
January 1992

Summer Report: June-august 1991

Florida Field Naturalist

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Recommended Citation

Florida Field Naturalist (1992) "Summer Report: June-august 1991," *Florida Field Naturalist*. Vol. 20 : Iss. 1 , Article 8.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn/vol20/iss1/8>

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The guidelines in the report are necessary to protect Scrub Jays. They should be used by local government, regional, and state planners and biologists; developers and their consultants; landscape designers; and land managers. The guidelines are fair to developers who can benefit by having Scrub Jays as an amenity on their property. For many large developments, the scrub preserves can be designed into the land use plan by clustering structures on the site. Aside from creating the space for a scrub preserve, additional benefits of clustered development include reduced energy needs and expenses for public facilities.

The most difficult problem in applying the recommendations in the report may be in the management of the preserve areas. The unwillingness to use fire as a management technique is widespread in the development community and among local government officials. Even when a developer favors a burn program, the local government's Fire Marshall may be reluctant to issue a burn permit because of the expected number of complaints from nearby residents. A properly designed controlled burn program will have a minimum impact on nearby developed areas. Education of the citizens and local government officials on the importance of fire management in maintaining Scrub Jay habitat is a critical step in establishing successful scrub preserves in urbanizing areas.—**Peter G. Merritt**, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, 3228 S.W. Martin Downs Blvd., Suite 205, Palm City, FL 34990.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Fla. Field Nat. 20(1): 24-28, 1992.

Summer Report: June-August 1991.—The observations listed here are based on accounts of rare birds and unusual numbers of birds reported to the Florida Ornithological Society (FOS) Field Observation Committee, whose names and addresses appear at the end of this report. The observations are not subjected to a thorough evaluation and formal peer review and thus must be considered tentative pending further review. We encourage observers to report their sightings to the FOS Records Committee (c/o Jocelyn Lee Baker, Secretary, 851 N. Surf Rd., #302, Hollywood, FL, 33019) for formal consideration. We also encourage observers to prepare formal notes and articles to describe extremely rare and unusual sightings.

Several conventions are used to save space. The first name of contributors is abbreviated in the accounts of individual species; full names of contributors are presented at the end of the report. The common names of species are used exclusively. Persons interested in scientific names should consult AOU (1983. Checklist of the North American Birds, 6th ed., Washington, D.C., Am. Ornithol. Union) and revisions published in *The Auk*. Other abbreviations used occasionally are: imm., immature; m. obs., many observers; NM, national monument; NP, national park; NS, national seashore; NWR, national wildlife refuge; SP, state park; SRA, state recreation area; WMA, wildlife management area, and S, W, N, E, etc. for compass headings. Unless necessary to clarify the location, the counties of named locations are omitted.

The FOS Field Observation Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed information. Please bring any unusual observations not reported here to the attention of Jim Cox, compiler. The deadline for the submission of records to regional compilers is two weeks after the close of each period. Reporting periods are "Fall" (September-November), "Winter" (December-February), "Spring" (March-May), and "Summer" (June-August).

SUMMARY OF THE SUMMER SEASON

The heavy rains that began in winter continued well into early summer and helped to extend wetlands into new areas. The expansion of wetlands resulted in several ducks breeding, or potentially breeding, in new locations. There were also breeding season records in new areas for other wetland associates such as American Coot, Sandhill Crane, and Black-necked Stilt, and, as measured by post-breeding records of juveniles, numbers of Roseate Spoonbills also appeared to be higher. Florida's first inland breeding record for Brown Pelican was also reported, which was perhaps adumbrated by several inland sightings reported last spring (see Spring Report). Finally, the increased rains helped to produce large numbers of migratory shorebirds in new areas.

In contrast, several species perhaps suffered as a result of the extensive rains. Wood Stork numbers in northern Florida were reported low at most colonies, American Oystercatcher nesting success appeared hampered by frequent storms, Snail Kites failed to nest south of Lake Okeechobee, and Osprey nesting success was reported at its lowest level in decades at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.

