

SEASONAL OCCURRENCES OF SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE BIRDS

The following is a revision of the compilation of several thousand field cards and notes collected for Shelby County since 1929. The original publication in 1982 was supported by the tireless efforts and encouragement of the late Ben B. Coffey, Jr., whose records provided the basis for this publication and the start of the Memphis Chapter of TOS. The previous revisions were in 1987 and 1998. This publication extends the reporting time into 2013 in an ongoing attempt to maintain an accurate and timely record of sightings in Shelby County. It would not have been possible without the continued work and support of the members of the Memphis chapter who have contributed countless hours of work, but most importantly kept field cards of their sightings. MTOS maintains a database of well over 9000 (and growing) records of these sightings for Shelby County, a large part of Tennessee and the mid-south.

This compilation provides a reasonable estimate of arrival and departure dates of transients, seasonal residents and visitors, a record of occasional and accidental sightings and the presence of year-round residents. The color graphing shows the expectation of sighting a species within Shelby County. An attempt is made to indicate current possibility of sighting a species though historical records may indicate greater density.

The population densities of birds and chances of seeing them are divided into six categories; numbers indicate arrival or departure dates within that month. If no date is indicated the species may appear at any time in that month. An observation prior to the printed arrival date or after the printed departure date would indicate an early or late record and should be reported to MTOS.

Common – seen every day in proper habitat

Fairly common – seen almost every day in proper habitat

Uncommon – might be seen but infrequent or unpredictable numbers

Rare – seen now and then though could be expected almost every year

Very Rare – very few seen and not every year; single sighting

Accidental – sighting outside of normal range

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Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec				
Bachman's Sparrow			Not reported since the 1950's													
American Tree Sparrow			23								21					
Chipping Sparrow																
Clay-colored Sparrow																
Field Sparrow																
Vesper Sparrow	27		1	28						4						
Lark Sparrow				12								21				
Savannah Sparrow					23				9							
Grasshopper Sparrow								17								
Henslow's Sparrow																
LeConte's Sparrow											6					
Nelson's Sparrow																
Fox Sparrow				27						18						
Song Sparrow																
Lincoln's Sparrow					28						22					
Swamp Sparrow					16											
White-throated Sparrow					4				15							
Harris' s Sparrow										30						
White-crowned Sparrow					17					4						
Dark-eyed Junco					10					21						
Summer Tanager		8									17					
Scarlet Tanager			9	nested					6	28						
Western Tanager																
Northern Cardinal																
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				15	22			30								
Black-headed Grosbeak																
Blue Grosbeak				13					20							
Lazuli Bunting																
Indigo Bunting											5					
Painted Bunting				11			18									
Dickcissel	27			14				29			3					
Bobolink				17	29											
Red-winged Blackbird																
Eastern Meadowlark																
Western Meadowlark					24	nested 1951				15						
Yellow-headed Blackbird																
Rusty Blackbird				19							22					
Brewer's Blackbird				15							27					
Common Grackle																
Shiny Cowbird																
Brown-headed Cowbird																
Orchard Oriole				4			26									
Baltimore Oriole				9					13							
Purple Finch					7											
House Finch																
Red Crossbill							nested									
White-winged Crossbill																
Pine Siskin					22					10						

