Two Hallmarks Set at 2014 Halberg Ecology Camp: the 35th Year and the 50th Session

By RENN TUMLISON and TAMZEN TUMLISON

This year marked the 50th session of the Halberg Ecology Camp, it being the 15th year the camp has held two sessions and the 35th year to hold the camp. The first session of the camp this year was held June 8-13, and the second session was June 15-20. Campers originated from 35 towns in 22 counties of Arkansas, with out-of-state campers from California, Colorado, Illinois, and Texas. Little Rock, Hot Springs, and Fayetteville were the most common sources of Arkansas campers.

The first three days of the first camp were conducted with heavy rains, but later in the week there were only a few showers, and the second week had a few drizzles as well. The first week tended to be long-sleeve weather, which was nice, but the second week was warmer.

Junior campers went to six classes twice through the week (Aquatic Biology, Botany, Entomology, Geology, Ornithology, and Mammalogy/Herpetology). To add to the classes, teachers led campers in early morning bird walks, evening herp (amphibian and reptile) walks, and

see HALBERG, continued on page 3

During an evening program given by Jim Gann of Logoly State Park, campers reached to touch a live alligator (its mouth was banded so it could not bite). | Photo: Tamzen Tumlison
Every two years, AAS elects officers. For an organization to thrive, it is essential to have dedicated and involved leadership. This is a brief salute to our wonderful roster of officeholders. New are Adam Schaffer, Vice President; Samantha Scheiman, Newsletter Editor; Maureen McClung, Conservation Chair; Lyndal York, Curator; and Dottie Boyles, News of Members Editor. Remaining for another term are Cindy Franklin, Secretary; Terry Butler, Treasurer; Ann Gordon and Jack Stewart, Education Co-Chairs; Mitchell Pruitt, Membership Chair; and Lyndal York, Finance Chair.

For years, Liz Fulton, Eric Sundell, Cheryl Lavers, and Barry Haas have managed the Halberg Ecology Camp, a herculean task they do superbly. Twice a year, Dan Scheiman, Barry Haas, and five trustees put intensive effort into reviewing dozens of applications and then choosing the Trust’s grant recipients.

We deeply appreciate each of you. We can’t keep these remarkable people forever, so please consider serving as an officer. To everyone, go out and find new members!

-KAREN HOLLIDAY
President, Arkansas Audubon Society

Newsletter and Membership Information

The Arkansas Audubon Society Newsletter is a quarterly publication of Arkansas Audubon Society, Inc., a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization, P.O. Box 313, Pangburn, AR 72121. Issue dates are March, June, September, and December.

PLEASE NOTE: announcements, articles, information, and/or photographs to be considered for an upcoming edition of Arkansas Birds should be submitted to the editor no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication.

The newsletter is provided to those who pay membership dues to AAS.

Send newsletter submissions to samantha.scheiman@gmail.com.

Membership renewals are due Jan. 1 of each calendar year.

Please enter my membership in the Arkansas Audubon Society as a:

(AAS Dues Prorated for New Members)  Jan-Jun 100%  Jul-Sept. 50%  *Oct. - Dec. 100%

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*New Memberships paid in the last quarter (Oct. - Dec.) will include full membership for the following calendar year.

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS
Life Member of Arkansas Audubon Society (May be paid over a two-year period.) $250.00
Patron of Arkansas Audubon Society $500.00

Draw check to Arkansas Audubon Society and send to: Terry Butler, Treasurer, P.O. Box 313, Pangburn, AR 72121
“bug” watches aided by a mercury vapor lamp set up against a white sheet.

Senior campers took a field trip away from camp on Wednesday. They toured the Poteau District of the Ouachita National Forest to see habitat restoration and riparian habitats, and they saw management targeted for Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers. The camp appreciates the support of the Forest Service personnel who guided the trip.

Recreation time offered multiple activities in which campers could participate, including swimming, canoeing, volleyball, ping-pong, and even making bird nests. A log jam that had developed in the lake after heavy rains several years ago had been removed, and the water was noticeably cleaner for aquatic activities.

Evening learning programs kept the campers entertained. In the first session, Jim Gann from Logoly State Park presented about alligators with a live specimen for the campers to see, and with supervision, also touch. During the second session, Alex Hinson from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission discussed the history of bears in Arkansas. Ornithology teachers Donna and Kelly Mulhollan, otherwise known as the folk group “Still on the Hill,” gave a small concert for the campers during the first week.

