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## NESTING AND FOOD HABITS OF BARN OWLS IN SOUTH FLORIDA

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**Abstract.**—Barn Owl (*Tyto alba pratincola*) food and nesting habits were studied for four years at the Dupuis Reserve in south Florida. Barn Owls preyed almost exclusively on mammals, with the cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*) accounting for 60% of the total prey biomass. Numbers of prey items declined over the study period, particularly the more wetland-dependent species, rice rat (*Oryzomys palustris*) and round-tailed muskrat (*Neofiber alleni*). This decline may have been due to the pre-existing overdrainage of the property accompanied by dry conditions in 1989 and 1990. The proportion of prey items in Barn Owl pellets varied significantly between months and years. Short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*) and cotton rat were most important in the early and late nest stages, respectively. Nesting occurred in every month, except June, July, and August. Lower nest success coincided with less biomass consumption as reflected by pellets collected during the incubation and owlet development stages.

The reliability of using pellet analysis to determine food habits of Barn Owls (*Tyto alba*) has been well documented (Marti 1973, Smith et al. 1974, Colvin and McLean 1986). Because Barn Owls are cavity nesters and often return to nest at the same locations, large numbers of regurgitated pellets can be collected to provide important qualitative information regarding local small mammal populations. Analysis of owl pellets can also reveal the presence of resident species not otherwise known to occur (David 1988).

Barn Owls feed almost exclusively upon small mammals (Marti 1974, Herrera and Jaksic 1980, Marti 1992). In south Florida, there appears to be a dearth of information regarding Barn Owl nesting ecology and food habits. Chicardi et al. (1990) found that hispid cotton rats (*Sigmodon hispidus*) and short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*) were the main prey items collected from Barn Owl pellets found in Orange County. Pellet analyses by Horner et al. (1974) and Miller (1994) at Paynes Prairie State Preserve in Alachua County, Florida, indicated

that round-tailed muskrat (*Neofiber alleni*) and marsh rice rat (*Oryzomys palustris*), respectively, were the most common food items. Trost and Hutchinson (1963) completed a more extensive analysis of food remains from a single nest site in Marion County and reported that cotton rats constituted over 75% of the total food items.

Barn Owl reproductive success in North America may depend heavily upon the abundance of voles *Microtus* spp. (Colvin 1986, Gubanyi et al. 1992). Colvin and McLean (1986) indicated that Barn Owls preyed almost exclusively upon *Microtus pennsylvanicus* from year to year. In contrast, Marti (1974) and Gubanyi et al. (1992) found significant differences in the annual proportion of Barn Owl prey.

This study is the first to document food habits of nesting Barn Owls in south Florida. Barn owl food habits, as determined by pellet analysis, relative to nesting status and success were studied over a four-year period.

#### STUDY AREA AND METHODS

The study was conducted at Dupuis Reserve, in northwest Palm Beach County and southwest Martin County, approximately 30 km west of Jupiter, Florida. The study area comprised 8,746 ha of pine forest, improved pasture, freshwater marsh, and cypress forest.

Barn Owl pellets were collected approximately monthly between December 1987 and January 1992 (n=39 collections) from a loft in a wood barn located on the property. Pellets were soaked in a weak sodium hydroxide solution that dissolved the hair and isolated crania and lower mandibles for easier identification (Schueler 1972). Crania were identified using Golley (1962) and Stevenson (1976) and further verified by comparisons with collections at Archbold Biological Station, Lake Placid, Florida.

Biomass of prey species was determined using mean weights from Golley (1962), Horner et al. (1974), Lefebvre (1982), and collection specimens from Archbold Biological Station. Prey species weights were multiplied by the number of prey items and divided by the total for all species to calculate percent biomass. Percent occurrence was estimated by dividing the number of items collected for each species by the total number of items collected. Total biomass in grams recovered per day was calculated by dividing pellet biomass obtained since the previous collection by the number of days over the same time period. This recovery rate provided a standard measure to compare food consumption among the nesting periods and assumed that the number of pellets recovered within the barn accurately reflected owl prey consumption and consistent regurgitation rates.

At least two visits per month were made for each of the eight nest attempts observed to determine number of eggs, number of eggs hatched and number of young surviving to about 55 days—the approximate age Barn Owls fledged from the nest (Stevenson and Anderson 1994). The date of first egg laying was estimated by subtracting two days for each egg once nesting activity was detected.

SAS PROC FREQ chi-square contingency tables were used to test for independence in the proportion of round-tailed muskrat, cotton rat, rice rat, house mouse (*Mus musculus*), short-tailed shrew, least shrew (*Cryptotis parva*), and cotton mouse (*Peromyscus gossypinus*) in the barn owl diet. Contingency tables were used to determine whether the proportion of each prey species compared to the total of all other species differed significantly by month (12×2), by stage of the nesting cycle (5×2), between nesting and non-

nesting periods (2×2), and between years (4×2). A Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons resulted in a significance level of 0.007 (0.05/7). Nest stages were divided into five categories based on nesting activity; 0=no nesting activity, 1=egg laying and incubation period, 2=hatched eggs with young up to 20 days, 3=young 20-40 days of age, and 4=young 40 days or having recently fledged. Categories 2 and 3 were selected to correspond to the most rapid growth period and the approximate age (40 days) when young owls reach their maximum weight (Marti 1992). Pellets collected in December 1987 and January 1992 were included in data analysis for the years 1988 and 1991, respectively. Nesting season data represent pellets collected while eggs or young were present.

## RESULTS

A total of 1484 prey items of 12 vertebrate species was identified from Barn Owl pellets. A southeastern five-lined skink (*Eumeces inexpectatus*) was apparently killed but not consumed. Small mammals accounted for 99.6% of the Barn Owl food items and cotton rats comprised 60% of the prey biomass. Although round-tailed muskrat constituted only 5% of the prey items consumed, it represented the second most important prey item in terms of percent biomass (14%). Over half of the muskrat skulls were from juveniles as evidenced by the incomplete eruption of the molars.

Eight nest attempts were observed during the study (Table 1). Mean number of eggs laid per clutch was 5.0, while 23 (57%) hatched, and 18 owls survived to approximate fledgling age (i.e., 55 days). The lowest nest success at the site occurred during the nesting period beginning November, 1991, and during the two synchronous nesting attempts beginning in September, 1989 and January, 1990. These nesting periods corresponded to the lowest rates of food item recovery at 67, 147 and 157 gms/day, respectively.

The percentage of round-tailed muskrat, short-tailed shrew, and hispid cotton rats consumed by Barn Owls during the nesting season differed significantly with the stage of the nest ( $p < 0.0001$ , 4 d.f.). The proportion of short-tailed shrew consumed was highest during the

**Table 1. Estimated start date, clutch size, brood size, and number of young surviving to fledgling age for Barn Owl nests observed at Dupuis Reserve.**

Start Date	Clutch Size	Brood Size	# Fledged
January 1, 1988	5	4	4
November 10, 1988	6	6	5
September 16, 1989	5	1	1
September 22, 1989	4	3	1
January 21, 1990	4	2	1
January 22, 1990	4	0	0
October 18, 1990	4	4	3
November 1, 1991	8	3	3
Totals	40	23	18

early stages of nesting while the percentage of hispid cotton rats in the owl diet increased as nesting progressed to the approximate fledgling age of the young owls (Figure 1). Numbers of pellets and food items collected were generally higher during the latter stages of nesting and immediately following the nest period. Round-tailed muskrat was consumed more frequently during non-nesting periods and was the only species whose proportion in the diet was significantly different ( $\chi^2=42.4$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ , 1 d.f.) between the seasons (Figure 2). Fifty percent of the round-tailed muskrat skulls was collected during June, July, and August. The proportion of Barn Owl prey items varied significantly ( $p < 0.0001$ , 3 d.f.) among years as the number of prey items declined over the study period (Table 2). This decline was most evident in the proportion of round-tailed muskrat, house mouse, and rice rat in the Barn Owl diet. Diet varied significantly ( $p < 0.0001$ , 11 d.f.) by month for the proportions of all seven species. Mean numbers of prey items collected were highest between November and March when nesting owls were present.

#### DISCUSSION

Because the Barn Owl is considered an opportunistic predator (Bunn et al. 1982), pellet analysis assumes that the number of food

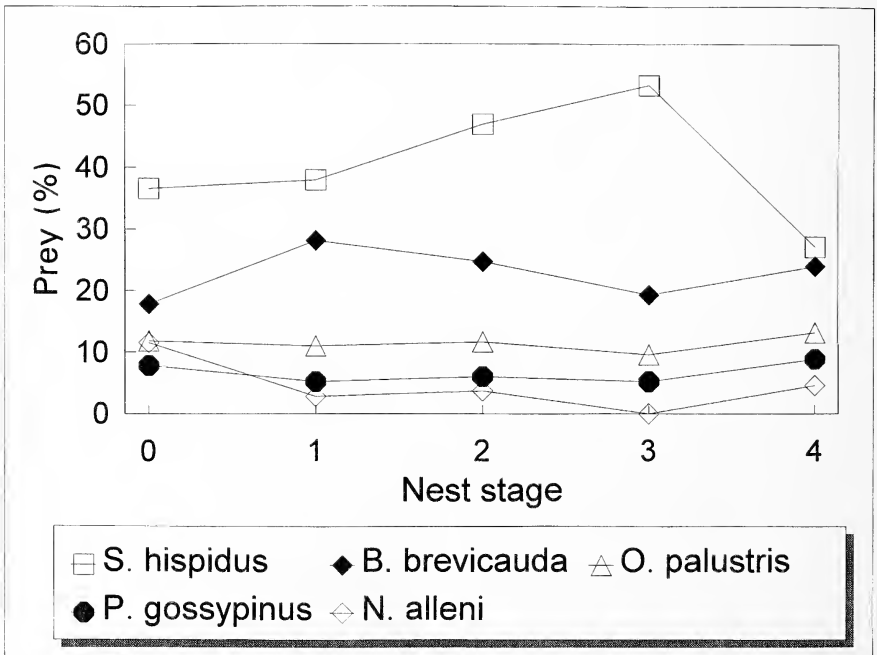


Figure 1. Proportion of prey items for five species relative to nest stage.

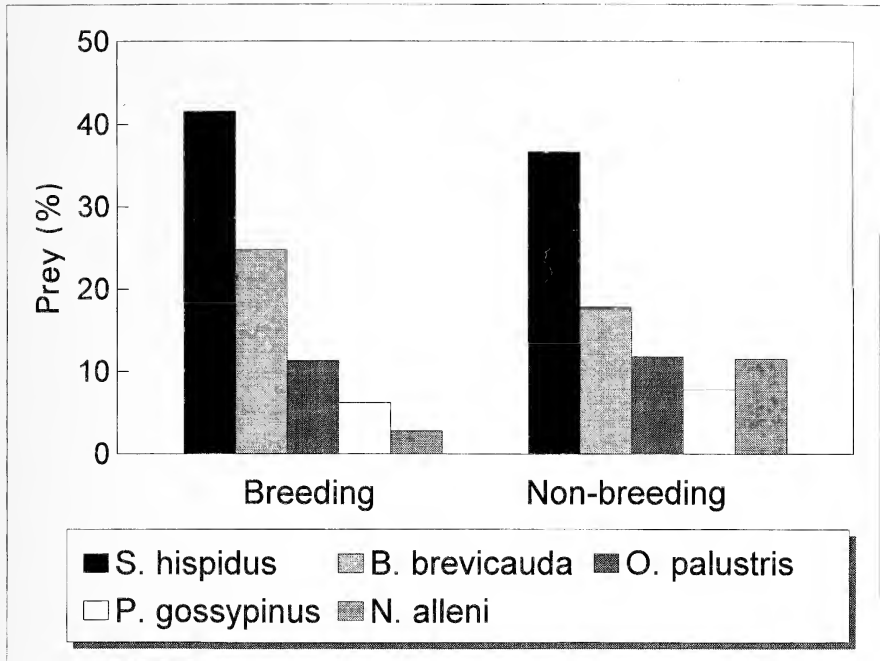


Figure 2. Percent prey composition of five species in breeding vs. non-breeding seasons.

items recovered in owl pellets is representative of overall food availability. Abundance of prey directly influences the reproductive success of Barn Owls (Ottieni et al. 1972, Colvin 1986). Consequently, analysis

Table 2. Number of occurrences and (%) of prey by year recovered from Barn Owl pellets collected from Martin County, Florida.

Prey species	1988	1989	1990	1991	Totals
Cotton rat	130(27)	254(54)	112(38)	104(42)	600(40)
Short-tailed shrew	124(26)	74(16)	77(26)	69(28)	344(23)
Rice rat	81(17)	46(10)	22(7)	21(8)	170(11)
Cotton mouse	23(5)	42(9)	16(5)	17(7)	98(7)
Least shrew	25(5)	19(4)	25(9)	16(6)	85(6)
House mouse	40(8)	12(3)	18(6)	7(3)	77(5)
Round-tailed muskrat	36(7)	12(3)	16(5)	6(2)	70(5)
<i>Rattus</i> sp.	12(2)	3(<1)	1(<1)	3(1)	19(1)
Birds	2(<1)	1(<1)	3(1)	1(<1)	7(<1)
Eastern cottontail	1(<1)	0	1(<1)	0	2(<1)
Southern flying squirrel	0	1(<1)	1(<1)	0	2(<1)
Unidentified rodent	3(<1)	1(<1)	1(<1)	5(2)	10(<1)
Totals	477	465	293	249	1484

of prey choice during the breeding season may indicate which small mammals are most critical to reproductive success. At Dupuis, short-tailed shrew was consumed in higher proportions during the early nesting season. The proportion of cotton rats in the pellets increased during the latter stages of nesting as the demand for food and the ability of the young owls to consume larger prey would be greater.

Availability of certain prey may be influenced by climate. Colvin (1984) found a strong relationship between rainfall and *Microtus* sp. populations, that appeared to influence Barn Owl productivity. Round-tailed muskrat was an important owl food item in terms of percent biomass, but may be an unreliable prey item for nesting owls, because its reproduction and abundance may vary and be dependent upon water conditions or vegetative cover (Birkenholz 1963). During drought, muskrats will burrow into the substrate or abandon colonies completely (Tilmant 1975). Muskrats were nearly absent from pellet collections made at Dupuis between March and June, normally the driest period in South Florida. In contrast, large numbers of juvenile or sub-adult muskrats were recovered in the July and August pellet collections. This suggests that reproductive activity of this species may be stimulated once wetlands are inundated from wet season rainfall. The general decline in the percentage of rice rats and round-tailed muskrat recovered from Barn Owl pellets during this study may have been due to drier conditions in South Florida during 1989 and 1990.

Barn Owls relied almost exclusively on small mammals, particularly cotton rat. The high number of cotton rats in the diet would be expected due to its ecological similarity to *Microtus* spp. that are preyed upon in large numbers by Barn Owls in much of the eastern United States. Both of these small mammals prefer early successional habitat (Chicardi et al. 1990) and can be extremely abundant when this habitat is widely available (Golley 1962). Rice rat was not preyed upon in large numbers, despite being the closest weight and size equivalent to *Microtus* spp. One explanation for the low occurrence of this species is its predilection for wetlands (Baker 1991, Birkenholtz 1963), that have been extensively drained on the property since the 1950s. In contrast, the frequent occurrence in the pellets of cotton rats may indicate that they were able to colonize the readily available pasture. Because Barn Owls prefer open areas when hunting (Marti 1992), these pastures would represent the most accessible foraging areas on the property.

