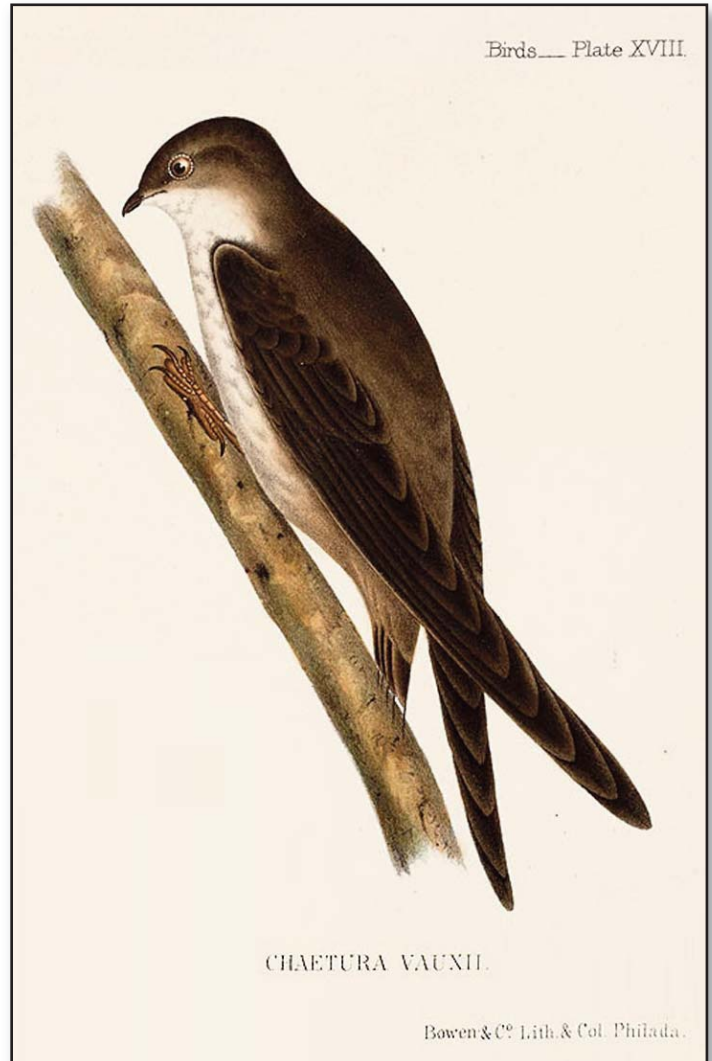
Under most other circumstances, a positive ID would be difficult. There are average differences in pattern but overlap is considerable. Structural differences are more specific but would require direct comparison at many angles (an example might be a single Vaux's among a feeding flock of Chimneys.)



Voice is the most reliable. At least one Vaux's call is sufficiently distinct to register as "different" to an observer well acquainted with Chimney Swift calls. But unfortunately, Vaux's Swift is most likely to vocalize when in flocks; singles or scattered birds tend to remain silent.

The Sibley Guide On-line gives a very good summary of ID options. Take a look at them and if you do see a swift in winter, use them as reference for making as detailed notes as you can. Hopefully someday someone will work out absolute ID criteria and you can count your bird retroactively.

Finally, if you know of any place where Chimney Swifts regularly roost during the warmer months, be sure to check it out a few times through the winter (an hour or so before sunset would probably be a good time). – NB