Some programs ran both weeks, including a wildlife rehabilitation presentation from Lynn Slater (first week) and Deborah Burris (second week) with HAWK, which stands for Helping Arkansas Wild “Kritters.” They brought a Barn Owl for the campers to see and photograph, and during the first week, a Mississippi Kite they had rehabilitated was released at the camp. Co-director Paul Lowrey gave an evening program explaining the geology of the area around the camp lake both weeks. Other programs held both weeks were get-acquainted games, a showing of the classic “The Lorax” film by Dr. Seuss, learning games related to nature, and a camp review slide show set to music.

Co-directors this year were Paul Lowrey and Robin Buff. Senior campers were taught by Janet McAllister and Chad Cragle the first week and Bill Rosser and Adam Schaffer the second week. Aquatic Biology teachers were Tamzen Tumlison and Matt Wilson. The first week, Botany was taught by Gavin Smith and Jackie Scott, and Erin Shaw replaced Jackie for the second camp. Brian Baldwin and Adaire Middleton taught Entomology. Geology was taught by Will Harmon and Melissa Craig. Kelly and Donna Mulhollan taught Ornithology the first week, and Mitchell Pruitt and Aaron Hinterthuer taught it the second week. Renn Tumlison did Mammalogy and Kory Roberts did Herpetology.

Camp nursing duties were expertly handled by Michea Gartin, and Cathleen Lowe served as Activities Director. The Food Director the first week was Ava Arsaga, and Kimberly Elder took over for the second week. Cooks were Virginia Buff and Charlie McCracken, and helpers who insured that utensils were clean were Andy Jones and Penelope Starr-O’Berski. Acacia Willis helped as a cabin counselor, and Michael Gartin helped as a volunteer the second week.

Financial assistance to help some of the campers attend was generously provided by several individuals, local organizations, and state agencies. The campers wrote thank-you notes to their benefactors, and some of their comments give us insight on the effects of this camp on their lives. Many campers appreciated the abundance of hands-on learning opportunities, as described below:

“I’ve really learned a lot of good experiences like on birds the sounds they make … The mammalogy/herpetology was really cool. The fur from the animals were really cool and the snake that I held was weird feeling but awesome. Geology was really cool because there’s limestone rocks and there’s the acid that makes it bubble up and dissolve. Botany is fun. Aquatic biology we got to go canoeing and see bugs. Entomology we saw bugs.”

“Thank you so much for this chance. It’s really awesome. I am having the time of my life. I have learned much more than at my school.”

“I realize how nature is useful and important. If I wasn’t here I would be in my house playing video games.”

“This has been an amazing week and I am so thankful that you gave me this awesome opportunity! I have learned soooooooooo much! One of my favorite activities … has now made me want to become a scientist.”

The last event on Thursday evening of each session was a review of camp based on images taken by co-director Paul Lowrey and other camp staff. Set to music to help set a mood, the week in review also was presented to the parents on Friday morning to provide them a glimpse of the camp. One song by Alabama has remained a constant for camp as it exemplifies the camp philosophy: “Pass It On Down.”
90-for-90 Boosts Trust

By BARRY HAAS
Ecology Camp Treasurer I AAS Trust Treasurer

The 90-for-90 fundraiser to honor Doug James, Thurman Jordan, and Art Johnson in association with their 90th birthdays has started strong. Since the fundraiser was first announced at the Spring Meeting, the Trust has received 22 donations totaling $6,928.98. This fundraiser will help build the Endowment-Memorial Fund that generates investment income to fund a variety of research and other efforts to expand our knowledge of the natural world.

If you would like to help us honor Doug James, Thurman Jordan, and Art Johnson or make a donation for any other purpose, please make your checks payable to “AAS Trust” or “Arkansas Audubon Society Trust” and mail to 804 Konrad Court, Little Rock, AR 72223-9201. All donations to the Trust are tax deductible and are acknowledged by letter or e-mail (e-mail to save on postage).