The mean number of eggs laid appeared to be consistent with other Florida nests (Stevenson and Anderson 1994) and the four eggs hatched per nest attempt was similar to findings outside of Florida by Reese (1972) and Bendel and Therres (1990). The 57% hatching rate in my study was comparable to that found by Otteni et al. (1972), Smith et al. (1974), and Bendel and Therres (1990). These studies and Guba-



nyi et al. (1992) reported higher fledgling rates than my study. Although they reportedly nest in every month of the year in the U.S. (Marti 1992), nesting Barn Owls were absent from the Dupuis barn during the hottest months of June, July, and August.

Barn Owls probably used several roost sites prior to nesting in the barn so that biomass consumption during this period may not be an accurate predictor of the number of eggs laid per nest. Because female Barn Owls begin incubation after the first egg is laid and generally stay at the nest while the adult male supplies food (Marti 1992), the lower nest success that occurred at the lowest rate of food item recovery suggests that a stronger relationship may exist between nest success and the food biomass recovered from the barn during the incubation and early nestling periods.

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## STATUS OF COYOTES IN SOUTH FLORIDA

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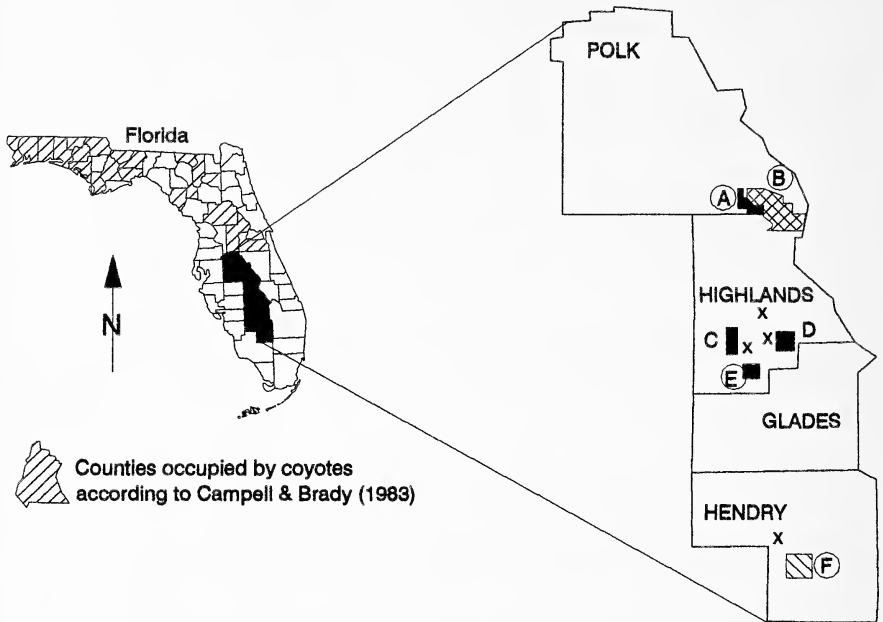
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**Abstract.**—A late spring 1995 survey for coyotes in south Florida revealed an established population in the region from southern Polk County to southern Hendry County that has the potential to compete with native carnivores and become an economic burden on farmers and ranchers.

Extensive changes in south Florida land use patterns began in the early 1900s (De Bellevue 1976) and have created a denatured landscape that is very different from pre-Columbian conditions. A mosaic of large farm fields and fragmented forests has also facilitated a new combination of wildlife species that exhibit a variety of adaptive responses. Florida panthers (*Felis concolor coryi*), bobcats (*Lynx rufus*), black bears (*Ursus americanus*), and other carnivores may benefit locally from some of these changes, but this less-forested environment has caused range-wide distribution contraction, population decreases, and increased anthropogenic mortality. Some of the beneficiaries of a drained and more open landscape include exotic species with relatively small home ranges and generalist food requirements such as the nine-banded armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), wild hog (*Sus scrofa*), white-winged dove (*Zenaida asiatica*), and European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). The nomadic cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) is likely the most abundant of these new immigrants. All of these species are numerous and obvious members of today's south Florida fauna.

A relatively recent, and little understood addition to this wildlife community is the coyote (*Canis latrans*). Although coyotes were introduced into south-central Florida as early as the 1920s (Hill et al. 1987), these individuals are thought to have disappeared (Brady and Campbell 1983). Although these authors suggested that coyotes were restricted to 18 mostly Panhandle counties (Figure 1), Cunningham and Dunford (1970) documented a reproducing Polk County population in 1969. Wooding and Hardisky (1990: 13) classified coyote occupation in south Florida as "scattered." Regular discoveries of coyote sign in Collier and Hendry counties began in 1989 during searches for Florida panthers, suggesting a recent expansion into this part of the state. This likely is



**Figure 1.** Locations searched for coyote sign from 3-18 June 1995. Circled letters represent locations where signs were found. Xs represent areas outside of formally searched properties where coyote signs also were found. A=Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area, B=Avon Park Air Force Range, C=Archbold Biological Station, D=MacArthur Agro-Ecology Research Center, E=Hendrie Ranch, F=Hilliard Brothers Ranch.

the result of changing land-use patterns and the coyote's dispersal abilities (Harrison 1992).

The coyote has no competitors in most of its range except for man. Its catholic diet and ability to increase in numbers despite predator control efforts have encouraged the spread of this medium-sized carnivore that now inhabits most of eastern North America. Maehr (1996) measured food habits overlap among large mammalian carnivores in south Florida and speculated that the coyote will compete more with bobcats, black bears, and Florida panthers, than these native species currently compete with each other. Further, coyotes are considered notorious predators of domestic livestock and agricultural crops (Robel et al. 1981, Bekoff 1982).

Hill et al. (1987) suggested that coyote "research efforts should document the nature and extent of impacts on wild fauna and agricultural commodities, and if appropriate, determine control methods compatible with the region's social values and land uses." A thorough understanding of coyote habitat requirements, food habits, and reproductive

output in south Florida will be necessary to accurately evaluate the potential impact of this species on agriculture and native wildlife. As a first step in better understanding coyote ecology in south Florida, we conducted a two-week survey for coyote sign. This represents the first systematic effort beyond mail surveys to document a portion of the species' distribution in Florida.

#### STUDY AREA

Coyote sign was searched for at selected localities in an area that ranged from the southern terminus of the Lake Wales ridge to the northern drainages of the Big Cypress Swamp (Figure 1). Vegetative communities surveyed included sand pine scrub, dry prairie, improved pasture, pine flatwoods, scrubby flatwoods, vegetable farms, and citrus groves. Descriptions of the native plant communities can be found in Myers and Ewel (1990). Property ownership was predominantly private with the exception of the Avon Park Air Force Range (APBR), and Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area (AWMA). The other properties searched included Archbold Biological Station (ABS), the MacArthur AgroEcology Research Center (MAERC), the Hendrie Ranch, and the Hilliard Brothers Ranch (Figure 1). Public roads adjacent to properties in southern Highlands County, especially those with access to citrus groves, were also searched. Time constraints precluded searches on other private lands in Collier and southern Highlands counties.

#### METHODS

We contacted by telephone owners of property >2000 ha to request permission to search for coyote sign using the technique described for Florida panthers by Roof and Maehr (1988). Coyote tracks and scats (feces) were looked for along unpaved roads, canal banks, fire breaks, and trails by walking or by driving a slow-moving all-terrain cycle or pickup truck. Scats were identified as those of coyotes if they were associated with coyote tracks, and if they did not exhibit the distinct segmentation typical of bobcat feces. Locations of sign were recorded on area maps or on county highway maps. Surveys were conducted from 3 through 18 June 1995. Not all contacted property owners granted permission for us to search for coyote sign. Thus, the findings presented here are a patchy representation of actual coyote distribution in south Florida.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Southern Polk County/Northern Highlands County*—Coyotes were present in both the Polk and Highlands sections of APBR (Table 1). The highest concentration of sign was found in the north-central portion of the range, but evidence of coyotes was encountered throughout the property. Records maintained by APBR personnel indicate that coyotes have been seen on the Air Force Range since 1970, but that they appear to be concentrated in the center of the facility (P. Walsh, pers. comm.). Our survey suggests a more widespread distribution of coyotes than indicated by sightings alone. The AWMA provided sparse evidence of coyotes. However, because it is contiguous with APBR, the individuals using Arbuckle are likely residents of both areas.

**Table 1. Frequency of coyote track sets among properties searched from 3-18 June 1985.**

Area searched	Number of track sets found
Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area	2
Archbold Biological Station	4 <sup>a</sup>
Avon Park Air Force Range	38
Hendrie Ranch and vicinity	3
Hilliard Brothers Ranch	11
MacArthur Agro-Ecology Research Center	7 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Tracks found within 1.0 km of property.

*Southern Highlands County*—Neither ABS nor the MAERC contained sign of coyotes; however, tracks were found within 1.0 km of ABS (Table 1) and coyotes have been seen by the ranch manager on the latter property (J. Mullahey, pers. comm.). Tracks were found on nearby properties: immediately to the west of MAERC, immediately east of ABS, and just north of State Highway 70. In these cases coyote sign was associated with citrus groves. This was the same area frequented by a Florida panther before its capture and instrumentation in 1988 (Layne and Wassmer 1988, Maehr et al. 1992). Our survey was insufficient to determine the status of coyotes on ABS and MAERC, however, sign was found in similarly vegetated areas such as AWMA and APBR. The relatively open nature of MAERC and the relatively heavily vegetated ABS are land cover opposites, but such cover is used by coyotes elsewhere.

Coyotes were implicated by a local rancher in the deaths of over 200 sheep near Venus, Florida, during 1993 and 1994 (J. Hendrie, pers. comm.). While they may not have been responsible for all of these losses, the presence of their sign on and in the vicinity of the Hendrie Ranch suggests that coyotes certainly have the opportunity to prey on a domestic species that is consumed by coyotes throughout their range. Generally, the coyote causes more sheep losses than does any other predator in the western U.S. where dollar losses in an individual state can exceed  $3 \times 10^6$  (Bekoff 1982).

*Southern Hendry County*—Although only one area was searched in Hendry County, anecdotal evidence suggests that coyotes are widespread throughout the sections of the county that contain improved pasture and other agricultural activities. In addition to frequent sighting reports, and reports of harvested animals, we documented coyote tracks at the edge of a vegetable farm near Felda, Florida, during November 1994 (Maehr pers. observation). This survey turned up abundant sign on Dinner Island where improved pasture dominates the landscape. The area originally supported extensive pine flatwoods and

a combination of isolated wetlands and the large north-south-flowing Okaloacoochee Slough before the uplands were cleared for agriculture. Surrounding properties (where permission to survey was unobtainable) are very similar in terms of vegetation and land use, and likely support comparable numbers of coyotes as exist on Dinner Island.

Despite our inability to conduct an uninterrupted survey throughout south Florida, the consistent discovery of coyote sign in most areas examined suggests that the species is continuously distributed from southern Polk County through Hendry County and that major highways and the Caloosahatchee River in the region do not appear to be a barrier to coyote movement. Lack of access to property in Glades County precluded surveys in this relatively unpopulated area; however, the combination of extensive improved pasture and remnant forests has created a milieu very similar to occupied range to the north and south. Contrary to the conclusions by Campell and Brady (1983) and Wooding and Hardisky (1990), this survey revealed that a substantial area of southern peninsular Florida now is permanently occupied by coyotes. This difference may have resulted from biases inherent to mail surveys, or it may reflect a change in the coyote's status since the earlier papers were written. Evidence supporting range expansion is provided by APBR natural resources staff who have seen coyotes at least 51 times since 1970 (P. Walsh pers. comm.), but most (>95%) were seen from 1992 through 1995. In addition, three coyotes were harvested on APBR after 1992, and Mr. James Hendrie reported significant depredations on sheep only within the last 2 years in southern Highlands County. Layne (1994) listed several other recent records from Charlotte, DeSoto, and Highlands counties, and coyotes have been seen near Bassinger, Okeechobee County, and implicated in nearby goat depredations (G. Tanner, pers. comm.)

With the exception of their apparent expanding range, little can be inferred about coyote ecology in south Florida beyond an apparent preference for open grasslands (Nowak 1991: 1068). Three scats from APBR contained native plant and animal remains, and they were collected in an area that is an active livestock range. Although there is some evidence that coyotes in Florida are a significant predator on livestock, abundant native prey species likely reduce the potential for depredations. Nothing has been reported on coyote den requirements in Florida; however, H. W. Kale, II (pers. comm.) observed a coyote family within a dense saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) thicket in the phosphate region of central Polk County. Saw palmetto is commonly used by all of south Florida's native mammalian carnivores for food, cover or both (Maehr and Layne 1996).

Until the 20th century, Florida supported permanent populations of native canids that included red wolves (*Canis rufus*) (Robson 1992)

and gray foxes (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*). Although it could be argued that the coyote has simply filled the vacant niche of an extirpated congeneric, the loss of the red wolf coincided with predator control that was followed by the clearing of forests. As a result, Florida has become an increasingly open, range-like state that is more similar to the native range-lands of western North America that are considered typical coyote habitat.

The presence of coyotes was confirmed from the southern Lake Wales Ridge to the northern Big Cypress Swamp. The inconsistent discovery of sign may be the result of differences in habitat quality, brief survey efforts, or may reflect the coyote's continuing range expansion. In any event, the distribution of sign was sufficient to be the product of a population that exists in numbers that could impact native carnivores, farmers, and ranchers.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## FLORIDA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

**Species Index to Florida Bird Records in Audubon Field Notes and American Birds Volumes 1-30 1947-1976**, by Margaret C. Bowman. 1978. Florida Ornithological Society, Special Publication No. 1. Price \$4.00.

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**West Indian Bird Records in American Birds and Audubon Field Notes (1947-1990): Species Index by Islands**, by Robert W. Loftin. 1992. Florida Ornithological Society, Special Publication No. 5. Price \$8.00.

**Florida Bird Species: An Annotated List**, by William B. Robertson, Jr. and Glen E. Woolfenden. 1992. Florida Ornithological Society, Special Publication No. 6. Price for FOS members \$14.95 (soft cover), \$19.95 (hard cover); nonmembers \$17.95 (soft cover), \$22.95 (hard cover).

**Order prepaid from the Secretary**; add \$1.00 handling and shipping for Special Publications No. 1-5; add \$2.00 handling and shipping for Special Publication No. 6. **Florida residents** add 7% sales tax to the total. Make checks payable to the Florida Ornithological Society.

## NOTES

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):108, 1996.