SOME SIGHTINGS FROM THE FIELD: Spring/Summer 2016

Gene Knight, MBRC Chair

The fourth **Say's Phoebe** reported within a year in the state was discovered in Chickasaw County on 13 February and the last report of the state's first **Couch's Kingbird** from Singing River Island, Jackson County was on 20 April. Buck Island Road in Tunica County again hosted a **Sprague's Pipit** on 27 February and 5 March. Spring started off with a rarely seen **Black-headed Grosbeak** when it was photographed on 1 March in Pearl River County. Rare winter loons are seen frequently in Tishomingo County on Bay Springs Lake. On 6 March a fourth species of loon was spotted and well documented as an **Arctic Loon**, a first for Mississippi. A **Brown Booby** was picked up on a barge entering Gulfport Harbor, Harrison County on 8 March but later expired. A pair of **Gray Kingbirds**, rarely seen in the state, was photographed on West Ship Island, Harrison County, on 23 and 24 March. **Bronzed Cowbirds** are a regular visitor to the Mississippi Coast in Hancock County so one on 16 March was expected, but one on 15 April at a feeder, second year in a row, in Lincoln County was a good find. **Roseate Spoonbills** are a rare spring bird in Mississippi so 19 in Holmes County on 25 April were an excellent find. A pair of very rare **Shiny Cowbirds**, were well described and photographed on 1 May in Jackson County at Singing River Island. Coldwater River NWR in Tallahatchie/Quitman Counties hosted their first **Neotropic Cormorant** on 4 May. **Mourning Warblers** are rare in Mississippi but males were seen and heard in Lowndes County at two locations. The first was at Section Line Road on 4 May and the second was at Plymouth Bluff Environmental Center on 16 May. **Western Kingbirds** have nested in Mississippi so a pair seen on 7 and 8 May near Greenville in Washington County was suspicious. Multiple **Alder** and **Willow Flycatchers** were heard and recorded singing off the Mississippi River in DeSoto County on 17 May. **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** rarely nest in the state but numerous possibilities were reported this season. A single **STFL** was present near Canton in Madison County at a repeat nesting site from 16 May to 4 June. In Noxubee County near Macon a pair of **STFLs** was first seen on 29 May. Nesting was noted with two nestlings spotted on 12 June and a female carrying food to an unseen fledgling on 20 June. Then over along the Mississippi River Levee north of Friar's Point in Coahoma County on 28 June, a single **STFL** rested on the fence. Finally in Monroe County a family of five **STFLs** (two adults and three fledglings) was photographed near Aberdeen from 31 July to 2 August. **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** are really flourishing on the coast as 17 adults and 55 ducklings were spotted at Seaman Road Lagoons and another 50+ present at Singing River Island, both in June and in Jackson County. A calling **Black-bellied Plover** was heard at Graysport Landing on Grenada Lake, Grenada County on 22 June, representing the first June record for north Mississippi. With the summer season ending it's time for southbound shorebirds to show up. Due to low water levels in Oktibbeha County Lake a **Willet** was seen on 27 July and two **Piping Plovers** on 25 July for excellent finds.



Gray Kingbird • Andy Bell



Juvenile STFLs • Wayne Patterson

MOS Constitution and By-Laws Changes: Vote to be held at the Fall Meeting

The MOS Board has drafted five proposed modifications to the MOS Constitution and By-Laws for your review. These proposals (outlined below) deal with terms and duties of officers, timing of membership dues and year of membership, and offer a detailed sequence of events for meetings. The proposals would affect the MOS Constitution, Article IV, Section 1 and the MOS By-Laws: Article I, Sections 3 & 4; Article II, Section 3; and Article III. These proposals will be voted on by the membership at the 2016 Fall MOS Meeting in Starkville. Proposals require approval by 2/3 of the members present to be accepted. Please be sure to attend!

1) Proposed modification to MOS Constitution, Article IV, Section 1:

Current wording: "The elected officers of the Society shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present at the Annual Meeting, and shall serve for a period of two years. They may be re-elected. If the office of President is vacated during the two-year term, the Vice-President shall automatically become President and complete the term. If one of the other offices is vacated before the end of the term, another member shall be appointed to complete the term by a majority vote of the Board of Directors."

Proposed wording keeps the current wording, but adds the following at the end of the current wording: "The terms of the newly elected officers shall begin immediately following the Annual Meeting. Their terms will terminate in two years at the Annual Meeting."