The summer period also offered several records of "accidental" species. A Thick-billed Vireo appeared at Bill Baggs State Park in late August; a Fork-tailed Flycatcher was reported at Castellow Hammock in mid-June; and a Ruff remained at the Zellwood "muck farms" through early September. Finally, the fall migration of several passerines appeared to initiate earlier than usual. Good diversity and fair numbers of several species of vireos and warblers were reported in late June and August.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- BROWN PELICAN:** 3 nests on SW shore of Lake Okeechobee in Jun; 2 failed, but the other fledged 2 young (J. Smith); first inland nesting in Florida.
- HORNED GREBE:** 1 in winter plumage at St. Marks NWR on 12 Jul (D. Morrow), late.
- NORTHERN GANNET:** 3 off St. Marks NWR on 6 Jun (J. Wathall), somewhat late.
- AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER:** 3 near Port Canaveral (Brevard Co.) on 9 Jun (B. Neville, D. Emkalns), 1 inside breakwater.
- MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD:** 1 at St. George Island on 17 Aug (B. Neville, D. Emkalns), rare in Big Bend area.
- BROWN BOOBY:** imm. seen 33 miles E of Jacksonville Beach on 23 Jun (S. Buettner).
- REDDISH EGRET:** confirmed nesting at St. Joseph Sound (Pinellas Co.) on 28 Aug, new range limit (R. Paul).
- AMERICAN FLAMINGO:** 21 at Sandy Key on 14 Jun (B. Ekblad).
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL:** several post-breeding dispersal records of note: 1 at M.K. Ranch (Gulf Co.) on 13 Sep (H. Stevenson); 126 in N Tampa Bay on 5 Aug (*fide* H. Kairies), high number; 7 at Cedar Key (Levy Co.) on 16 Aug (S. Olson), all imm.
- SNOWY EGRET:** 11 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) on 10 Aug (B. Duncan), high for area.
- YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON:** 1 at Saddle Creek Park (Polk Co.) from 14 Jul through report period; unusual location (P. Fellers).
- LEAST BITTERN:** breeding pair at Key West on 20 Jun (J. Ondejko).
- WOOD STORK:** population at breeding colonies in N Florida reported down this year (J. Rodgers), though 1 colony in Duval Co. increased by 100 nesting pairs. Very large flight-line of about 475 observed near the Brothers River (Gulf Co.) on 30 Jul (H. Stevenson).
- WHITE IBIS:** 19 imm. and 1 adult at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) on 10 Aug. (R. Duncan), high number for area.