**PEACH-COLORED CATTLE EGRETS (*BUBULCUS IBIS*) IN SOUTHERN FLORIDA**

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The rich orange-buff ("peach") coloration of Cattle Egrets in high breeding plumage is normally restricted to the crown, lower throat and mantle (Cramp and Simmons 1977). In April 1995 we observed three completely peach-colored individuals in southern Florida. We saw the first bird on 10 April, foraging with the Cattle Egret flock in the Flamingo campground, Everglades N.P. in the early afternoon, and flying to roost on the island in Eco Pond, again with the flock, in the early evening. What was presumably the same bird had been reported to us on 2 April, but we did not see it again on subsequent visits to Flamingo, April-July 1995. On 22 April, TB saw two similar birds, again with small flocks, along the US 27 south of Lake Okeechobee and west of South Bay. All three individuals were identical to normal breeding plumage adults except for their rich peach color. It is unclear whether this plumage, presumably caused by an excess of yellow and red pigmentation, is genetically controlled or a result of diet or disease. Although the Asian *B. i. coromandus* "differs from nominate *ibis* in buff colour on head spreading to cheeks and throat, ornamental feathers more golden . . ." (Cramp and Simmons 1977), we can find no previous report of entirely peach-colored Cattle Egrets in the literature. However, O. L. Bass (pers. comm. 1995) reports having seen about five such individuals in southern Florida over the last 20 years.

Thanks to O. L. Bass, C. Brooks, J. Rivas, W. Taylor and an anonymous referee for their help with the preparation of this note.

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Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):109, 1996.

### LATE AUTUMNAL BREEDING BY KILLDEER

WILLIAM POST

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On 13 November 1995, three downy young Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) were brought to Susan Thompson, a veterinarian who engages in wildlife rehabilitation. The 1-2 day-old young had been found the same day in Goose Creek, Berkeley County, South Carolina, 35 km from the Atlantic Ocean. The finder, Eddie Howard, Jr., said that he found the birds together under the edge of a wooden pallet holding a large (1.5-m high) air conditioner, which was placed in a deserted sand-gravel parking lot next to a suburban construction site. The lot had about 20 such pallets. Howard did not see any adult Killdeers, and it is possible that they had abandoned the nest because of work in the lot the day before. On the morning of 13 November, the temperature was about 0° C, and believing the young to be deserted, Howard took them to the veterinarian. The young died the next day, and were put in the garbage. I recovered two individuals, now preserved in ethanol (ChM #1995.70).

The extrapolated egg dates of the young would be between 17 October and 9 November. The latter date is four months later than the latest egg date known for South Carolina, 9 July (Post and Gauthreaux 1989). Even in Florida, where a more extended breeding season might be allowed by climate, the latest downy young have been found on 3 August, a date considered anomalous by Stevenson and Anderson (1994). In Mississippi, however, nesting has been reported as late as December (Jackson et al. 1995)

I thank B. J. S. Jackson for helpful suggestions on the manuscript.

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## REVIEW

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):110, 1996.

**Swamp Song: A Natural History of Florida's Swamps.**—Ron Larson, 1995. Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 248 p. ISBN 0-8130-1355-0. \$19.95 paper.—This book attests that Florida's swamps are wondrous places. Alligators bellow, colorful butterflies and songbirds flit among the lush vegetation, and little-seen fish and amphibians feed in relative obscurity. Giant cypress trees tower over the calm waters creating secret gardens of pineapple-like bromeliads and other epiphytes. Along the swamp's margins and sweeping across the wet prairies bloom delicate, white spider lilies. Biologist Ron Larson provides a panoptic view of these rich habitats that, for many, symbolize the natural richness and diversity of Florida.

Wetlands are ubiquitous in Florida, covering more than 4.4 million hectares. They cannot be represented by a single habitat. They comprise floodplain forests, cypress domes, marshes, and bogs. From north to south across Florida, they encompass snaking strands of tupelo and gum trees, vast forests of old-growth cypress, subtropical forests embellished with orchids, and the, once seemingly endless, sawgrass marshes of the Everglades. Larson describes each part of the whole in turn, carefully providing the details of their flora, fauna, and different hydroperiods.

Larson's observations delve more deeply into the denizens of the swamp than mere descriptions of well-known species such as the wading birds and the snakes, although they are not ignored. He explores the web-spinning of spiders, how fungi grow, the mating habits of damselflies, and frog songs. His text treads far beyond a mere catalog of the biota of swamps.

Although this book is a celebration of Florida swamps, it is equally a urgent call to defend what is left of them by helping us understand their importance. Florida's wetlands are a relatively recent development, if you think in geologic time. Formed just 5,000 years ago, over the last 100 years they have been relentlessly dredged and filled with little restraint. Larson reports that over 20 years, from 1955 to 1975, an average of three hectares of swamp were destroyed every hour. The destruction of many wetlands continues, even as millions of dollars are spent to save and restore other wetlands, such as the Everglades and the Kissimmee River Basin that feeds it.

Larson's accounts of Florida's swamps are educating and entertaining, and will renew the resolve of all who care about the protection of natural resources. The book is enhanced by beautiful color photographs, useful diagrams, maps, and an extensive index and list of references. It would be a useful addition to any library.—**Tom Palmer**, 1805 26th St. NW, Winter Haven, Florida 33881.

## REVIEW

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):111-112, 1996.

**Palms of South Florida.**—George B. Stevenson. 1996. Gainesville, Florida, University Press of Florida. ISBN 0-8130-1441-7. \$19.95.—The image of south Florida would never be complete without the requisite palms leaning over sunny beaches (on the post-cards, anyway), reaching out of the canopies of hammocks and swamps, or standing sentinel over our urban landscapes. For those who have ever wanted to know what they are, where they came from and even a bit about how to grow them, George B. Stevenson's **Palms of South Florida** provides a concise and useful reference.

With the recent re-issue of **Palms of South Florida**, the identification, classification, and horticultural temperaments of palms cultivated in subtropical lands has once again become accessible to the general public. For those with or without advanced taxonomic or even botanical knowledge, this book offers an easy and accurate summary of horticultural palms found in south Florida. Even if you know your Latin but don't feel up to trudging through a complicated key to species when your neighbor inquires about their diseased landscaping trees, this book offers a quick breakdown based on easily observable characters. Moreover, Stevenson writes as if he's taking you on a plant-walk around the block, presenting information in an easy-to-grasp manner. Mr. Stevenson is the first to point out that this book addresses the call for a way to discuss palms "intelligently, in standard English". It is not a technical taxonomic treatise on the inter-relationships of palms; it was not meant to be. Its purpose is something of a horticultural field guide and it meets this task well. Based on his observations largely from Fairchild Tropical Garden, the center and source for horticultural palm diversity in Florida, Stevenson covers all the most commonly grown species and even species that are only rarely encountered. A helpful two-page summary of the ten most common species is included at the front as "Beginners Pages", a nice introduction to the bulk of our horticultural species.

His framework begins with broad, artificial groups based on conspicuous leaf traits. These are separated in the Preliminary Key with descriptions, in layman's terms, which form the basis for these groupings (e.g., palmate, where "leaf segments radiate from a central point, as in the palm of a hand" versus pinnate, where leaflets are spaced along the leaf axis "as in a feather"). The groups are broken down further by a continuing hierarchy of user-friendly dichotomous keys to genus and species. One potentially frustrating limitation of the keys is that the corresponding illustrations are not labeled. Although a series of drawings corresponding to the characters in the keys occur on the facing pages, the ordering is unclear so the whole page must be searched for the image described in the key. Fortunately, Stevenson does a remarkable job of making the character states discrete and easily understood, so the illustrations mostly serve to boost one's decision-making confidence.

With patience and the very helpful glossary and the rough sketches (which get the point across but are by no means masterful) contained throughout, one can soon find a complete description and illustrations of an unknown palm. Most of the book is comprised of these descriptions, written in a conversational tone, combining important field characters with horticultural notes and tidbits of general interest. His writing style is reminiscent of the flowery days of descriptive botany, when workers' enthusiasm for their focus was mirrored in their generous and respectful attitudes toward their subjects. For a person trained on modern field manuals, where a whole sentence is a rarity and a word like "graceful" is reserved only for slide-shows, I found his completeness refreshing.

The last sections of the book include small segments on species not recommended for growing in Florida, additional species that may tolerate our climate, but that may not be

easy to acquire, the botany and classification of palms (based on Moore's 1961 system), palm geography, Florida's horticultural zones, palm care including discussions on nutritional requirements and the parasites and diseases of palms, salt tolerance of palms, species well-suited for container gardening, a very handy pronunciation guide, and indexes of both the scientific and common names. Most of these sections are brief but informative. The exception is the Palm Botany section which goes into some depth on classification, morphology and development, providing a concise summary of familial characteristics.

Overall, I can strongly recommend this book for anyone interested in learning about palms in south Florida, with the reminder that the book is intended primarily for horticultural species. My only hesitation is that native species are not emphasized for their unique charms and obvious suitability for growing in Florida. Nonetheless, the book should make a welcome addition to any personal or institutional collection as a useful reference.—**Rebecca Yahr**, Archbold Biological Station, PO Box 2057, Lake Placid, Florida 33862.

## REVIEW

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):113, 1996.

**Florida's Pioneer Naturalist, The Life of Charles Torrey Simpson.**—Elizabeth Ogren Rothra. 1995. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida. 240 p. ISBN 0-8130-1374-7. \$49.95 cloth.—Charles Torrey Simpson is best known as a specialist in mollusks, and as one of the first naturalists of south Florida. His writings on wild Florida, on landscaping with tropical plants, on the diminishing *Liguus* tree snail, and on the need to preserve south Florida's uniqueness have ranked him with the noted nature writers, John Muir and John Burroughs.

The reader of a naturalist's writings, especially one as productive as Simpson, cannot help but wonder how this life-long curiosity and drive began, and what obstacles and sacrifices were overcome to pursue it. This book is the first comprehensive biography of Simpson that goes behind the man as author and into his formative years. It is a sequential accounting from his birth in 1846 to his death in 1932.

Ms. Rothra follows Simpson from his childhood discoveries in Illinois, to his first ill-fated stay in Florida, and back to the Midwest where his longing for Florida continued. Simpson was never wealthy in a material sense, probably due to his unwillingness to give up his quest to understand the natural world. At every opportunity, he traveled, he collected and he catalogued.

It is evident that mollusks intrigued him from the beginning, so in 1890 his position as museum aide at the Smithsonian was truly a dream-come-true. He could support his family doing what he loved. This position took him on adventures in the company of those he admired. When he retired from the museum at the age of 56, he himself expected to spend his last years quietly, not to become one of Florida's best known naturalists and one of the first advocates for the establishment of Everglades National Park.

This biography is well documented both through the numerous quotes from Simpson's letters, articles, and books interspersed throughout the narrative, and by the Notes and Bibliography sections. The thirty-four photographs dotted throughout the book assist the reader's imagination in picturing the characters and places described.

Simpson's character, from his humbleness in his lack of formal education to his defense of his classification system of the mollusks, is developed as the book progresses. His independent spirit and determination is unfaltering. Although Simpson spoke little of his personal life in his own writings, Ms. Rothra revealed what she could find of his private life, including his friends, family and his loss of privacy for the sake of educating the public to appreciate the natural world.

My encounter with Simpson's name has only been through his *Liguus* tree snail work, but through this book I have come to know his other accomplishments. For those acquainted with Simpson as a botanist, this book will diversify their appreciation also.

Agency and private individuals involved in the South Florida Restoration initiative will find this book timely. Here is a man who first saw a truly untouched south Florida, and then witnessed its earliest degradations. He fought vehemently to preserve the places he loved. Had only a portion of the money and effort invested today, eight decades later, been available to support Simpson's foresight, south Florida would have remained natural. Though the apparent losses are disheartening, this book is also a motivation to continue restoration efforts.—**Deborah Jansen**, Big Cypress National Preserve, Box 110, Ochopee, Florida 34141.

## FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):114-121, 1996.

**Spring Report: March-May 1996**—The observations listed here are based on rare or unusual species or significant numbers of birds reported to the Florida Ornithological Society (F.O.S.) Field Observations Committee (F.O.C.). As these reports are not formally reviewed, they may be considered tentative.

Significant reports are welcomed for inclusion in future issues of this section. Reports should include the following information: species, number of individuals, age and sex of the bird(s), color morph if applicable, location (including county), date, observer(s), and significance of the report. Reporting periods are winter (December-February), spring (March-May), summer (June-July), and fall (August-November). Submit reports to regional compilers within 2 weeks after the close of each period, or to the state compiler within 1 month. Reports may be E-mailed to the state compiler at blp414@aol.com.

Following the examples set by *Florida Bird Species: An Annotated List* (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, F.O.S. Spec. Publ. No. 6) and *The Birdlife of Florida* (Stevenson and Anderson 1994, Univ. Press of Florida), sight-only observations are considered "reports," while only those supported by verifiable evidence (photographs, video or audio tapes, or specimens) are called "records."

Bruce Anderson (*in litt.* July 1995) revised the list of birds for which the F.O.S. Records Committee (F.O.S.R.C.) requires documentation. These species are marked in this report with an asterisk (\*) to alert the observers of their need to supply the F.O.S.R.C. with details of their sightings. (Some reports that lack documentation may have been omitted from this report).

A county designation accompanies the first-time listing of each site in this report; further listings of the same site lack the county name. Abbreviations used are as follows: A.B.S.=Archbold Biological Station (*Highlands*), ca.=circa, C.P.=county park, D.T.N.P.=Dry Tortugas N.P. (*Monroe*), F.B.R.=Florida Birding Report (*vide* Robbie Wooster), F.D.C.P.=Fort DeSoto C.P. (*Pinellas*), N.P.=national park, N.W.R.=national wildlife refuge, R&W 1992=Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, S&A 1994=Stevenson and Anderson 1994, S.P.=state park, S.R.A.=state recreation area, S.T.F.=sewage treatment facility, W.M.A.=wildlife management area, and N, S, E, W, etc. for compass directions. Bold-faced species, if any, denote birds newly reported or verified in Florida.

We thank Howard Langridge, the spring editor of *National Audubon Society Field Notes* and Robbie Wooster of the F.B.R. for sharing information with us. Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) and Stevenson and Anderson (1994) were used to determine the regional and seasonal status of many species. Editor Walter K. Taylor suggested many helpful comments to the manuscript.

### SUMMARY OF THE SPRING SEASON

Weather this spring varied from a wet and cold March to a hot and dry May, but overall was fairly typical. Fall-outs of birds were reported 30-31 March, 16-20 April, and 30 April-1 May, when 18 warblers and numerous other species were observed at Fort DeSoto C.P. The North American Migration Count was held 11 May; a few results are included here. From late January through mid-April, a "Red Tide" plagued the Naples area. Called by Ted Below, "the largest, strongest and longest Red Tide I have experienced in 40 years," the microorganism killed West Indian manatees, sea turtles, and "thousands and thousands of fish" (mostly catfish), but there appeared to be no ill effects on birds.



Rarities reported this spring included a Red-billed Tropicbird, 4 Red-footed Boobies, Ross' Goose, White-cheeked Pintail, Ferruginous Hawk, Zenaida Dove, 6 Buff-bellied Hummingbirds, Calliope Hummingbird, Cuban Pewee, 2 La Sagra's Flycatchers, Cassin's Kingbird, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, a record 7 Bahama Mockingbirds, 4 Warbling Vireos, and a Black-headed Grosbeak.

## SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- RED-THROATED LOON: 7 at Fort Clinch S.P. (*Nassau*) 10 Feb (R. Clark).
- COMMON LOON: 1 over Gainesville (*Alachua*) 22 May (S. Duncan); 2 at Santa Rosa Island (*Escambia* and/or *Santa Rosa*) 23 May (G. Sprandel).
- WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD: 1 adult 20 km S. of Pensacola Pass (*Escambia*) 27 Apr (J. Pfeiffer) was the first report in the W. Panhandle (*vide* B. Duncan, S&A 1994:34); 1 at Key West (*Monroe*) 28 Apr (J. Ondrejko).
- \*RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD: 1 *ca.* 29 km S.E. of D.T.N.P. 13 Mar (P. Maiuri *vide* W. Biggs).
- MASKED BOOBY: 6 fledglings and 2 eggs at Hospital Key, D.T.N.P. 19 Apr (K. Karlson et al.).
- BROWN BOOBY: 80 on a radio tower between D.T.N.P. and the Marquesas Keys (*Monroe*) 14 Apr (D. Goodwin, W. Biggs et al.) and 145 *ca.* 51 km W of Key West 24 Apr (S. Tingley et al.) were the highest published counts in Florida (S&A 1994:37).
- \*RED-FOOTED BOOBY: 3 reports from D.T.N.P.: 1 white-tailed dark morph in Mar (W. B. Robertson), another from 6 Apr-31 May (H. Langridge et al.), and a 3rd there 26 Apr-17 May (G. Lasley, P. Lehman et al.)—the latter 2 birds were together 15-17 May (H. and M. Parker); 1 white-tailed dark morph off St. George Island (*Franklin*) 16 Apr (B. Russell, details to F.O.S.R.C.) was the first spring report in Florida outside D.T.N.P. (S&A 1994:38).
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: 405 at Little-Big Econ State Forest (*Seminole*) 16 Mar (*vide* L. Malo); 250 at Choctaw Beach (*Walton*) 19 Mar (S. Maxwell); 3 at Newnans Lake (*Alachua*) 22 Mar—the species is increasing in the county (R. Rowan); 1 at Rookery Bay (*Collier*) 24 May (T. Below, J. Douglas).
- BROWN PELICAN: 1 at Cypress Lake (*Osceola*) 16 Mar (C. Black et al.); 7 S.E. over Highlands Hammock S.P. (*Highlands*) 28 Mar (B. and M. Kittredge).
- AMERICAN BITTERN: 9 in a 1 ha. marsh at Brooker Creek Preserve (*Pinellas*) 6 Apr (L. Hopkins, P. Blair).
- LITTLE BLUE HERON: 8 migrating N. over Rookery Bay at dusk on 28 Mar (T. Below). After analyzing bi-weekly dusk counts for the past 18 years, Ted noted a peak in numbers of Little Blue and Tricolored herons and Snowy and Cattle egrets in late Mar, but had not realized these were spring migrants.
- GREEN HERON: 3 depredated birds on a sandbar at Marco Island (*Collier*) 12 Apr were thought to have been migrants preyed upon by a Great Horned Owl. In 22 years of surveying the sandbars in the area, no Green Herons had been observed previously (T. Below, B. J. Anderson).
- GLOSSY IBIS: 1 at St. Andrew S.R.A. 18 Apr (J. Richardson) was casual in *Bay* (*vide* T. Mertart).
- BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK: 1 in DeLand 19-23 Apr (J. Lahart *vide* F.B.R.) was the first *Volusia* report (S&A 1994:96); 10 in Babson Park (*Polk*) 13 May (B. Gordon); 2 at Duda sewer ponds, Rockledge (*Brevard*) 22 May (M. Newton, B. and S. Hills, N. Sekera); 2 pairs just E. of Myakka River S.P. 27 May (A. and R. Smith) were the first published *Manatee* report (S&A 1994:96).
- TUNDRA SWAN: 2 in Tallahassee (*Leon*) until 15 Mar (J. LaVia) were the latest spring report (S&A 1994:97).
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: 4 at Gulf Breeze (*Santa Rosa*) 6-14 Mar (B. Bremser) were the latest spring report (S&A 1994:98).

- \*ROSS' GOOSE: 1 at Lake Woodruff N.W.R. ca. 17 Feb-13 Mar (*vide* F.B.R.) was the first Florida report from the peninsula (S&A 1994:101).
- CANADA GOOSE: 6 on Lake Pierce (*Polk*) 8 Apr were thought to be wild birds (D. Pierce, S. Huxtable); 1 at Fort Walton Beach (*Okaloosa*) 19-20 May (H. King, D. Ware); 2 pairs nested successfully at Air Products Sanctuary, Pace (*Santa Rosa*), producing a combined total of 5 young that were "full sized" by 31 May (B. Milmore).
- AMERICAN BLACK DUCK: 1 in *Polk* mines 24 Mar (P. Fellers, C. Geanangel).
- MALLARD: 1 wary male in a small fresh water pond at Honeymoon Island S.R.A. (*Pinellas*) 10 May (D. Goodwin, C. Buhrman, E. Haney).
- \*WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL: 1 male at Merritt Island N.W.R. (*Brevard*) 11 May through the season (*vide* F.B.R.) was the latest spring report (S&A 1994:113).
- SCOTER SPECIES: about 300 "dark-winged" scoters off St. George Island (*Franklin*) 16 Apr; some were male Black Scoters (B. Russell).
- BLACK SCOTER: 25 at Alligator Point (*Franklin*) 25 Apr (J. Dozier).
- SURF SCOTER: 2 at Honeymoon Island S.R.A. 20 Apr (R. Webb, D. Bowman); 100 at Alligator Point 25 Apr (J. Dozier).
- WHITE-TAILED KITE: 1 adult at A.B.S. 19 Mar (C. Jonas); 1 pair copulating and building a nest at Buck Island Ranch (*Highlands*) 21 Mar (S. Christman, note in prep. by M. McMillian and B. Pranty) was the first nesting record in central Florida since 1930 (S&A 1994:150), but the nestlings were depredated; 1 at Three Lakes W.M.A. (*Osceola*) 22 March (P. Vickery, T. Dean, M. Scheuerell et al.), where birds have been seen regularly the past few years.
- MISSISSIPPI KITE: 70 at Tram Road S.T.F., Tallahassee 2 May and 15 May (G. Menk) may be the highest Florida count (S&A 1994:154).
- NORTHERN HARRIER: 1 male at Placid Lakes Estates (*Highlands*) 14 May (A. Fleischer) and 31 May, depredating Northern Mockingbird nestlings (R. Bowman) was very late (S&A 1994:159).
- COOPER'S HAWK: 1 pair nested at Gulf Breeze (female on the nest 28 Mar, 1 downy young seen 23 May) (P. Tetlow, B. Duncan et al.) was the first regional nesting report (S&A 1994:162).
- SHORT-TAILED HAWK: 1 dark morph over Aripeka (*Pasco*) 9 Apr was rare locally (B. Pranty); 1 adult light morph over the University of South Florida Eco Area, Tampa (*Hillsborough*) 13 Apr (D. Bowman); 3 near Jena in Big Bend W.M.A. (*Dixie*) 14 May (*vide* C. Parenteau).
- SWAINSON'S HAWK: 1 adult light morph migrating N. over Avon Park (*Highlands*) 23 March (P. Vickery, T. Dean).
- \*FERRUGINOUS HAWK: 1 immature at Tram Road S.T.F. 21 Mar-1 Apr (J. Cavanagh, details and photos to F.O.S.R.C., H. Horne, J. LaVia) was the latest spring report (S&A 1994:173).
- PEREGRINE FALCON: 2 at Pensacola Beach (*Escambia*) 20 May (T. Sanders).
- YELLOW RAIL: 1 at St. Marks N.W.R. (*Wakulla*) 10 Mar (H. Horne).
- KING RAIL: 1 at Bush Key, D.T.N.P. 10-17 Apr (P. Lehman et al.) was rare there.
- SORA: 78 at Fort Walton Beach S.T.F. (*Okaloosa*) 17 Apr (B. Duncan).
- WHOOPIING CRANE: 28 on the N.E. shore of Lake Kissimmee (*Osceola*) 28 Mar (B. and L. Cooper).
- AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER: 100 (mostly in winter plumage) at Tram Road S.T.F. 21 Mar, 140 there 22 Mar (both J. Cavanagh, J. LaVia), and 200 there 27 Mar (G. Menk); 1 at N. Jacksonville (*Duval*) 24 Mar (R. Clark); 1 at Honeymoon Island S.R.A. 30 Mar (D. Gagne, W. Yusek).
- WILSON'S PLOVER: 6 pairs nesting at Boyce-Werner Gulf Coast Preserve, Bayonet Point (*Pasco*) 17 May (D. Robinson, D. Helton), a previously unpublished breeding site.
- SEMPALMATED PLOVER: 2 at Watermelon Pond (*Alachua*) 11 May (B. Roberts, T. Taylor) were rare inland.

- AMERICAN AVOCET: 7 at N. Jacksonville 8 Apr (R. Clark); 6 in breeding plumage at Cedar Key (*Levy*) 9 Apr (B. Pranty, S. Johnson, P. Nevins); 2 at Alligator Point 20 Apr (H. Horne, M. Collins); singles at St. George Island S.P. 1 May and Bald Point (*Franklin*) 3 May (both G. Sprandel).
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS: 1 at Lake Campbell (*Walton*) 30 May (D. Ware).
- SOLITARY SANDPIPER: 90+ at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (P. Blair, B. and L. Cooper et al.) were the state's highest count (S&A 1994:228).
- WILLET: 2000 at Shell Key (*Pinellas*) 4 Apr (P. Blair).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER: 15 in winter plumage at Lake Annie, A.B.S. 5 May (B. Pranty, H. Vili).
- UPLAND SANDPIPER: 7 in an *Osceola* sod field 28 Mar (B. and L. Cooper).
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW: 1 at Tram Road S.T.F. 22-23 Mar (J. LaVia, J. Cavanagh et al.); 1 at Shell Key until 12 Apr (P. Blair).
- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER: 1 at Fort Walton Beach S.T.F. 17 Apr was "early by 2 days" (B. Duncan); 4 at F.D.C.P. 21-22 May (L. Atherton, R. Smith); 10 at Tigertail Beach C.P. (*Collier*) 22 May (N. Pettis to F.B.R.); 30 at Duda sewer ponds 22 May (B. and S. Hills, N. Sekera).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER: 20 at Lake Kissimmee 29 Mar (C. Geanangel).
- PURPLE SANDPIPER: 2 at Convoy Point, Biscayne N.P. (*Dade*) 8 May (B. Dusek).
- STILT SANDPIPER: 23 at N. Jacksonville 8 Apr, with 2 remaining until 11 May (R. Clark); 1 at Cedar Key 9 Apr (B. Pranty, S. Johnson); 2 at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (S. Backes, R. Webb et al.).
- BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER: 4 at Fort Walton Beach S.T.F. 12 Apr (B. and L. Duncan); 1 at Destin (*Okaloosa*) 8 May (D. Ware); 1 at Air Products Sanctuary 23 May (B. Milmore) was the latest regional report (*vide* B. Duncan).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER: 75 at N. Jacksonville 8 Apr, with 25 remaining to 20 Apr (R. Clark).
- COMMON SNIBE: 60 at Lake Lafayette (*Leon*) 13 Mar (D. Harder).
- RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: 1 male in breeding plumage at Duda sewer ponds 22 May (B. and S. Hills, N. Sekera).
- LAUGHING GULL: 10,000 pairs nested at Shell Key in mid-May (P. Blair).
- BONAPARTE'S GULL: 5 at Marco Island 13 Mar "have become so uncommon as to warrant comment" (T. and V. Below, B. J. Anderson); 390 at Lakeland S.T.F. (*Polk*) 21 Mar (P. Fellers).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: 1 adult at Anastasia Island S.R.A. (*St. Johns*) 20-24 Apr (P. Powell).
- GLAUCOUS GULL: 1 second-year bird at Passage Key N.W.R. (*Manatee*) 27 Apr (C. Folis).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: 1 adult at Fort Island Beach Park, Crystal River 7 Apr (B. Pranty [photo], S. Johnson) was the first record for *Citrus* (S&A 1994:285).
- BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: 1 at F.D.C.P. 1-2 May (M. and B. Sokol et al.).
- BLACK TERN: 6 at *Polk* mines 2 Apr (B. and L. Cooper); 1 at Honeymoon Island S.R.A. 25 Apr (W. Yusek); 2 at Spring Hill S.T.F. (*Hernando*) 31 May (C. Black).
- BLACK SKIMMER: 500 at Key West 21 Apr (J. Ondrejko).
- \*RAZORBILL: 1 found dead at John U. Lloyd S.R.A. (*Broward*) 5 Mar (specimen to Univ. of Central Florida, Orlando).
- WHITE-CROWNED PIGEON: 2 *Collier* reports: singles in the Ten Thousand Islands, where birds are being encountered regularly during transect surveys, 20 Feb and 7 Mar (N. Nalley), and 1 at Chokoloskee 24 Mar (*vide* T. Below); 1 at Hugh Taylor Birch S.R.A. (*Broward*) 22 May (W. George).
- \*ZENAIDA DOVE: 1 that wintered at Windley Key (not reported previously) was seen last in mid-May (W. B. Robertson et al.).
- RED-CROWNED PARROT: 4 at Key West 17 Mar, with 2 excavating a cavity in a dead coconut palm 5 May (J. Ondrejko).

- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO: singles at F.D.C.P. 16-20 Apr (L. Atherton, V. Morrison) and 30 Apr-1 May (K. Nelson et al.), and 2 there 7 May (L. and R. Smith), 1 remaining until 11 May (L. Atherton); 1 at Cedar Key 30 Apr (S. Duncan).
- MANGROVE CUCKOO: 2 at Weedon Island Preserve (*Pinellas*) 27 Apr through the season, where nesting has been suspected for a number of years recently (R. Smith et al.).
- GROOVE-BILLED ANI: 1 that wintered S.W. of San Antonio (*Pasco*) was seen last 29 Apr (R. Webb).
- BURROWING OWL: 1 in coastal Port Richey 8 Mar (C. Black) was only the 2nd *W. Pasco* report (*vide* B. Pranty).
- ANTILLEAN NIGHTHAWK: 1 at Key West (*Monroe*) 5 Apr (J. Ondrejko) was the earliest spring report (S&A 1994:374).
- CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: 3 migrants at Marco Island 26 Mar (T. Below, B. J. Anderson).
- CHAEATURA SPECIES: 3 "pale, silent" birds over Kanapaha S.T.F. (*Alachua*) 17 Mar were believed to be Vaux's Swifts (M. Manetz).
- \*BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD: 1 at Kissimmee in Mar-Apr (H. Moore et al.) was the first *Osecola* report (S&A 1994:385); 5 in the W. Panhandle lingered into spring, with the latest bird at Pensacola (*Escambia*) 10 May (J. Pfeiffer), the latest spring report in Florida by far (S&A 1994:385).
- RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD: 250+ at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (R. Smith, L. Atherton et al.) was the highest Florida count (S&A 1994:386).
- BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD: 1 remained at Pensacola until 8 Apr (I. Roose); 1 female at F.D.C.P. 16 Apr (L. Atherton); 1 adult male at Lakeland 13 May (J. Misiaszek) was the first *Polk* report, and the latest spring report (S&A 1994:388).
- \*CALLOPE HUMMINGBIRD: 1 male at Lakeland 30 Mar-3 Apr (J. Misiaszek, B. and L. Cooper, P. Fellers et al., photos to F.O.S.R.C.) was the first *Polk* record and about the 10th Florida report, with all but the first record occurring since 30 November 1995.
- SELASPHORUS SPECIES: 1 at Gainesville 4 Apr (B. Muschlitz).
- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: 1 male that wintered at Jacksonville remained to 1 Apr, by which time it had molted into adult plumage (P. Powell); 1 that wintered at Gainesville remained to 1 Apr (B. Roberts); 6 in the W. Panhandle lingered into spring, with the latest at Pensacola 23 Apr (J. Roose).
- BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD: 1 male in Pensacola (Florida's first) was last seen 9 Mar (J. Pfeiffer).
- PILEATED WOODPECKER: 1 melanistic bird (entirely lacking white) at Placid Lakes Estates 30 Apr (F. Lohrer).
- \*CUBAN PEWEE: 1 silent bird observed for over an hour at D.T.N.P. 20 May was "extremely brown" in plumage and had a "half eye-ring" (B. and W.B. Robertson, K. Chisolm). This was the third Florida (and North American) report.
- ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: 1 at Paynes Prairie State Preserve (*Alachua*) 13 Mar (A. Farkash, B. Muschlitz), where 1 has wintered the past 3 years.
- BROWN-CRESTED FLYCATCHER: 1 at Matheson Hammock C.P. (*Dade*) in late Apr (*vide* F.B.R.).
- LA SAGRA'S FLYCATCHER: 1 at Hugh Taylor Birch S.R.A. 6-8 Apr (W. George et al.); 1 at Bill Baggs/Cape Florida S.R.A. 25 Apr (*vide* F.B.R.).
- \*CASSIN'S KINGBIRD: 1 that wintered at Homestead was seen through 24 Apr (P. W. Smith et al.).
- WESTERN KINGBIRD: 1 at Air Products Sanctuary 23 May (B. Milmore et al.) was the latest regional report (*vide* B. Duncan); 1 S. of Hawthorne (*Alachua*) 26 May (T. Gilyard).
- EASTERN KINGBIRD: 1 at Woodlawn (*Bay*) 13 Mar (H. Loftin).
- GRAY KINGBIRD: 1 near Florida City (*Dade*) 2 Mar (L. Manfredi) was the earliest spring report if the bird did not winter (S&A 1994:435).
- \*FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER: 1 at Islamorada (*Monroe*) 15 Apr (P. Blair, W. Yusek et al. photos to F.O.S.R.C.).

- CLIFF SWALLOW: 1 at Brooker Creek Preserve 6 Apr (L. Hopkins, P. Blair); 1 at St. Cloud (*Osceola*) 10 Apr (P. Blair, W. Yusek).
- CAVE SWALLOW: 1 described as being of the Central American race *Hirundo fulva pelodoma* at Fort Walton Beach S.T.F. 8 Apr (B. Duncan, P. Tetlow, B. Burroughs, details to F.O.S.R.C.) was the first W. Panhandle report (S&A 1994:452).
- BLUE JAY: 2 carrying nesting material at F.D.C.P. 11 May, where breeding had never been reported previously (B. and L. Atherton, M. Wilkinson).
- AMERICAN CROW: 1 pure albino (all white plumage with pinkish eyes, bill, and legs—it looked like a short-legged Cattle Egret!) with a group of 4 typically plumaged crows at Three Lakes W.M.A. (*Osceola*) 30 May (B. Pranty) had been observed also May-Sep 1995 (T. Dean).
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH: 1 at Cedar Key 5 Apr (M. Landsman, D. Henderson).
- SEDGE WREN: 75-80 singing at Black Point Wildlife Drive, Merritt Island N.W.R. (*Brevard*) 18 Apr (N. Sekera); 1 at Three Lakes W.M.A., where birds winter commonly in dry prairies, remained to 30 May (B. Pranty) and tied the latest spring report (S&A 1994:484).
- CATHARUS SPECIES: a “great flight” of Veeries and “Gray-cheeked” and Swainson’s thrushes at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (*vide* R. Smith).
- AMERICAN ROBIN: 1 at F.D.C.P. 26 Apr had not been present earlier (P. Blair).
- BAHAMA MOCKINGBIRD: 1 singing at John Pennekamp S.P. (*Monroe*) 26 Apr-10 May (L. Manfredi); 2 singing at Spanish River Park 21-26 Apr (B. Hope, P. W. Smith et al.); 1 at Key West 30 Apr-5 May (J. Ondrejko et al.); 1 at Fort Lauderdale (*Broward*) 1-8 May (*vide* H. Langridge); 1 at Elliott Key, Biscayne N.P. 11 May (B. and M. Dusek); 1 singing at Hypoluxo Island (*Palm Beach*) 13 May (H. Langridge, G. Hunter).
- CEDAR WAXWING: ca. 50 at Tallahassee 16 May (G. Menk).
- \*WARBLING VIREO: 1 at Fort Walton Beach 28 Mar (D. Ware, details); 2 singing at Key West 15 Apr and 1 singing there 19 Apr (both J. Ondrejko, details to F.O.S.R.C.); 1 at F.D.C.P. 1 May (R. Card et al., details to F.O.S.R.C.); 1 at Seminole (*Pinellas*) 3 May (J. Fisher).
- PHILADELPHIA VIREO: singles at F.D.C.P. 21 Apr (P. Blair et al.), 1-2 May (L. and R. Smith, P. Blair), and 3 May (L. Atherton et al.); 2 at St. George Island S.P. 30 Apr (D. and S. Jue, J. Cavanagh, sketch).
- BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO: 1 at Key West 1 Apr (J. Ondrejko).
- BLUE-WINGED WARBLER: 1 at F.D.C.P. 2 Apr (L. Atherton, M. Wilkinson).
- GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER: 1 male at Six Mile Cypress Parkway (*Lee*) 6-13 Mar (N. Pettis) had been reported also in Feb; 1 male at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr-1 May (S. Backes, R. Webb et al.); 1 at Bonner Park (*Pinellas*) 1 May (L. Atherton).
- VERMIVORA HYBRID: 1 “Brewster’s Warbler” at D.T.N.P. 8-9 May (*vide* H. Langridge).
- NASHVILLE WARBLER: 1 at Tallahassee 13 Mar (G. Menk, M. Collins) was the 2nd-earliest spring report if the bird did not winter (S&A 1994:546); 1 at St. George Island 22 Apr (R. West, R. Christen et al.).
- CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER: 1 at Cedar Key 30 Apr (B. Muschlitiz).
- BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER: 2 males at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (S. Backes, B. Atherton et al.).
- PALM WARBLER: 200 at Key West 31 Mar (J. Ondrejko).
- BAY-BREASTED WARBLER: 27 at St. George Island S.P. 30 Apr (J. Cavanagh, D. and S. Jue); 11 at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr-2 May (R. Smith et al.); 5 at Cedar Key 30 Apr (B. Muschlitiz).
- AMERICAN REDSTART: 60 in *Pinellas* 11 May (*vide* D. Goodwin).
- WORM-EATING WARBLER: 1 in *Gadsden* 30 Mar (D. McBride).
- NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: 1 at Gainesville 2 Mar (M. Manetz) was the earliest spring report if the bird did not winter (S&A 1994:586); 15 in *Pinellas* 11 May: 7 at Honey-moon Island S.R.A. and 8 at F.D.C.P. (*vide* D. Goodwin); 1 at Tiger Creek Sanctuary (*Polk*) 23 May (P. Fellers).

- KENTUCKY WARBLER: 1 at F.D.C.P. 2-3 May (B. Hoffman, P. Blair).
- CONNECTICUT WARBLER: 1 at Bonner Park (*Pinellas*) 10 May (K. Nelson, J. Fisher); singles at A.D. Barnes Park (*Dade*) 13 May and 17-21 May (*vide* F.B.R.); 1 at Matheson Hammock C.P. (*Dade*) 19 May (*vide* F.B.R.).
- COMMON YELLOWTHROAT: 100+ at F.D.C.P. 7 May (L. and R. Smith).
- WILSON'S WARBLER: 1 male at A.D. Barnes Park 4 Mar (*vide* F.B.R.) was the earliest spring report if the bird did not winter (S&A 1994:597)
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: 1 male singing near Nichols (*Polk*) 22 Apr (K. Rousch); 1 at F.D.C.P. 1-3 May (B. Hoffman, R. Card, P. Blair et al.); 2 at Paynes Prairie 1 May through the period were probably nesting (J. Hintermister et al.).
- SCARLET TANAGER: 25+ at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (*vide* R. Smith).
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK: 40 estimated at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr-3 May (*vide* R. Smith).
- \*BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK: 1 immature male at Key West 30 Apr (J. Ondrejko, details to F.O.S.R.C.).
- BLUE GROSBEAK: 17 at F.D.C.P. 13 Apr (*vide* R. Smith).
- INDIGO BUNTING: 100 estimated at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (*vide* R. Smith) were a high count (S&A 1994:617).
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: 1 at Alligator Point 4 Mar (J. Dozier); 1 at D.T.N.P. 11-29 Apr (H. Langridge et al.).
- SAVANNAH SPARROW: 1 at Boca Chica Key (*Monroe*) 8 May (B. Dusek, H. Howitt).
- HENSLOW'S SPARROW: 1 at Paynes Prairie 8 Apr (M. Manetz).
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW: 1 at Emerald Marsh Conservation Area (*Lake*) 23 Mar (*vide* J. Marburger).
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW: 1 in *Okaloosa* 1 Mar (D. Ware); 2 at Paynes Prairie 9-15 Mar (M. Manetz).
- SWAMP SPARROW: 1 at Three Lakes W.M.A. 2 May (B. Pranty).
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW: 10 at Talbot Island S.P. (*Duval*) until 24 Mar (R. Clark).
- BOBOLINK: 600+ in *Leon* 21 Apr-15 May (G. Menk et al.); 3 males at Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary (*Okeechobee*) 24 Apr (B. Pranty, M. Scheuerell et al.); 30 at F.D.C.P. 30 Apr (P. Blair et al.).
- SHINY COWBIRD: 1 male and 1 female at Largo (*Pinellas*) 14 Apr (T. Palmer); 1 immature at Alligator Point 20 Apr and 1 adult there 24 Apr (both J. Dozier); 2 males at Cedar Key 25 Apr through at least mid-May—birds have been reported here annually since 1990 (C. Folis, D. Henderson); 1 female at Fort George Island (*Duval*) 9 May was joined by a male 22 May, and both remained through the season (R. Clark).
- BRONZED COWBIRD: the last wintering bird at Homestead was seen through 2 May (*vide* F.B.R.).
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE: up to 12 at a S. Jacksonville feeder until 10 Apr (J. Cocke).
- BULLOCK'S ORIOLE: 1 male at Tallahassee until 10 Mar (N. Wamer); up to 3 at a S. Jacksonville feeder until 10 Apr (J. Cocke).
- PURPLE FINCH: 3 at Niceville (*Okaloosa*) 11-15 May (P. and T. Baker) were the latest spring report (S&A 1994:694).
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH: 1 at Shalimar (*Okaloosa*) 20 May (B. Dillon).

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## RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):122-134, 1996.

**Twelfth Report of the Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee: 1994 & 1995.**—The Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee (F.O.S.R.C.) critically reviews all written sight reports and specimen and/or photographic records (including audio recordings) submitted to it to determine the validity of the reports. The Committee's findings are published annually in the *Florida Field Naturalist (F.F.N.)*. Of 72 reports received in 1994 and 1995, 5 were not reviewed and 5 are "still under consideration": SCARLET IBIS, *Eudocimus ruber* (94-299), WHITE-FACED IBIS, *Plegadis chihi* (94-312b), LEPTOTILA DOVE SPECIES (95-337), COMMON POORWILL, *Phalaenoptilus nuttallii* (95-336), MYIODYNASTES FLYCATCHER SPECIES (95-343). In addition to the remaining 62 reports, the Committee resolved 2 reports that had been in "still under consideration" status since 1994: 47 (73%) were accepted and 17 (27%) were not accepted. Three species were added to the official list of verified Florida species bringing the total to 466 (see Robertson and Woolfenden 1992, *F.F.N.* 23:38-43, 1995). Three reports received prior to 1994 remain "still under consideration": ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD, *Selasphorus sasin* (88-138, 93-276), and CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR, *Calcarius ornatus* (89-181).

F.O.S.R.C. members who evaluated these reports and their expiration dates of tenure are as follows: Bruce H. Anderson (1996), Lyn S. Atherton (1995), John W. Fitzpatrick (voluntarily retired 1995), Wayne Hoffman (1998), Brian H. Hope (1999), Vaughn W. Morrison (1997), William B. Robertson, Jr. (2002), P. William Smith (2001), and Glen E. Woolfenden (2000).

In this issue is a list of bird species that the Committee has deemed sufficiently rare or difficult to identify to suggest F.O.S.R.C. evaluation. Any species reported on this list should be documented by the observer. All observers are encouraged to submit these reports to the F.O.S.R.C., including those intended for publication in the *Florida Field Naturalist*, *National Audubon Society Field Notes*, or another publication.

While in the field, the observer should write a detailed description of all body parts (e.g., bill, legs, and feet, noting sizes, shapes, and colors). Although a specimen or photograph and vocal recording are preferred, a sketch of the bird and vocal descriptions are beneficial. Behavioral traits and the habitat should be detailed. It is necessary to describe how all similar species were eliminated (e.g., members of the genus *Myiarchus*), not only those known or suspected to occur in Florida, but also any species that could possibly stray here. All observations should be submitted on the standard report form that is available from the Secretary. In addition to uniformity, the report form provides the Committee and the observer with guidelines to those factors used by the F.O.S.R.C. for its evaluation. Completed forms with supporting materials should be submitted to the Secretary.

Since 1994, the Committee has consisted of 7 members. Through 1995, an accepted report required the unanimous vote of all Committee members. When a report is accepted, it gains status on the official Florida state list (Robertson and Woolfenden 1992). A species or race new to the state is given full status only when its natural occurrence is probable, and there is a supporting specimen, photograph, or audio recording; otherwise it is given hypothetical status. When a report is not accepted, it does not necessarily mean that the species or form was not correctly identified. Sometimes a sighting is too brief or the written account lacks sufficient details to eliminate all possibilities. The Committee will reconsider a report if additional information is submitted that might alter a previous decision. All documentation is deposited in the F.O.S. Archives at the Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville.



The F.O.S.R.C. was established in 1981. Published reports of unusual sightings that have not been submitted to the Committee (either before or since 1981) have been given varying degrees of scrutiny by the various editors. Recently, Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) and Stevenson and Anderson (1994) have evaluated many of the unusual sightings not evaluated by the Committee. At this time the F.O.S.R.C. has made no commitment to review reports that have been published prior to 1981 and those that have not been submitted to it.