2) Proposed modification to MOS By-Laws, Article I, Section 3:

Current wording: "The fiscal year of the Society shall coincide with the calendar year. Annual dues shall be for the calendar year beginning January 1. Any member paying dues before October 1 shall be credited for the current calendar year, and any member paying after October 1 shall be credited for the next calendar year."

Proposed wording: Replace "October" with "August".

3) Proposed modification to MOS By-Laws, Article I, Section 4:

Current wording: "Members six months delinquent in dues shall be dropped."

Proposed wording: Replace "six" with "12".

4) Proposed modification to MOS By-Laws, Article II, Section 3:

Current wording: "The Secretary shall keep a complete record of the meetings and shall prepare a report of the meetings for publication in the newsletter."

Proposed wording keeps the current wording, but adds the following at the end of the current wording: "The Secretary shall be responsible for updating (typing up) the amendments to the MOS By-Laws and MOS Constitution after they have been voted on and approved by the Membership. The Secretary shall make updates available to the Board of Directors." (continued on page 5)



Bobwhite
• Larry Pace

5) Proposed modification to MOS By-Laws, Article III:

Current wording: "As nearly as possible the business at each meeting shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order."

Proposed wording keeps the current wording, but adds the following at the end of the current wording: "Every effort should be made by the President and members who have the floor to make the business aspects of the meetings short, allowing as much time as possible for members to enjoy the program and social and field aspects of the meeting. Membership Meetings shall follow the format below. Section 1 – Call meeting to order. Section 2 – Accept the Secretary's report as published in the latest MOS Newsletter. Section 3 – Treasurer's report. Section 4 – Old or unfinished business. Section 5 – New Business. Section 6 – Species tally. Section 7 – Announce new slate of officers by Nomination Committee chair, and hold election (at two-year intervals at Annual Meeting). Section 8 – Program. Section 9 – Adjourn."

Minutes of the MOS Board Meeting and Business Meeting

Spring Meeting • April 29-May 1, 2016

BOARD MEETING

The Board of the Mississippi Ornithological Society met Friday, April 29, in the conference room at Camp Lake Stephens, near Oxford, Mississippi. Attending were Ken Hackman, President; Wayne Patterson, Treasurer; Nick Winstead, Editor, *Mississippi Kite*; Gene Knight, Editor, *MOS Newsletter*; J.R. Rigby, Web Committee Chairman; and Martha Swan, Secretary. Ken called the meeting to order at 3:07. The minutes of the Fall 2015 meeting were read. J.R. moved to approve and Nick seconded, and the motion passed. Wayne presented the Treasurer's Report, and provided additional information. There are still outstanding invoices for Camp Lake Stephens rental and the speaker's travel, but with donations for the meeting from several sources, he expects that we will make about \$1,000 on the meeting. J.R. moved acceptance of the report, Nick seconded, and the motion passed.

Old Business: J.R. reported that he has renewed the Website authorization. Wayne asked that he be given an official letter or document to show banks so that he can open accounts, and the board agreed. He will find out exactly what he needs and Ken will provide. Concerning application for 501(c)3 status for MOS, J.R. and Jason Hoeksema need more time to work on that process.

Regarding discrepancies between different versions of the Constitution and By-Laws, and items voted on by the Board but not presented to the membership, Nick volunteered to collect the information and present it to the board.

New Business: It was suggested that the Fall meeting be held in Starkville. The Schiefers will be asked if they would help organize it. Matt Smith might be considered as a speaker. For Spring 2017, somewhere on the Coast is planned.

Ken will appoint a nominating committee to come up with a slate of officers for 2017-2018. J.R. reported that he has a draft of an online reporting site for submitting BATS records. It would be accessible for public viewing on the MOS website and would be similar to eBird. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

About 75 members and attendees gathered at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel at Camp Lake Stephens for dinner and a presentation by David Sibley, noted author and bird expert. J.R. opened the meeting and encouraged the group to visit the vendors' tables: Wild Birds Unlimited of Jackson, Strawberry Plains Audubon Center and Mississippi Audubon, and Square Books with Mr. Sibley's latest book. He also requested that eBird checklists of the weekend's sightings be submitted. Ken Hackman, President, then assumed the podium and thanked J.R. and Jason Hoeksema, organizers of the meeting. Gene Knight conducted the species tally, totaling 114, including 29 warblers. (Final tally was 125). Plans for Sunday field trips were announced.

