

THE SEASON

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SPRING MIGRATION: 16 MARCH - 15 MAY, 1980

The following report is incomplete as the data for the Central Plateau and Basin Region was unavailable after an extended deadline at the time this material was called for by the editor of *The Migrant*.

This season's report is highlighted by several exciting records. The most outstanding being the observation of a *Lark Bunting* in late April in Elizabethton. This constitutes only the *second* sighting of the species in Tennessee. Tony Koella flushed a *Black Rail* from a hayfield in Jefferson County in early May. There are only *three* previous records from Tennessee, and all are from nearby Cocke and Greene counties. In early April Ben and Lula Coffey located the *first* nests of the *Fish Crow* to be documented in Tennessee finding a total of 4 in the Memphis area. Rick Phillips and Tom Laughlin found the first evidence that our wintering *House Finches* may now be *nesting* here when they observed a pair of adult birds feeding a short-tailed fledgling in Oak Hill Cemetery in Kingsport in early May.

There were several records of species listed as threatened in Tennessee by the Tenn. Wildlife Resources Agency. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were seen in both the Eastern Mountain and Eastern Ridge and Valley Regions. Single Bewick's Wrens were found in the Eastern Ridge and Valley and Western Coastal Plain regions and Grasshopper Sparrows were located at 2 different sites in the last region. Marsh Hawks were also seen in the Western Coastal Plain.

Species listed as endangered by the above agency and counted during the period included Ospreys in the Eastern Mountain and Eastern Ridge and Valley regions. Birders in the last region also had a Bald Eagle, a Peregrine Falcon, and at least 2 Bachman's Sparrows. The nest of a Common Raven was seen in early May in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Mississippi Kites begin returning to their breeding areas in the Western Coastal Plain in the first week of May. Ken Dubke identified a Mississippi Kite near Savannah Bay in the Eastern Plateau and Basin in mid-April. This is the easternmost record for the bird in the State and only the fourth record off the Gulf Coastal Plain.

Two nests of the Great Horned Owl were discovered in the Eastern Mountain Region and one active nest was located in the Eastern Ridge and Valley. The Ridge and Valley also produced a nest record for the Red-tailed Hawk and 6 active nest sites of Red-shouldered Hawks. The largest spring flight of Sandhill Cranes recorded to date was observed in the Eastern Ridge and Valley with 1,270 birds counted. Good numbers of shorebirds were found at the Kingston Steam Plant in the Eastern Ridge and Valley and Upland Sandpipers were seen in the Eastern

Mountain Region where they are rarely recorded.

Olive-sided Flycatchers were observed in the two easternmost regions and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was identified in Hardeman County in the western end of the State. Both hybrids of the Golden-winged/Blue-winged Warbler complex were spotted the same weekend in late April with a Brewster's Warbler in Knox County and a male Lawrence's Warbler, which sang a Golden-wing song, was seen just to the south in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. House Finches remained well into May in East Tennessee and Painted Buntings were found once more at Covington in the Western Coastal Plain. These outstanding records in more detail and numerous others follow. Please send *your* birding records to your regional compiler today.

WESTERN COASTAL PLAIN REGION—The spring migration was generally slow and late. We had an unusually mild winter and practically no spring temperatures of any great variance. The spring migrants arrived in late April with many making their appearance at birdbaths in early May.

Heron-Tern: Little Blue Heron: 24 Apr (12) M (JD, ND). Mississippi Kite: 6 May (3) Frayser (JS), 7 May (2) OP (JS), 8 May (1) Obion Co., Big Lake, Gooch WMA (CN), 11-13 May (1) Ra (JF, SF), 15 May (2) OP (NS, MW). Marsh Hawk: 26 Apr (1) M (JD), 12 May (1) Hooker's Bend Area, Dickey Landing, Hardin Co. (CN). Virginia Rail: 10 Apr (1) M (JS). Pectoral Sandpiper: 4 May (175) Phillipps Pits, Lake Co. (CN). Forester's Tern: 10 May (2) Coro Lake, SW Memphis (BBC, CN).

Swift-Waxwing: Chimney Swift: 2 Apr (950) M (JD, ND). Eastern Kingbird: 2 Apr (1) Dyer Co. (WGC). Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 11 May (1) Hardeman Co., Hwy 57 at Muddy Creek (CN). Eastern Phoebe: 23 Apr (1) FPSP, (1) Cold Creek (AS). *FISH CROW*: 2 Apr (1 nest). This is the first nest for Overton Park (BBC), 5 Apr (3 nests) Riverside Park (BBC, LCC). *BEWICK'S WREN*: 2 Apr (1) C (AS). Short-billed Marsh Wren: 5 May (1) D (WGC), 7 May (1) Hooper Marsh, Dyer Co. (WGC). Swainson's Thrush: This spring the Swainson's Thrush count was unusually low as compared to previous years. Water Pipit: 5 May (2) Air Park Inn, Lake Co. (PC, DC, DJ, CN). Cedar Waxwing: 20-21 Mar (800) M (JD).

Warbler-Sparrow: Swainson's Warbler: Chuck Nicholson taped the Swainson's in the following counties during the week of May 4-11: Henry (1), Weakley (3), Obion (1), Lake (1), Shelby (4), Fayette (1), Hardeman (1). Tennessee Warbler: This warbler was late and only common this season M (BBC). Blue-winged Warbler: fairly common from 13 Apr to 5 May M (BBC). Yellow Warbler: 9 May (1) Dyer Co. Tiger Tail (CN). Cape May Warbler: 12 May (1) M (BB). Palm Warbler: 14 Apr (1) Dyer Co. (WGC). Mourning Warbler: 13 May (1) M (CB). Bobolink: 9 May (220) Dyer Co., 5 mi. N. of Tiger Tail (CN). Blue Grosbeak: 15 Apr (1) M (VH, MR). *PAINTED BUNTING*: 11 May (1) C (AS). Note: this species was not at this location in 1977 or 1979; it was first found in 1975. Grasshopper Sparrow: 9 May (3) Dyer Co. 5 mi. N. of Tiger Tail (1) 4 mi. S. W. of Newbern (CN). White-throated Sparrow: 17 May (1) M (BBC, LCC), 20 May (1) M (CB), 21 May (1) M (DD).

Observers: BB—Bob Browne; CB—Carolyn Bullock; BBC—Ben B. Coffey; DC—Dot Crawford; LCC—Lula C. Coffey; PC—Paul Crawford; WGC—William G. Criswell; DD—Dollyann Daily; JD—Jon DeVore; ND—Nancy DeVore; JF—Jim Ferguson; SF—Sue Ferguson; VH—Van Harris; DJ—Daniel