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Recent Unprecedented Numbers of Buff-breasted Sandpipers

A decidedly rare migrant in Florida, the Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*) has historically been recorded only in very small numbers and primarily in September. Nearly all of its spring migration passes northward through Texas and the High Plains, which makes all the more remarkable a flock of exactly 75 which were seen by about 100 Florida Ornithological Society members on 28 April 1973 at Mullet Key near St. Petersburg. A tornadic, northwesterly front two nights before had swept in a myriad of trans-Gulf migrants, and many continued to arrive for two more days, presumably from coastal points farther south where they had first come ashore. The usually tame Buff-breasts were very flighty; at noon they often took off and circled excitedly, by 1600 only 37 remained, and at 1830 Henry Stevenson, Stephen Stedman, and the writer saw them fly away up the coast. Two hundred miles farther north, near St. Marks Light, Stevenson saw 3 on 30 April.

The Mullet Key number nearly equalled the two flocks combined (each of 40+ birds) which had been present simultaneously at Zellwood and Rodman Reservoir between 19 August and early September, 1972, the total of which exceeded all previous Florida records combined. Those of us who found the Zellwood birds were surprised not only by their number, but also by their earliness and concealment in tall grass and weeds. Since the few past Zellwood records had involved birds seen in very open areas, and only in September, we wondered if earlier birds had not formerly been overlooked. Following up on this in 1973, we again found good numbers between 16 August and 15 September, and the largest number (24 on 25 August) were again in head-high vegetation. Of interest were two of these upland birds seen among many other shorebirds feeding in shallow water on 18 August. Very careful coverage of various habitats probably will prove this species to be an earlier, more regular, and a bit more common, fall migrant than has heretofore been evident. *John B. Edscorn, Rt. 14, Box 350, Lakeland, Florida 33801.*

Remarkable Weights Carried by Red-shouldered Hawks

In Everglades National Park on 14 November 1971 a Red-shouldered Hawk of the small, very pale south-Florida race (*Buteo lineatus extimus*) appeared from beyond a line of trees 100 meters from where, partly concealed, my mother, my daughter Heidi, and I stood. It flew straight toward us, while carrying a Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor*) of considerably greater dimensions than itself, and lit on the ground only 3 meters away. It began to tear into its prey which, judging by the bleeding, had just been killed. Then it saw us and flew away screaming. We stepped off the distance