- SANDHILL CRANE: 1 heard west of Apalachicola River near M.K. Ranch (Gulf Co.) on 30 Jul and 13 Sep (H. Stevenson).
- FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK: 100+ and 6 pair with young at Zellwood Farms (Orange Co.) on 4 Aug (P. Fellers, P. Timmer).
- BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK: 40 in Sarasota Co. on 11 Jul (*vide* J. Boettcher).
- LESSER SCAUP: 1 at 2 Polk Co. locations on 6, 22 Jun; unusual in summer (P. Fellers, P. Timmer, C. Geanangel).
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL: first breeding record for Okaloosa Co. at Fort Walton Beach spray field (*vide* D. Ware).
- BUFFLEHEAD: 1 at Ft Walton Beach spray field on 10 Jul (D. Ware), stayed for weeks.
- RED-BREADED MERGANSER: numerous sick birds along Big Bend coast (C. Chase).
- BALD EAGLE: adult at nest tree at St. Marks NWR on 10 Aug (C. Gidden), early.
- OSPREY: poor nesting success reported at St. Marks NWR (J. Reinman); 79 occupied nests averaged 1.36 young per successful nest; lowest record since 1980.
- SNAIL KITE: no nests in Everglades or water conservation areas; Big Lake Tohopekaliga (Osceola Co.) had good fledgling production from 150+ nests; nest counts from other areas include 75+ at Lake Kissimmee, 10 at E Lake Tohopekaliga; 35 along St. John's Marsh (Indian River Co.), and 95+ at Lake Okeechobee. Fledgling production erratic among these sites (J. Rodgers).
- AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE: 2 nests in Austin Cary SF (Alachua Co.) in May were first confirmed nesting records for co. (E. Alvarez, S. McGehee).
- MISSISSIPPI KITE: adult over St. Mary's River (Nassau Co.) on 20 Jun, rare in area in nesting season (P. Powell).
- NORTHERN HARRIER: 1 flying over Tallahassee on 5 Aug (J. Cavanagh) was early.
- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK: adult male, dark morph, seen soaring at Wekiwa Springs SP on 30 Aug (H. Kale, B. Pranty); report submitted to FOS Records Committee; earliest fall record.
- SHORT-TAILED HAWK: 1 in Key West area all summer (J. Ondrejko).
- SORA: 26 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) on 24 Aug (R. Duncan), highest count ever for area.
- AMERICAN COOT: first breeding record for Okaloosa Co. at Fort Walton Beach spray field (*vide* D. Ware).
- AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER: nesting success in Big Bend area reported low as a result of storms and heavy rains (C. Chase).
- PIPING PLOVER: 1 at Phipps Point preserve (Wakulla Co.) on 17 Jul (C. Chase), earliest report; good concentration of 25 at Phipps Point preserve on 18 Aug (D. Mehlman).
- SNOWY PLOVER: breeding activity in Big Bend area waned during hot spell of mid-summer and resumed in early Sep (C. Chase).
- MARBLED GODWIT: 1 at Ft. Walton Beach sewage treatment plant on 27 Aug (D. Ware), unusual location.
- SEMPALMATED PLOVER: 16 in alternate plumage at end of CR 361 in Dixie Co. on 6 Jul, presumed returning from N (N. Wamer).
- BLACK-NECKED STILT: first breeding record for Okaloosa Co. at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (*vide* D. Ware) with 24 being the maximum number seen (R. Duncan) on 10 Aug; 1 at St. Marks NWR on 6, 11 Jun (J. Reinman).
- WHIMBREL: 15 at Jena WMA (Dixie Co.) on 16 Jun (B. Neville, D. Emkalns, N. Wamer), large number; 2 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) on 24 Aug (R. Duncan).
- LEAST SANDPIPER: 25 at St. Marks NWR on 20 Jul (N. Wamer), first of fall.
- WESTERN SANDPIPER: 2 at St. Marks NWR on 20 Jul (N. Wamer), first of fall.
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER: 15 at St. Marks NWR on 20 Jul (N. Wamer), first of fall.
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER: 30 at IMC phosphate mines (Polk Co.) on 23 Jun (P. Fellers); 1 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) on 24 Aug (R. Duncan).