Each species that appears in this report is listed according to the A.O.U. (1983) checklist and supplements through 1996. The number of published reports (including verifiable records and the reports published herein) through 1995 for each species or race is given after the species name; these numbers follow Robertson and Woolfenden (1992) unless otherwise stated. Each account includes the initials of the contributor(s) for accepted reports and reports received but not reviewed, F.O.S.R.C. catalog number, and abbreviations for supporting materials. Following the account of each species is a listing of catalog numbers for other reports previously considered by the F.O.S.R.C.

Abbreviations used in this report are: A=audio recording; A.B.=American Birds; A.B.S.=Archbold Biological Station; A.F.N.=Audubon Field Notes; C.P.=county park; N.P.=national park; N.S.=national seashore; N.W.R.=national wildlife refuge; P.=photo; S.=specimen; S.PR.=state preserve; S.R.=state road; S.R.A.=state recreation area; S&A=Stevenson & Anderson 1994; U.F.=Florida Museum of Natural History/University of Florida; V.=video; and G.E.W.=Glen E. Woolfenden at A.B.S. Also, contributors are identified by their initials.

The Committee thanks Susan Allan for additional photographs of 95-334, Kevin T. Karlson for his photograph of 95-338, Kevin J. Zimmer for his evaluation of 93-277, George Barrowclough and Paul Sweet for the loan of specimens from the American Museum of Natural History for 94-310, Gary Graves and Phil Angle for the loan of specimens from the National Museum for 95-332, Walter Kinglsey Taylor for his helpful suggestions with earlier drafts of this manuscript, and Tom Webber who maintains and provides access to the F.O.S.R.C. Archives at the Florida Museum of Natural History. Contributors to this report are Bruce H. Anderson, Lyn S. Atherton, Michael J. Austin, Jocelyn L. Baker, Richard L. Ballman, Richard Bowen, Robert A. Duncan, John W. Fitzpatrick, Wally George, David Goodwin, Brian H. Hope, Howard P. Langridge, Barbara P. Muschlit, Blair Nikula, Bill Pranty, Harry Robinson, Rex Rowan, Sean P. Rowe, Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, James H. Saunders, Macklin Smith, P. William Smith, Annette E. Stedman, Paul W. Sykes, Keith A. Tarvin, Philip C. Tetlow, Tom Webber, Ann Y. Weinrich, and Philip S. Weinrich.

#### ACCEPTED REPORTS

ALBATROSS SPECIES, *Diomedea* SPECIES: 7 albatross reports, not all evaluated, includes 1 specimen and photographs of another YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS, *D. chlororhynchos* (S&A). One believed to be a YELLOW-NOSED, was seen about 152 m from the Lake Worth pier, Palm Beach Co., on 5 January 1995 (H.P.L., 95-326, Langridge 1995). While agreeing that a species of *Diomedea* was observed, the first Florida winter report, the Committee was unable to rule out some form of *D. cauta*, especially *D. cauta*, the WHITE-CAPPED (SHY) ALBATROSS.

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL, *Pterodroma hasitata*: about 20 reports, not all evaluated, includes 4 specimens (S&A). One was seen and sketched on an F.O.S. pelagic trip in the Gulf Stream along a weed line, about 11 km E of Riviera Beach, Palm Beach Co., on 24 April 1994 (D.G., 94-295). (Previously not accepted, 89-177, 90-183). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.

MANX SHEARWATER, *Puffinus puffinus*: about 20 reports, not all evaluated, includes 6 specimens (S&A). Two were observed through a telescope, less than 300 m from shore

S of Bethune Beach, Canaveral N.S., Brevard Co., on 15 November 1994 (H.R., 94-322).

RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD, *Phaethon aethereus*: 5 reports, not all evaluated, includes 3 specimens and another individual photographed (S&A). One subadult in flight and on water was seen from a boat about 10 km S of Key West, Monroe Co., 11 May 1995 (H.P.L., P., 95-334, published photo, *N.A.S.F.N.* 49:241). The location of 1 found moribund on Hutchison Island, St. Lucie Co., on 27 August 1986, that died on 3 (A.B. 41:76; S&A), or 6 or 9 (Wes Biggs pers. comm.) September 1986, was solved by Wes Biggs; the specimen is preserved as a flat skin (A.B.S.), and a skeleton (Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago).

RED-FOOTED BOOBY, *Sula sula*: about 20 reports, not all evaluated, includes 3 specimens and others photographed (S&A). One probable subadult in flight was observed between Hospital Key and Long Key, Dry Tortugas N.P., Monroe Co., on 20 September 1995 (P.W.Sm., 95-344). Not received for review were 3 other reports from Dry Tortugas N.P. (*F.F.N.* 22:11, 23:100, *N.A.S.F.N.* 49:240). (Previously accepted, 82-013). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.

WHITE-FACED IBIS: 7 reports, not all evaluated, includes 1 specimen and others photographed (S&A). The various accounts submitted make reference to at least 1, possible 2, individuals identified as this species out of 3 or 4 *Plegadis* ibis observed from 26 October-16 November 1994 (22 November in *F.F.N.* 23:46), Ft. Walton beach Sewage Treatment Facility, Okaloosa Co.; other individuals were identified as GLOSSY IBIS, *P. falcinellus*. The Committee assigned different catalog numbers based on the dates of observation to clarify its findings. Four observers submitted detailed reports of at least 1 individual identified as this species (94-312a): 26 October 1994 (P.C.T., R.A.D.); 9 November 1994, resulted in the only report of the bird with a streaked head and neck (R.L.B., J.H.S.); and 11 November 1994 (P.W.Sy.). Each observation included a single bird in basic plumage without blue facial skin but with distinct red eyes. The other reports (94-312b) remain "still under consideration".

CURLEW SANDPIPER, *Calidris ferruginea*: more than 20 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs (S&A). Three observers submitted reports of 1 sandpiper seen near the Holiday Inn at Ft. Myers Beach, Lee Co. (V.C.M., W.W., V.K., P., 93-301). First observed in basic plumage on 24 September 1993, with "sporadic reports in Feb.," it was not seen again until the "end of April [1994] . . . in breeding plumage." Another observer gave 9 October as the date that he last saw the individual in basic plumage. The species was last reported at this locality on 20 May 1994. The Committee accepted the observations of 24 September and 9 October 1993, and those from the end of April-15 May 1994. The Committee did not have sufficient evidence to conclude that 1 overwintered in the area because there is only a vague reference to "winter" observations, or that the bird described and photographed in the spring was the same individual as seen the previous fall. One in basic plumage was seen at Black Point Wildlife Drive, Merritt Island N.W.R., Brevard Co., on 15 October 1994 (H.R., 94-320). A bird in alternate plumage was observed at the end of Snake Bight Trail, E.N.P., Monroe Co., on 25 April 1995 (M.J.A., 95-339). A 1995 report from Ft. Myers Beach was not received by the Committee (*F.F.N.* 24:21). (Previously accepted, 84-065, 87-125; previously not accepted, 87-113, 91-243). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.

SKUA SPECIES, *Catharacta* SPECIES: 8 reports (contra *F.F.N.* 23:39), not all evaluated, includes photographs of 1 SOUTH POLAR SKUA, *C. maccormicki* (S&A). An immature skua, identified as *C. maccormicki*, was seen below Bethune Beach at Canaveral N.S., Brevard Co., from shore, at a distance of about 550 m, on 28 October 1994 (H.R., 94-319). The description provided could not eliminate all other skuas due to the complexities of their identification. According to Bourne and Curtis (1994. *British Birds* 87:289-297), there are no verifiable reports of this species in the western Atlantic

- north of the equator in autumn. (Previously accepted, 82-024, 93-275; previously not accepted, 83-030, 83-056).
- MARbled MURRELET, *Brachyramphus marmoratus*: 4 records, not all evaluated, including 3 specimens and another individual photographed. The first live bird seen in Florida was on 17-28 March 1994, in the boat basin at Cedar Key, Levy Co. (B.P.M., P., 94-304, Muschlitz 1995). The third Florida specimen (U.F. not yet numbered) was 1 bird that died on 29 November 1995. The murrelet was found alive the day before by John Tipton about 4 km off the coast of St. Pete Beach. All records are of individuals with white orbital markings, and an elongated bill indicative of the Asiatic *B.m. perdix*. (Previously accepted, 87-118, 93-281).
- LONG-EARED OWL, *Asio otus*: 8 reports, not all evaluated, includes 2 specimens and another bird photographed (S&A). One was photographed and video-taped at A.B.S., Highlands Co., 20 March 1994, during daylight hours (K.A.T., 95-292, Tarvin 1994). One was flushed about 1000 m from the 1994 A.B.S. location, on 2 March 1995 (B.P., 95-330).
- LESSER NIGHThAWK, *Chordeiles acutipennis*: more than 20 reports, not all evaluated, includes 1 specimen and photographs of other individuals (S&A). A lone individual was observed in flight about 750 m SW of the road to Royal Palm Hammock, E.N.P., Dade Co., on 26 November 1994 (P.W.Sm., 95-327). Other published reports from E.N.P. and St. George Island were not submitted to F.O.S.R.C. (contra *F.F.N.* 23:50, 82). (Previously accepted, 83-028, 83-033, 85-078, 87-129, 88-134, 88-157, 93-217, 93-267; previously not accepted, 85-086, 90-200). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.
- WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT, *Streptoprocne zonaris*: 2 specimens. One was found on 15 September 1994, "floundering" on a lawn of a residence at NW 29th Street in Lauderdale Lakes, Broward Co. This swift was brought to Debbie Anderson, a wildlife rehabilitator, and subsequently died on 17 September 1994 (W.G., P., 94-310, dates contra *N.A.S.F.N.* 49:39). The specimen (U.F. 38059) is about 8-10% smaller than any specimen from Mexico/Central America, including Florida's first specimen, and accords well with the West Indian form *S.z. pallidifrons*; this female represents the first record of this subspecies for North America.
- VAUX'S SWIFT, *Chaetura vauxi*: 6 reports (many other reports have been speculative), not all evaluated (S&A). Vocalizations were recorded on 22 January 1993, from a group of 6 *Chaetura* swifts that repeatedly appeared in and around Gainesville, Alachua Co. (T.W., A., 95-331, Webber and Collins 1996). The vocalizations recorded and corresponding sonograms were compared to nearly identical, known *C. vauxi* calls recorded in Oregon. Thus, a species long-suspected of having occurred in Florida, was added to the list of verified species. Three other Alachua Co. reports were not received (*F.F.N.* 22:92, *N.A.S.F.N.* 49:141). The first winter specimen of a *Chaetura* swift in Florida proved to be a hatching year male CHIMNEY SWIFT, *C. pelagica*. It was found alive on the ground on the U.F. campus, Gainesville, and died 3 hours later. The specimen (U.F. 38060) bears the date "31 November 1993"; however, the salvager, Richard Bucholz, "put down 31 November instead of realizing it was 1 December" because he "never knew how many days are in which months," but he is sure that "it was November/December rather than October/November" (fide T.W.). (Previously not accepted, 90-184).
- BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD, *Amazilia yucatanensis*: 15 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs. Four reports were received of individuals that were banded: an adult at Choctaw Beach, Freeport, Walton Co., on 18 December 1989 (B.S., M.S., P., 94-307); a hatching year bird at Destin, Okaloosa Co., on 19 December 1995 (B.S., M.S., P., 95-348); and 2 other hatching year birds in Pensacola, Escambia Co. (R.A.D., B.S., M.S., P.), on 28 November 1995 (95-347), and on 26 December 1995 (95-349). A report for a fifth banded bird in the Panhandle was received in 1996 (96-356). Details

- of 1 in Ft. Lauderdale for the sixth year were not received (*N.A.S.F.N.* 39:59, 242). (Previously accepted, 83-036, 90-196, 90-198, 93-280; previously not accepted, 88-131, see below). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.
- CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD, *Stellula calliope*:** 8 reports, not all evaluated, includes 1 specimen and tail feathers from another bird. Four reports were received in 1995: 2 in Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa Co.: an adult female from 30 November-5 December 1995 (B.S., M.S., 95-350) and a hatching year male from 12-16 December 1995 (B.S., M.S., R.A.D., 95-351); 2 hatching year males in Pensacola, Escambia Co.: 19 December 1995 (B.S., M.S., P., S. to A.B.S., 95-352), and 16 December 1995 (B.S., M.S., R.A.D., 95-353). Two reports were received in 1996: 1 from Gulf Breeze (96-357) may be the same individual as 95-353; and 1 from Polk Co. Details of 1 reported in Duval Co. were not received (*N.A.S.F.N.* 49:163). (Previously accepted, 90-192).
- WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE, *Contopus sordidulus*:** 3 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs and audio recording (S&A). One was seen and heard on the McJunkin Ranch west of A.B.S., Highlands Co., on 19 June 1995 (B.P., P., A., 95-342, Woolfenden et al. 1996). The call notes and sonograms prepared from the observers' recordings are nearly identical when compared with those from recordings of known WESTERN WOOD-PEWEES. This record resulted in the species being added to the list of verified species. (Previously accepted, 86-107, but see below).
- CUBAN PEWEE, *Contopus caribaeus*:** 2 reports, not all evaluated, includes video record. One observed from 11-17 March and 1-4 April 1995 (*F.F.N.* 23:104) at Spanish River Park, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Co. was described from observations and recordings made on 11-12 March (B.H.H., P.W.Sm., M.S., V., 95-333, published photos *N.A.S.F.N.* 49:216, 242). This is the first verified record of this species for Florida and the United States, and appears in the cited literature under the former name, GREATER ANTILLEAN PEWEE.
- YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax flaviventris*:** about 50 reports, not all evaluated, includes 7 specimens (S&A). From 7 January-4 April 1994 (contra *F.F.N.* 22:122), one individual was observed at a golf course in Delray Beach, Palm Beach Co. (B.H.H., A., 95-341). This was the first confirmed observation of this species in Florida in winter. Six reports from Dry Tortugas N.P., and Palm Beach and Seminole counties were not received (*F.F.N.* 22:122, 23:83, 51, 24:54). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.
- LASAGRA'S FLYCATCHER, *Myiarchus sagrae*:** 22 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs and audio recording. Two reports came from Broward Co.: 1 was seen 20-21 April 1994, in John U. Lloyd S.R.A., Dania (J.L.B., 94-298); the farthest inland report to date, 1 was seen and heard about 19 km from the coast at Tree Tops Park, Davie, from 12 November 1994 (W.G., M.J.A., A., 94-318), through the first week of January 1995 (*F.F.N.* 23:83). Two other reports from Palm Beach and Dade counties were not received (*N.A.S.F.N.* 49:242). (Previously accepted, 83-028, 83-033, 85-078, 87-129, 88-134, 88-157, 93-274). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.
- ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER, *Myiarchus cinerascens*:** 34 reports, not all evaluated, includes 2 specimens and photographs of other birds (S&A). One was described from Ft. Walton spray field in Okaloosa Co., on 9 December 1993 (R.A.D., 94-287). Present there since early January 1994 (*F.F.N.* 22:92), 2 were heard calling on Honeymoon Island S.R.A., Pinellas Co., on 5 February (L.S.A., P., 94-289). One was seen at Fairpoint, Santa Rosa Co., on 23 October 1994 (R.A.D., 94-314). Two observers submitted reports of presumably the same individual seen on 6 December 1994, and 3 February 1995, on La Chua Trail at Old Sweetwater Branch, Paynes Prairie S.P.R. (B.P.M., R.R., 94-324). One adult was seen from a dike off Canal Road along the southern shore of Lake Jessup, Seminole Co., on 31 December 1994, a locality where 2 were seen in 1992, and again in 1995 (B.H.A., 94-325). Thirteen other reports from Brevard, Escambia, Franklin, Volusia, and Wakulla counties were not received (*F.F.N.*

23:83, 104; 24:54; N.A.S.F.N. 49:163). (Previously accepted, 83-051, 90-186; previously not accepted, 90-187, and see below). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.