New Arkansas Audubon Society Members

Richard Floyd, Murfreesboro
Greg Mitchell, Fayetteville
Jacqueline Albright, Eureka Springs
Margaret Malek, Conway
Sara Belk, Jonesboro
Aly Bowers, Alexander
Halea Carter, Cedarville
Raven Edens, Winslow
Katharine Edwards, Little Rock
Morgan McDaniel, Mountain Pine
Evan Nicholas, Little Rock
Zoe Paladino, Little Rock
Catherine Plank, Little Rock
Brock Rigsby, Lonsdale
Joseph Shaw, Greenbrier
Don Thompson, Alamosa, CO
Mike & Sharon Martin, Cave Springs

New Life Member
Sharon Boatright #178, Gassville

Donation to General Fund
Jacqueline Albright
Ted Hank & Sheree Rogers

Donation to AAS Iola Rea Fund
Don Blessing (grandfather of Nick Nahas, AAS camper)
Dan & Samantha Scheiman

Donation to AAS in Memory of Joyce Jones
Dottie Boyles
Doris Boyles
Terry & Judy Butler

Donation to AAS in Memory of Nao Ueda
Terry & Judy Butler
Margaret Powell

Donation to AAS in Memory of Sylvia Drexler
Dottie Boyles
Doris Boyles
Terry & Judy Butler
News of Members: Birding Vacations Abound!

By DOTTIE BOYLES
News of Members Editor

I am pleased to fill the “News of Members” editor position for Arkansas Birds, a position held by Loice Lacy for many years! Loice did a wonderful job gathering, compiling, and sharing information about the many trips and adventures of AAS members. Thank you for your many years of service and for sharing your talent with all of us.

Sally Jo Gibson visited her daughter and her husband, Janet and Frank Salman, in Victorville, California. She was able to add two new species to her life list: Black Phoebe in their backyard and Bullock’s Oriole at Mono Lake. While lunching at Las Brisas Restaurant on Laguna Beach, she photographed Brown Pelicans sunning on an outcropping.

In late June, she was fortunate to make a bus trip with the Arkansas Daughters of the American Revolution ladies to attend the 123rd Continental Congress in Washington, D.C. No new life birds on the east coast, but she photographed an Osprey on nest while having lunch on the Spirit of Washington on the Potomac River. So, in five weeks’ time she lunched “coast to coast,” a great beginning to the summer season.

Ann Gordon shared: Carolyn Minson and I joined Dr. Kannan and eight other birders for a trip to Trinidad and Tobago in May. During a boat trip on the Caroni Swamp, we watched the magnificent Scarlet Ibis come in to roost in the mangroves. The brilliant red on green looked like Christmas decorations! We also visited Matura Beach to watch leatherback sea turtles come ashore to lay eggs. Asa Wright Nature Centre is truly a magical place, and its fabled “veranda” is as wonderful as advertised. On Tobago we visited the rainforest, where we were visited, in turn, by swarms of newly minted termites! We found their wings in our gear and clothing for days. We also climbed to the top of Little Tobago to view Red-billed Tropicbirds, Brown Noddies and Brown Boobies. So many brilliant and wonderful birds on this trip, it would be hard to choose a favorite. For “most unusual,” the prize would have to go the Oilbird, while the cutest, to me, was the Tufted Coquette.


Favorite locations were Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, the rookery at Smith Woods Sanctuary on High Island, and Rollover Pass for the shorebirds. Social highlights included running into Larry and Jean Jernigan and exchanging a few tips on locating bird species, which included the successful search for Crested Caracara.

Mitchell Pruitt shared: For three weeks in May/June, I went to Belize with a University of Arkansas study abroad group. My part, as a member of the ecology team, was to help with herp and bird surveys at Billy Barquedier National Park. Along the way, I was able to acquire 104 life birds in Belize. Not all of them were from the national park, but many were. Some of my favorites here were King Vulture, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, and Crested Guan. One afternoon we were able to get away to another location, Blue Hole National Park. The “blue hole” here (basically a giant spring) was a cool oasis in the humid jungle. In this small area, several of the species I had high hopes of seeing turned into reality: Blue-crowned Motmots and Rufous-tailed Jacamars, both nesting, as well as a couple stunning hummers: Purple-crowned Fairy coming to drink, and the sizeable Long-billed Hermit that puts our little Ruby-throated Hummer to shame. Falling asleep to the haunting sounds of tinamous and waking up to the electric snapping of White-collared Manakins ... now that’s the life.