- SPOTTED SANDPIPER: 1 at Key West on 12 Jul (J. Ondrejko), first of fall.
- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER: 1 along Dixie Co. coast on 2 Jun (N. Wamer), rare.
- STILT SANDPIPER: 9 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field on 10 Aug (R. Duncan).
- RUFF: 1 at Zellwood farms (Orange Co.) from 27 Jul to at least 7 Sep (m. obs.).
- BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER: 1 at Zellwood farms (Orange Co.) on 17 Aug (H. Robinson).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER: 241 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) on 7 Aug (R. Duncan), highest count ever for area; flock of 74 birds at Zellwood farms on 8 Sep (B. Pranty, C. Thompson).
- WILSON'S PHALAROPE: 1 at Ft. Walton Beach spray field (Okaloosa Co.) from 21 Aug to 10 Sep (R. Duncan).
- POMARINE JAEGER: sub-adult at Venice fishing pier from 6 Jul to 5 Aug (A. Stedman, S. Stedman).
- BONAPARTE'S GULL: 1 in Pinellas Co. on 21 Aug (J. Goodwin), extremely early.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: several reported near Longboat Key (Pinellas Co.) on 21 May (C. Chase).
- ARCTIC TERN: imm. near Longboat Key (Pinellas Co.) on 21 May (C. Chase).
- CASPIAN TERN: 70 nests at 2 sites in Hillsborough Bay (R. Paul).
- ROYAL TERN: 2750 nests at Passage Key (R. Paul); 40+ nests reported on Lanark Reef (C. Chase).
- LEAST TERN: 155 at phosphate mines (Polk Co.) on 23 Jun, with at least one nesting (P. Fellers, P. Timmer, C. Geanangel); modest nesting success in NE Florida (P. Powell); few fledged young at Anatasia SRA, 50 nests at Matanzas NM (St. Johns Co.).
- EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: nesting pair seen in Orlando from 6 Jun through report period with 4 at nest site in early Sept (D. Freeman); 1 at Zellwood farms (Orange Co.) on 21 Jul (T. Robinson, G. Bretz); reports from Big Bend area (D. Mehlman, B. Neville, D. Emkalns) and Gulf Breeze (Okaloosa Co.) (R. Duncan) continue.
- CANARY-WINGED PARAKEET: pair at feeder in Polk City (Polk Co.) through report period (*vide* L. Cooper), new area.
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO: 1 at Saddle Creek Park (Polk Co.) on 24 Aug (P. Timmer), rare migrant; 1 on Wakulla River on 27 Aug (S. Olson).
- CUCKOOS: 3 species (Yellow-billed, Black-billed, Mangrove) on nature trail at Bill Baggs Cape Florida SP (Dade Co.) on 2 Sep (M. Wheeler).
- WESTERN KINGBIRD: 1 at Cedar Key (Levy Co.) on 29 Aug (D. Henderson), early and rare for the area.
- GRAY KINGBIRD: 1 at softball fields in Tallahassee (Leon Co.) on 19 Jun (E. White), rare inland record.
- FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER: 1 at Castellow Hammock (Dade Co.) on 14 Jun (B. Ekblad). *Empidonax* sp.: possible Yellow-bellied Flycatcher near Wakulla Springs SP (Wakulla Co.) on 30 Aug (N. Wamer); noticeably smaller than nearby Acadian, short bill, bright yellow wash on underside, including throat, yellow wing bars, but silent.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER: 1 at Gulf Breeze (Okaloosa Co.) from 16 to 29 Aug (L. Duncan, R. Duncan, S. Duncan, G. Fleming, F. Logan).
- BARN SWALLOW: 1 feeding young at Orlando Wilderness Park (Orange Co.) on 17 Aug (T. Robinson, D. Freeman), new nesting area.
- BAHAMA MOCKINGBIRD: 1 at Key West from 14 Jun through 29 Aug (J. Ondrejko).
- THICK-BILLED VIREO: 1 reported at Bill Baggs SRA (Dade Co.) on 31 Aug (M. Wheeler).
- RED-EYED VIREO: 5 reported at Deering Estates (Dade Co.) on 30 Jul (V. Edens).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO: 1 at Deering Estates (Dade Co.) on 29 Aug (V. Edens).
- BLUE-WINGED WARBLER: 1 at Saddle Creek Park (Polk Co.) on 24 Aug (P. Timmer), uncommon migrant.
- GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER: 1 along Wakulla River (Wakulla Co.) on 24 Aug (N. Wamer, R. Crawford), first of fall.

- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER:** early migrants at Tiger Creek Preserve (Polk Co.) on 28 Jul (P. Fellers) and Key West on 28 Jul (J. Ondrejko).
- CAPE MAY WARBLER:** 1 in S Jacksonville on 27 Aug (J. Cocke), early date.
- CERULEAN WARBLER:** apparently more common in Big Bend area: 2 reports from urban areas of Tallahassee (B. Neville, D. Emkalns, E. Duncan) in late Aug; 3 along Wakulla River (Wakulla Co.) on 24 Aug, high count (N. Wamer, R. Crawford).
- OVENBIRD:** 1 at Deering Estates on 2 Aug (V. Edens); 1 at Key West on 18 Aug (J. Ondrejko).
- CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER:** early report of 1 in Tallahassee on 27 Aug (J. Cavanagh).
- AMERICAN REDSTART:** 4 at Saddle Creek Park (Polk Co.) on 27 Jul (P. Fellers); 1 at Key West on 4 Aug (J. Ondrejko); 7 at Deering Estates (Dade Co.) on 6 Aug (V. Edens), good numbers for so early; other early imm./females include 1 in Melbourne Village (Brevard Co.) on 13 Aug (S. Hills, B. Hills) and 1 at Cedar Key (Levy Co.) on 29 Aug (D. Henderson).
- YELLOW WARBLER:** 6 at St. Marks NWR on 20 Jul (N. Wamer), first of fall.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER:** somewhat early reports include 1 at Saddle Creek Park (Polk Co.) on 10 Aug (T. Palmer), 1 at Suwannee River SP (Suwannee Co.) on 18 Aug (B. Neville, D. Emkalns), and 4 at Deering Estates on 22 Aug (V. Edens).
- HOODED WARBLER:** adult male at Deering Estates (Dade Co.) on 2 Aug (V. Edens).
- KENTUCKY WARBLER:** 12 at Saddle Creek Park (Polk Co.) on 24 Aug (P. Timmer), uncommon; 1 at Deering Estates (Dade Co.) on 29 Aug (V. Edens).
- LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH:** 1 at Deering Estates (Dade Co.) on 29 Aug (V. Edens).
- BLUE GROSBEAK:** pair in Pinellas Co. (near Hillsborough Co. line) from May through Jul (J. Goodwin), possible breeders.
- HOUSE FINCH:** new nesting in Okaloosa and Escambia Cos. (D. Ware, F. Wicke, C. Kingsberry); singing male in Fort Myers in Jun (photographed by R. Repenning).
- SHINY COWBIRD:** first Highland Co. record on 10 Aug (F. Lohrer) at feeder.
- BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD:** 25 present at Highlands Co. feeder from 6 to 10 Aug; rare in summer along Lake Wales Ridge (F. Lohrer).

Contributors: Eduardo Alvarez, Greg Bretz, Steve Buettner, Dan Canterbury, Jim Cavanagh, Charlie Chase, Linda Cooper, Robert Crawford, Linda Duncan, Robert Duncan, Scot Duncan, Virginia Edens, Bob Ekblad, Paul Fellers, Gene Fleming, Dot Freeman, Chuck Geanangel, C. "Red" Gidden, Bill Hills, Shirley Hills, Hans Kairies, Herb Kale, Curtis Kingsberry, Frank Logan, Fred Lohrer, Steve McGehee, David Mehlman, Don Morrow, Storrs Olson, Joe Ondrejko, Tom Palmer, Peggy Powell, Bill Pranty, Joe Reinman, Robert Repenning, Tom Roberts, Harry Robinson, Ted Robinson, Jim Rodgers, Jeff Smith, Henry Stevenson, Cindy Thompson, Pete Timmer, Ann Stedman, Steve Stedman, Donald Ware, Noel Wamer, Jody Wathall, Mickey Wheeler, Eddie White, Fred Wicke.

Field Observation Committee: **Linda Cooper** (115 Lameraux Rd., Winter Haven, FL 33884), **Jim Cox**, Compiler (Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, 620 S. Meridian St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600), **Bill Pranty** (8515 Village Mill Row, Bayonet Park, FL 34667), **Peggy Powell** (2965 Forest Circle, Jacksonville, FL 32257), and **Wayne Hoffman** (National Audubon Society, 115 Indian Mound Trail, Tavernier, FL 33070).