"TROPICAL" KINGBIRD COMPLEX, *Tyrannus* SPECIES: 26 reports of the complex, not all evaluated, includes photographs, 7 reports of COUCH'S KINGBIRD, *T. couchii*, and 1 of TROPICAL KINGBIRD, *T. melancholicus* (S&A). Three observers submitted details of presumably the same individual, identified by all as a COUCH'S, seen near Loxahatchee N.W.R., Palm Beach Co., on 18 and 20 December 1993 (H.P.L., A.Y.W., P.S.W., 84-285), through 16 April 1994 (A.B. 46:414). Although 2 observers described a vocalization heard, the description does not perfectly match those given in many field guides. The Committee members agreed that the description of the morphology and plumage did accord with an individual of this complex. Details for reports of COUCH'S on Dry Tortugas N.P. and another in Palm Beach Co. were not received (F.F.N. 21:125, 23:83). The first specimen of this complex was salvaged in 1996, in Palm Beach Co.; it has yet to be evaluated by the Committee. (Previously accepted, 86-092, 86-106).

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER, *Tyrannus savana*: 15 reports, includes photographs (S&A). An adult was seen and sketched at Buck Island Ranch, Highlands Co., on 16 July 1993 (J.W.F., 94-292). An adult was observed on Garden Key, Dry Tortugas N.P., Monroe Co., 23 April 1995 (M.J.A., P., 95-338). The report of 94-292 does not include the description of a nuchal collar; however, the published photo (N.A.S.F.N. 49:242) of 95-338 shows the presence of a collar that is typical of South American populations. (Previously accepted, 83-039, 84-068, 86-191, 90-210, 92-259). Reports of this species will no longer be evaluated by F.O.S.R.C.

HORNED LARK, *Eremophila alpestris*: more than 25 reports, not all evaluated, includes 2 specimens and other individuals photographed (S&A). One was observed on a dirt road parallel to S.R. 405, E of the Banana River bridge, about 1 km W of the eastern boundary of Merritt Island N.W.R., Brevard Co., on 9-10 March 1993 (S.P.R., P., 94294). Details for reports in Brevard and Leon counties were not received (F.F.N. 22:92, 24:54). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR, *Oenanthe oenanthe*: 6 reports, not all evaluated, includes 2 specimens and photographs of other birds (S&A). One was observed in a debris-strewn construction area near administration trailers and nursery at Bill Baggs Cape Florida S.R.A., Key Biscayne, Dade Co., from 19-23 October 1994. The bird's coloration and form are indicative of a hatching year male *O.o. leucorhoa*, the form breeding in Greenland and eastern Canada. (P.W.Sm., P., 94-316, Smith and Woolfenden 1995). (Previously accepted, 82-020; previously not accepted, 81-003).

BAHAMA MOCKINGBIRD, *Mimus gundlachi*: 28 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs and 1 nest (S&A). One was seen in John U. Lloyd S.R.A., Dania, Broward Co., 20-24 May 1993 (J.L.B., 94-297), and again at that location on 27 April 1994 (J.L.B., 94-303). Details for other reports from Broward, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties were not received (F.F.N. 22:92, 123; 23:23, N.A.S.F.N. 49:242). (Previously accepted, 86-090, 86-094, 88-142, 88-148, 89-180, 90-203, 90-204, 91-230, 91-236, 91-239; not accepted 84-061, and see below). This species will no longer be evaluated by F.O.S.R.C.

THICK-BILLED VIREO, *Vireo crassirostris*: 17 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs and audio recordings (S&A). One (contra N.A.S.F.N. 49:39) was seen Port Bouganville Tract, Key Largo, Monroe Co., on 8 September 1994 (P.W.Sm., 94-308). Detailed reports for counties of Palm Beach and Broward (first for this county) were not received (F.F.N. 23:105, 24:55). (Previously accepted, 89-179, 90-202, 91-226; previously not accepted, 88-151, 93-279).

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER, *Dendroica townsendi*: 14, not all evaluated, includes photographs (S&A). A female-plumaged warbler was video recorded at East Beach Woods, Ft. DeSoto C.P., on 11 September 1993 (L.S.A., V., 94-283), and a first-year male was

observed from 4 December 1993 through 19 March 1994, Sawgrass Park (L.S.A., P., 94-291). These are the second and third reports for Pinellas Co.; details for the fourth county report, and 1 for E.N.P. were not received (*F.F.N.* 23:105, 24:56). All 4 accepted fall reports for Florida have occurred between 11-15 September. (Previously accepted, 83-029, 83-047, 85-088, 93-266; previously not accepted, 81-001, 85-071). This species will no longer be evaluated by F.O.S.R.C.

BANANAQUIT, *Coereba flaveola*: about 30 reports, includes 1 specimen and photographs of other birds (S&A). Present from 20 April-3 May 1994 (*F.F.N.* 22:124), 1 was photographed and video recorded on 30 April 1994, at Spanish River Park, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Co. (M.J.A., 94-300). This is the first individual in immature plumage to be reported in Florida; most post-breeding dispersal, at least to Florida, involves birds in definitive plumage. Details for a report for Palm Beach Co. were not received (*F.F.N.* 22:94). (Previously accepted, 88-153, 89-174; not accepted, see below). This species will no longer be reviewed by F.O.S.R.C.

YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT, *Tiaris olivacea*: 4 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs (S&A). An adult was seen on Garden Key, Dry Tortugas N.P., on 20 April 1994 (B.N., P., 94-305), and through 25 April (*F.F.N.* 22:125). Photographs show an individual with little black on the face. This feature precludes an adult of the Mexican/Central American race, *T.o. pusilla*, the form commonly kept in captivity. The bird was most likely an adult or immature from a West Indies population, such as the nominate race that is a resident of the Greater Antilles breeding as close to Florida as Cuba.

HARRIS' SPARROW, *Zonotrichia querula*: 15 reports, not all evaluated, includes photographs. An immature was described from an observation at Gulf Islands N.S., Ft. Pickens, Escambia Co., on 26 October 1994 (R.A.D., 94-315). Details for a report for Okaloosa Co. were not received (*F.F.N.* 22:94).

#### REPORTS NOT ACCEPTED

LITTLE EGRET, *Egretta garzetta*: not previously reported. A photographer, while showing slides to a friend, realized that the bird in one of his pictures appeared to exhibit characteristics of this species, especially 2 long occipital plumes. The photographer recalls that this slide was one in a series taken between 11-17 April 1993, in Pinellas Co., between Ft. DeSoto C.P. and Tarpon Springs, the exact location unknown (*vide* L.S.A., P., 95-340). The presence of a nuchal crest and recurved dorsal plumes, the length of those plumes, the colors depicted in the photograph of the lores and toes, the relative shortness of the legs, and the thickness of the bill lead members to believe that the bird is an aberrant SNOWY EGRET, *E. thula*. One or 2 strikingly similar birds, referred to as "probable" SNOWY EGRET X LITTLE BLUE HERON, *E. caerulea*, hybrids were seen in Connecticut in spring 1995 (P.; *N.A.S.F.N.* 49:227-8). However, it seems unlikely that these birds in alternate plumage could be hybrids, and not exhibit some color characteristics of the darker species. A specimen of this crossed parentage was collected in Glades Co., in 1953 (S&A).

SCARLET IBIS, *Eudocimus ruber*: Escapes from waterfowl collections, and at least one attempt to introduce, make its natural status uncertain. Not all reports have been evaluated. One specimen. Apparently the same adult individual has resided in the Lakes Park area of Ft. Myers, Lee Co. (P., 94-306). The first sightings occurred from 10 March 1991, through January 1992. What is believed to be the same individual reappeared in April 1993, and was last seen on 24 March 1995 (*F.F.N.* 23:100). Reports were submitted by 2 observers; the color of the bird photographed appears lighter than typical adults in the wild leading some members to believe that the bird is a long-lived Greynolds Park derivative: a hybrid SCARLET IBIS X WHITE IBIS, *E. albus*; in addition, the documentation does not exclude a possible escape. Details were not

received for reports of 1 at E.N.P., or hybrids there and in Hillsborough Co. (F.F.N. 22:88, 119; 23:78).

**KING EIDER, *Somateria spectabilis*:** 7 reports, not all evaluated, includes 2 specimens and other individuals photographed. A single bird identified as a subadult male was seen and sketched in Escambia Co. at Spanish Point in the Intercoastal Waterway at Perdido Key on 27 December 1993 (94-286). Although the Committee agrees that the description and accompanying sketch are referable to an eider, the Committee is unable to exclude the COMMON EIDER, *S. mollissima* or even a hybrid. The description of the dark back, color of the bill, distinct line of separation between the neck and upper breast, and the presence of an orbital ring are typical of *S. spectabilis*. The sketched profile of the head, and bill process are those typical of *S. mollissima*. Eye and feet color are not typical of either species.

**MASKED DUCK, *Oxyura dominica*:** about 30 reports, not all evaluated, includes 4 specimens and photographs; no previous reports of breeding (S&A). A report was received of a pair of these stiff-tailed ducks with young at Loxahatchee N.W.R., Palm Beach Co., on 11 February 1977 (94-311, Bowman 1995). Up to 9 MASKED DUCKS of both sexes were reported in the same locality as was this observation (A.F.N. 31:322); however, no other observer that year reported breeding. The original documentation, a manuscript, was submitted to the Committee on 14 October 1994, and a copy was submitted for publication in the *F.F.N.* A refereed and revised copy was submitted to the Committee by the editor in March 1995. The original documentation includes a description of "a brown female with . . . blue bill." We were unable to find any source that described a female having a blue bill in any season. In the revision, the observer omitted any reference to the color of the female's bill. "[F]our small ducklings probably not more than a month old . . . were not as large as my fist . . . two dark horizontal streaks on their pale cheeks" described the breeding evidence in the original documentation; the description was revised to "four small brownish ducklings with a dark horizontal streak on the pale cheek . . . about the size of an Easter chick" in the edited version. Based on the original description, the "young" of this small species, "fist-sized," could have referred to birds in feathered juvenal plumage; Johnsgard (1975) wrote that "the juvenal plumage so closely resembles that of the adult female that probably the only certain plumage criterion of immaturity is the presence of juvenal tail feathers." According to the observer's revised description, the young must have been downy. Delacour (1959) describes the downy young with one dark stripe through the eye, and, in addition, his illustration by Peter Scott shows a rather poorly defined malar stripe. Bond (1961) refers to the malar stripe as "dark . . . (and) more prominent" when comparing Cuban specimens with Delacour's description and Scott's illustration. Palmer (1976) referred to Bond (*ibid.*) when describing the downy chick in which "one cheek stripe is prominent." The Committee concludes that the observer saw this species, but because of the revisions in the observer's documentations of key characters used to distinguish young, does not find definitive evidence for breeding. It is apparent that the observer did not rely on any detailed notes of the observation that may have been taken at the time of the occurrence, and the observer's recollection may no longer be reliable. Furthermore, the observation was made in late winter and the species is typically a fall breeder in both hemispheres, Johnsgard (*op. cit.*) providing dates of breeding in southern Texas from September through November. Finally, the documentation makes reference to a male in alternate plumage in company with the female and young. Johnsgard (*ibid.*) wrote that in Argentina, "[m]ales . . . were never seen in association with broods," and in southern Texas ". . . only female-like birds have been found associated with broods." (Previously accepted, 83-045; previously not accepted, 90-197).

**BLACK-HAWK SPECIES, *Buteogallus* SPECIES:** Since 1973, and as recently as 1995 (F.F.N. 23:101) individuals of suspect origin have been observed in Broward, Dade, and Mon-



roe counties. Not all reports have been evaluated. There is 1 photograph of COMMON BLACK-HAWK, *B. anthracinus* and 1 specimen of GREAT BLACK-HAWK, *B. urubitinga* (S&A). A dark hawk was seen in flight near Suwannee, Dixie Co., on 25 April 1994 (94-296). Some Committee members believe that a *Buteogallus* is a possibility, but the report is not accepted because neither the origin of this bird nor the species can be determined with certainty based on the documentation submitted (94-296).

ICELAND GULL, *Larus glaucooides*: more than 30 reports, not all evaluated, includes 1 specimen and photographs (S&A). The description and sketch of 1 seen at Wards Bank, Duval Co., on 9 October 1993 (93-277), accords well with the second year basic plumage of the *kumlieni* race; however, the description could not definitely eliminate a small bleached-out HERRING GULL, *L. argentatus* (Previously accepted, 93-270).

COMMON POORWILL: 2 reports, includes 1 "still under consideration". The songster was not observed, but the observer heard vocalizations at 9:25 p.m. for about 1 minute, at Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa Co., on 1 December 1995 (95-346). The observer is familiar with the whistled call of this species in the western U.S., and compared those notes heard with a commercial recording of the species' call. Some members believe that there is not enough description of the call notes to establish with certainty the presence of this species in Florida.

WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE: see above. A pewee was seen at St. Marks N.W.R., Wakulla Co., on 26 and 28 October 1986 (P. A., 86-107). Accepted by the F.O.S.R.C. when initially submitted, the Committee decided to again review the record in light of the latest verified record (95:342). Woolfenden *et al.* (1996), compared sonograms of the recorded calls of 86-107, with those of known individuals of this species. The Committee is convinced that this record can not be identified to species with certainty based on the recorded calls or the photograph.

ALDER FLYCATCHER, *Empidonax alnorum*: "TRAIL'S" FLYCATCHER COMPLEX species are rare in fall and casual in spring. Status of species is uncertain due to difficulty separating this species from WILLOW FLYCATCHER, *E. traillii* in field. Not all reports have been evaluated. There is 1 specimen. A small flycatcher was seen in the picnic area at Ft. DeSoto C.P., Pinellas Co., on 25 September 1994 (94-321). The identification is not accepted because this species is not known to flit its wings and tail, and the call described is not diagnostic of this species. (Previously not accepted, 89-173).

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: see above. A member of the genus *Myiarchus* was observed at Imeson Industrial Park, Jacksonville, Duval Co., on 19 December 1993 (94-284). The orange color of the mouth lining described is not typical of this species. Neither the call nor the tail pattern is described. All other species of the genus that could possibly stray to Florida can not be eliminated.