J.R. then introduced the speaker, David Sibley, whose topic was "The Psychology of Bird Identification; or, How to mistake an egret for a shrike." In an entertaining way, he outlined how our expectations, the context, and ambiguity color our perceptions when birding, and may lead to errors in identification.

After the meeting, Kathy Ross of WBU in Jackson awarded two very nice door prizes, and gave all attendees a free bag of premium bird seed. Ken closed out the meeting with thanks to the organizers and the speaker. — Submitted by Martha Swan, MOS Secretary



Robert Briscoe of Oxford hosted a nesting pair of Mississippi Kites again this summer. Their single chick fledged on August 7. (Photos by Robert Briscoe.)

SPECIES LIST: 2016 MOS Spring Meeting, April 29 - May 1

Camp Lake Stephens, Rowan Oak, Wall Doxey State Park

Canada Goose	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Wood Duck	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Northern Bobwhite	Eastern Bluebird
Wild Turkey	Veery
A. White Pelican	Gray-cheeked Thrush
Great Blue Heron	Swainson's Thrush
Green Heron	Wood Thrush
Black Vulture	American Robin
Turkey Vulture	Gray Catbird
Osprey	Brown Thrasher
Mississippi Kite	Northern Mockingbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	European Starling
Broad-winged Hawk	Cedar Waxwing
Red-tailed Hawk	Ovenbird
Killdeer	Worm-eating Warbler
Willet	Louisiana Waterthrush
Rock Pigeon	N. Waterthrush
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Golden-winged Warbler
Mourning Dove	Blue-winged Warbler
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Black-and-white Warbler
Common Nighthawk	Prothonotary Warbler
Chuck-will's-widow	Swainson's Warbler
E. Whip-poor-will	Tennessee Warbler
Chimney Swift	Nashville Warbler
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Kentucky Warbler
Red-headed Woodpecker	Common Yellowthroat
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Hooded Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	American Redstart
Hairy Woodpecker	Cerulean Warbler
Northern Flicker	Northern Parula
Pileated Woodpecker	Magnolia Warbler
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Bay-breasted Warbler
Acadian Flycatcher	Blackburnian Warbler
Empid sp.	Yellow Warbler
E. Phoebe	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Great Crested Flycatcher	Blackpoll Warbler
Eastern Kingbird	Pine Warbler
Loggerhead Shrike	Yellow-rumped Warbler
White-eyed Vireo	Yellow-throated Warbler
Yellow-throated Vireo	Prairie Warbler
Blue-headed Vireo	Black-throated Green Warbler
Red-eyed Vireo	Canada Warbler
Blue Jay	Yellow-breasted Chat
American Crow	Eastern Towhee
Fish Crow	Chipping Sparrow
Purple Martin	Savannah Sparrow
Tree Swallow	Lincoln's Sparrow
N. Rough-winged Swallow	Swamp Sparrow
Cliff Swallow	White-throated Sparrow
Barn Swallow	White-crowned Sparrow
Carolina Chickadee	Summer Tanager
Tufted Titmouse	Scarlet Tanager
White-breasted Nuthatch	Northern Cardinal
Brown-headed Nuthatch	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Sedge Wren	Blue Grosbeak
Carolina Wren	Indigo Bunting

Painted Bunting
Dickcissel
Bobolink
Red-winged Blackbird
E. Meadowlark
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird

Orchard Oriole
Baltimore Oriole
House Finch
Pine Siskin
A. Goldfinch
House Sparrow
Total Species 125