CARIBBEAN MARTIN, *Progne dominicensis*: 1 previous reference to this species. A martin observed and sketched at Eco Pond, Monroe Co., on 12 February 1995 (95-332), was identified as an adult male of this species. The drawing, when compared with both male and female specimens, does not suggest the actual "junco-like" ventral pattern of this species.

BICKNELL'S THRUSH, *Catharus bicknelli*: 5 specimens (S&A). A thrush seen at Oak Hammock Nature Trail, Merritt Island N.W.R., Brevard Co., on 15 October 1994, was identified as this species (94-323). No diagnostic field marks are presently known (Rimmer 1996). Perhaps this species can be separated from GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH, *C. minimus* by measurements (Ouellet 1993).

BAHAMA MOCKINGBIRD, *Mimus gundlachi*: see above. Nests have been built, but breeding has not been verified. The caption below a photograph (A.B. 47:1163) states that the adult BAHAMA MOCKINGBIRD pictured was feeding the juvenile and that the picture did "not rule out the possibility of a Northern X Bahama hybrid." The photograph was taken at Key West, Monroe Co., on 17 June 1993. The juvenile *Mimus* in the photo is not being fed by the adult, and the juvenile does not exhibit any plumage



- characteristics of *M. gundlachii*, only those typical of the NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD, *M. polyglottis*. Subsequent reports of hybrids at Key West have not produced a specimen nor photograph (F.F.N. 23:23).
- WARBLING VIREO, *Vireo gilvus*: about 100 reports, not all evaluated, 2 specimens. Other species have been misidentified as this species making its status uncertain. One was reported singing at Lake Sharon, north of Choctaw Beach, Walton Co., on 13 May 1995 (95-335). The description is not sufficiently detailed to make a definitive identification. Some members do not find the described size and vocalizations to be diagnostic of this species. (Previously accepted, 88-156).
- BANANAQUIT: see above. One individual identified as an adult was seen at John U. Lloyd S.R.A., Dania, Broward Co., on 19 December 1993 (94-309). Although the submitter has previous experience with this species, the description lacks specific details of the entire bird. Details included in the report are not definitive of this species.
- VIRGINIA'S WARBLER, *Vermivora virginiae*: no previous reports. A bird identified as an immature was seen on Lachua Trail, Paynes Prairie S.P.R., Alachua Co., on 7 February 1995 (95-328). Although the overall description suggests this species, the combination of "clear gray" back and "olive" rump does not. The back color ranges from brownish gray in the adult male to brownish in the immature. The rump ranges from yellow in the adult, to dull yellow in the immature.
- SMITH'S LONGSPUR, *Calcarius pictus*: no prior reports. Two reports were received involving 1 bird seen in a small field W of Hwy. 98, south of Bay Bridge, Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa Co., on 27 October 1994 (94-313). Details are insufficient to exclude similar species. This species has been reported in Alabama 8 times, including 1 on 29 January 1996 (N.A.S.F.N. 50:182).

#### REPORTS NOT EVALUATED

- YELLOW-LEGGED GULL, *Larus cachinnans*: no previous reports. One adult gull was seen sometime during the winter of 1991-1992, at Pompano Beach, Broward Co. The observation was considered withdrawn when the observer later wrote that he was not satisfied with the quality of his photograph that was submitted for identification (R.B., P., 94-293).
- BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD: see above. One was captured for banding at Destin, Okaloosa Co., on 29 November 1994 (R.S., 94-317). This individual was a banding return and was evaluated and accepted by the Committee when first captured and banded (93-280). The Committee decided not to reevaluate any individual that has been evaluated in the past.
- BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD, *Archilochus alexandri*: about 30 reports, not all evaluated, includes 3 specimens and photographs of other birds. A female-plumaged bird was seen at a feeder in Tallahassee, Leon Co., during December 1992 (N.W., 94-288). This species was removed from the list of species reviewed before this report came before the members for review. Thirteen individuals were reported from fall through spring 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 (F.F.N. 22:92; 23:50; 83; 24:53) from Escambia, Pasco and Duval counties. (Previously accepted, 83-050, 89-169, 90-188, 90-189, 90-190, 90-191, 90-193, 90-194).
- YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER: see above. One was banded on Casey Key, Sarasota Co., on 27 September 1994 (A.F.S., 95-345). This species was removed from the list of species reviewed before this report came before the members for review.
- HARRIS' SPARROW: see above. A report was submitted by an individual who do not view the bird, and who was unsuccessful securing details of the observation from the actual observer. Because no details were submitted by the observer, the Committee was unable to evaluate the bird seen at a feeder on the third floor of a multileveled-dwelling in Gainesville, Alachua Co., on 22 February 1995 (95-329).

## LIST OF SPECIES REVIEWED

Species in the list below should be documented when seen and submitted to the F.O.S.R.C. for review. Most of these species appear in the main list of verified species for Florida in Robertson and Woolfenden (1992). In addition, documentation should be submitted to the F.O.S.R.C. for any species observed in Florida, believed to have occurred naturally or escaped, but not appearing in the main list of that publication.

LEAST GREBE	<i>Tachybaptus dominicus</i>
WESTERN GREBE	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>
YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS	<i>Diomedea chlororhynchos</i>
MANX SHEARWATER	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>
BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL	<i>Oceanodroma castro</i>
RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD	<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>
SCARLET IBIS	<i>Eudocimus ruber</i>
WHITE-FACED IBIS	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>
ROSS' GOOSE	<i>Chen rossii</i>
WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL	<i>Anas bahamensis</i>
KING EIDER	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>
COMMON MERGANSER	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
MASKED DUCK	<i>Oxyura dominica</i>
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
FERRUGINOUS HAWK	<i>Buteo regalis</i>
MOUNTAIN PLOVER	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>
BLACK-TAILED GODWIT	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
BAR-TAILED GODWIT	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
SURFBIRD	<i>Aphriza virgata</i>
SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>
SOUTH POLAR SKUA	<i>Catharacta maccormicki</i>
LITTLE GULL	<i>Larus minutus</i>
BLACK-HEADED GULL	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
BAND-TAILED GULL	<i>Larus belcheri</i>
THAYER'S GULL	<i>Larus thayeri</i>
ICELAND GULL	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>
THICK-BILLED MURRE	<i>Uria lomvia</i>
RAZORBILL	<i>Alca torda</i>
MARbled MURRELET	<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>
ATLANTIC PUFFIN	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>
SCALY-NAPED PIGEON	<i>Columba squamosa</i>
BAND-TAILED PIGEON	<i>Columba fasciata</i>
ZENAIDA DOVE	<i>Zenaida aurita</i>
RUDDY QUAIL-DOVE	<i>Geotrygon montana</i>
FLAMMULATED OWL	<i>Otus flammeolus</i>
LONG-EARED OWL	<i>Asio otus</i>
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>
WHITE-COLLARED SWIFT	<i>Streptoprocne zonaris</i>
VAUX'S SWIFT	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>
ANTILLEAN PALM SWIFT	<i>Tachornis phoenicobia</i>
BAHAMA WOODSTAR	<i>Calliphlox evelynae</i>
ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD	<i>Calypte anna</i>
CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD	<i>Stellula calliope</i>
GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER	<i>Melanerpes aurifrons</i>
WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>
CUBAN PEWEE	<i>Contopus caribaeus</i>

BLACK PHOEBE	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>
SAY'S PHOEBE	<i>Sayornis saya</i>
VARIEGATED FLYCATCHER	<i>Empidonomus varius</i>
COUCH'S KINGBIRD	<i>Tyrannus couchii</i>
CASSIN'S KINGBIRD	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>
LOGGERHEAD KINGBIRD	<i>Tyrannus caudifasciatus</i>
CUBAN MARTIN	<i>Progne cryptoleuca</i>
SOUTHERN MARTIN	<i>Progne elegans</i>
BAHAMA SWALLOW	<i>Tachycineta cyanoviridis</i>
ROCK WREN	<i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i>
BEWICK'S WREN	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>
NORTHERN WHEATEAR	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
BICKNELL'S THRUSH	<i>Catharus bicknelli</i>
VARIED THRUSH	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>
SAGE THRASHER	<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>
CURVE-BILLED THRASHER	<i>Toxostoma curvirostre</i>
THICK-BILLED VIREO	<i>Vireo crassirostris</i>
WARBLING VIREO	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>
YELLOW-GREEN VIREO	<i>Vireo flavoviridis</i>
BACHMAN'S WARBLER	<i>Vermivora bachmanii</i>
GOLDEN-CHEEKED WARBLER	<i>Dendroica chrysoparia</i>
KIRTLAND'S WARBLER	<i>Dendroica kirtlandii</i>
LAZULI BUNTING	<i>Passerina amoena</i>
GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>
SPOTTED TOWHEE	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>
YELLOW-FACED GRASSQUIT	<i>Tiaris olivacea</i>
BLACK-FACED GRASSQUIT	<i>Tiaris bicolor</i>
BLACK-THROATED SPARROW	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>
LARK BUNTING	<i>Calamospiza melanocorys</i>
GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>
HARRIS' SPARROW	<i>Zonotrichia querula</i>
CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR	<i>Calcarius ornatus</i>
TAWNY-SHOULDERED BLACKBIRD	<i>Agelaius humeralis</i>
WESTERN MEADOWLARK	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>
RED CROSSBILL	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>

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## CHANGE OF EDITOR

Effective with this notice, all manuscripts for possible publication in the *Florida Field Naturalist* shall be sent to Dr. R. Todd Engstrom, Tall Timbers Research Station, Rt. 1, Box 678, Tallahassee, FL 32312.

**FLORIDA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
**TREASURER'S REPORT 1995**

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):135, 1996.

CASH IN BANKS AT YEAR-END:	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>
Barnett NOW checking account	12,650.59	9,638.52
MBNA CD 6.30%, maturity 12/6/95	8,583.75	
MBNA CD 6.70%, maturity 12/6/96	8,540.66	9,090.62
MBNA CD 5.85%, maturity 5/22/97		10,034.37
MBNA CD 6.80%, maturity 12/6/97	8,541.26	9,099.74
MBNA CD 6.95%, maturity 12/6/98	8,542.18	9,113.43
MBNA CD 7.40%, maturity 12/6/99	8,544.91	9,154.64
MBNA CD 5.95%, maturity 12/6/00		9,100.94
MBNA Money Market Account		<u>5,292.18</u>
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$55,403.35</b>	<b>\$70,524.44</b>

1995 CASH INCOME AND EXPENSES:

		Total Cash as of 1/1/95:	\$55,403.35
Income		Expenses	
Dues	8,365.00	<i>FFN</i> . Printing	4,261.25
Meetings	6,305.81	Meetings	6,716.49
Spec. Publications	1,966.43	Operating	1,342.24
Interest	3,332.25	Postage & Shipping	1,140.51
Page Charges	350.00	Newsletter Printing	532.14
Gifts	9,280.00	Research Award	800.00
Miscellaneous	<u>348.00</u>	Sales Tax Paid	<u>33.77</u>
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$29,947.49</b>		<b>\$14,826.40</b>

TOTAL CASH as of 12/31/95: \$70,524.44

The Society received a generous gift from the estate of HELEN GERE CRUICKSHANK directed to the Research Fund. In addition, numerous contributions were received in memory of DR. HERBERT W. KALE, II.

ANALYSIS OF CASH AS DISTRIBUTED TO F.O.S FUNDS:

Operating Fund	17,829.85
Special Publications Fund	14,756.01
Research Fund	23,051.37
Endowment Fund	9,872.21
Deferred Items <sup>1</sup>	<u>5,015.00</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$70,524.44</b>

<sup>1</sup>Dues received in 1995 for future years are considered Deferred Income, and a 1996 expense paid in 1995 is a Deferred Expense. These figures will be incorporated into the Operating Fund Income and Expense in the 1996 report.

Respectfully submitted,

**Linda C. Douglas, Treasurer**

## EDITORIAL

Fla. Field Nat. 24(4):136, 1996.

This is my last issue as Editor of *Florida Field Naturalist*. I kept my promise of two years to the Editorial Advisory Board; however, because of other duties I must resign as your Editor. The new Editor will be Dr. R. Todd Engstrom, Tall Timbers Research Station, Route 1, Box 678, Tallahassee, Florida 32312.

I have enjoyed serving you as Editor, and I appreciate the confidence given to me from the Editorial Advisory Board and the members of F.O.S. I could have not accomplished my duties without the help of many individuals to whom I should like to mention. These are as follows: Bill Pranty, Bruce Anderson, Reed Bowman, Linda C. Douglas, Eric Stolen, and Mike Petrovich. Special thanks are extended to Jeffery Johnston and Mark Johnston of E. O. Painter Printing who were very gracious to me and covered my mistakes at their end of the operation. My wife, Karin, deserves my appreciation for helping me in many ways. Lastly, but certainly not the least are the reviewers who made my job easier. Those who reviewed papers for this volume are listed below. Individuals with an asterisk reviewed more than one manuscript. **Walter K. Taylor**, Editor.

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 Brett Bannor  
 M. Shane Belson  
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# Florida Field Naturalist

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## INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The *Florida Field Naturalist* is a fully refereed journal emphasizing biological field studies and observations of vertebrates, especially birds, in and near Florida and the nearby West Indies. It welcomes submission of manuscripts containing new information from these areas. Please consult recent issues for style and Vol. 18, No. 1 for detailed information. Submit manuscripts for consideration to the Editor, Walter K. Taylor. Monograph-length manuscripts may be submitted for consideration to the Editor of Special Publications, Glen E. Woolfenden. Send books and other materials for review to Associate Editor, Reed Bowman. For preliminary assistance regarding submission of manuscripts dealing with bird distribution and rarities contact Associate Editor, Bruce H. Anderson. Reports of rare birds in Florida should also be submitted to the FOS Records Committee Secretary, Bruce H. Anderson. For preliminary assistance regarding submission of scientific, technical, or behavioral contributions contact Associate Editor, Richard T. Paul.

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## CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

- Nesting and Food Habits of Barn Owls in South Florida  
*Peter G. David* ..... 93-100
- Status of Coyotes in South Florida  
*David S. Maehr, Roy T. McBride, and J. Jeffrey Mullahey* ..... 101-107

### NOTES

- Peach-colored Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) in Southern Florida  
*Thomas Brooks and Karla Balent* ..... 108
- Late Autumnal Breeding by Killdeer  
*William Post* ..... 109

### REVIEWS

- Swamp Song: A Natural History of Florida's Swamps,  
 by Ron Larson  
*Tom Palmer* ..... 110
- Palms of South Florida, by George B. Stevenson  
*Rebecca Yahr* ..... 111-112
- Florida's Pioneer Naturalist, the Life of Charles Torrey Simpson,  
 by Elizabeth Ogren Rothra  
*Deborah Jansen* ..... 113

### FIELD OBSERVATIONS

- Spring Report: March-May 1996  
*Bill Pranty* ..... 114-121

### RECORD COMMITTEE REPORT

- Twelfth Report of the Florida Ornithological Society Records  
 Committee: 1994 & 1995  
*Bruce H. Anderson* ..... 122-134

### TREASURER'S REPORT

- Linda C. Douglas* ..... 135

### EDITORIAL

- Walter K. Taylor* ..... 136