Phoebe fledglings • Nick Dugan

MOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

RENEWAL _____ NEW MEMBER _____

DUES:

___ Junior (14 and under)	\$5 per year
___ Student (15 and older)	\$10 per year
___ Individual	\$25 per year
___ Family	\$35 per year
___ Subscribing (Libraries)	\$15 per year
___ Sustaining	\$50 per year
___ Life	\$350

DUES:

Annual dues are payable in January. Send check to:
Wayne Patterson, MOS Treasurer
283A CR 501
Shannon, MS 38868



MOS Member Photos

MOS members are invited to submit photos for publication in the Newsletter. Send to gsknight@hughes.net. See page 2 for details!

Purple Gallinule • Wayne Patterson

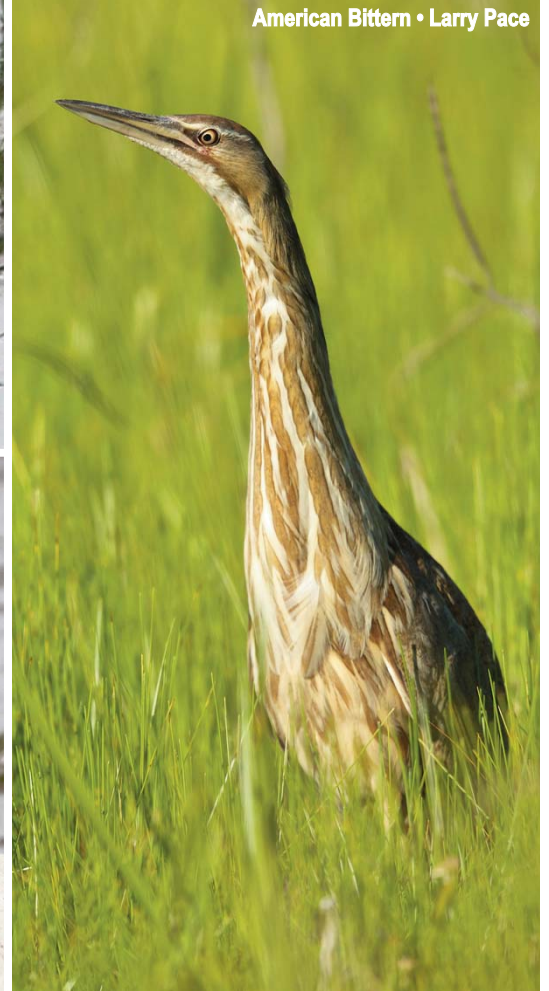


Leucistic Semipalmated Sandpiper • Wayne Patterson



Long-billed Curlew • Holly Cox

American Bittern • Larry Pace



Canada Goose nesting on (stolen?) Bald Eagle nest • Robert Briscoe

Great Black-backed Gull • Holly Cox



MOS Fall 2016 MEETING – REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ E-Mail _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Telephone _____

Additional Persons: Name _____ E-mail: _____

Name _____ E-mail: _____

• Registration / Friday Meet & Greet _____ Person(s) X \$ 25.00 = \$ _____

• Banquet entrees below include drink and baked potato. Prices include gratuity and tax.

Chicken & Fixin's – Grilled chicken breast topped with barbecue sauce, ham and melted Monterey Jack

_____ Person(s) X \$ 25.00 = \$ _____

Blackened Catfish – Fresh Mississippi farm-raised grilled and blackened catfish

_____ Person(s) X \$ 26.00 = \$ _____

Marinated Ribeye – 12 oz. USDA Choice steak, marinated for 48 hours in soy, pineapple, garlic and ginger

_____ Person(s) X \$ 35.00 = \$ _____

• 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:

Wayne Patterson, MOS Treasurer
283A CR 501, Shannon MS 38868

MAIL THIS REGISTRATION FORM TO REACH WAYNE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 15!



Mississippi Ornithological Society
Gene and Shannon Knight
79 Hwy 9W
Oxford, MS 38655



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