David Oakley, Michael Linz, and Bob Hardin birded in southeast Arizona the first week of August. They were based at three main locations: Portal, Sierra Vista, and Green Valley. They traveled to and from Arizona in four days, birding both ways, and then birded daylight to dark for seven days. David saw 61 life birds, Michael, 83, and Bob, 60+. They also saw 11 species of hummingbirds. Best birds were Mexican Spotted Owls, Rufous-capped and Red-faced Warblers, Elegant Trogon, Black-capped Gnatcatcher, and Montezuma Quail. David said, “It was a trip to die for and for sure the best birding adventure that I have ever experienced.” Michael stated, “It was certainly a trip I would recommend to anyone.”
International Migratory Bird Count Highlights

By LEIF ANDERSON

To see the whole migration picture, I paired the super-valuable, multi-party compiled counts with up to four counts of at least 30 species per county from eBird. Five hundred and forty seven observers did 88 counts in 32 counties during the migration count. YOU put in 763 hours and 1,256 miles to find 55,270 individual birds of 235 species.

This year’s highs were: 56 hours, 249 miles, 5,012 individual birds and 164 species in Pope #1, Sarah Davis compiler; and 53 observers in Pulaski #1, Dan Scheiman compiler.

New bird to the count was the Western Kingbird/Scissor-tailed Flycatcher hybrid at Faulkner #1, Allan Mueller compiler.

The Summary Table: Sorry, there was not enough space to show all 88 counts, so I show to 71 species. Please remember that because of “normalizing” by hours that ALL counts are equally valuable!

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The following trends have been balanced to make counts comparable over time and place by dividing the number of birds by the number of party hours.

Migration by Eco-Region: I broke the state into the following eco-regions to see where the birds were showing up: The Mississippi River Alluvial Plain, Grand Prairie, West Gulf Coastal Plain (pine country), Ouachita Mountains, Mount Magazine, AR River Valley, and the Ozarks, including both the Boston Mountains and the Ozark Plateau.

The most species showed up in the Arkansas Valley, followed by the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain, Ozarks, Grand Prairie, Ouachitas, and finally, Coastal Plain.

Of the broad groups, the most Geese-Swans-Ducks were in the Grand Prairie; the most Waterbirds and Shorebirds were in the Grand Prairie and Mississippi River Alluvial Plain; The Ouachitas, AR Valley, and Mississippi River Alluvial Plain were highest for Vultures-Hawks-Falcons; The Gulls-Terns and Towhees-Sparrows-Juncos were highest in the AR Valley and Mississippi River Alluvial Plain; The Owls-Nightjars were highest in the Coastal Plain; Woodpeckers were highest in the Coastal and Mississippi River Alluvial Plains; Flycatchers-Vireos and Lingering Winter Species were highest on Mt Magazine; The Swift-Martin-Swallows and Western Species were highest in the AR Valley; The Bluebird-Robin-Thrushes were highest in the Ozarks; The Warblers were highest in the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain; the Bluebird-Robin-Thrushes were in the Ozarks; Grassland species were highest in the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain; the most Non-AR Breeding Migrant Flycatchers-Vireos-Warblers were in the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain; and the Other Non-Breeding Migrants were best on the Grand Prairie.
Moths, Beetles, and Flies Masquerade as Bees, Gain Myriad Benefits from their Disguises

It's a very common day-flying hawk moth that hovers before your flowers, its wings an invisible blur, looking like a small hummingbird. When it ecloses (emerges from the pupa into adulthood) it has brown scales covering its wings, and the thorax is covered with yellow fur. But almost instantly it begins shedding scales from its wings until they appear mostly transparent (as on a bumble bee), and the bald spot begins (as here on this fresh individual) to appear on its thorax. The strategy must do it some good: This is one of the commonest creatures in our garden. The specific bumble-bee pattern is a rather large mostly black insect with a furry yellow thorax that has a bald spot in the middle of it. The message the bumble-bee pattern sends is, I won't bother you if you don't bother me.

Now, lots of harmless insects that are very good eating would like to have the bumble bee's dangerous reputation, as it might discourage predators from attacking. In fact, a surprisingly large number of insects imitate the bumble bee, as closely as they can manage, for just that purpose. I'll show you here just a few.

By NORM LAVERS

We easily recognize that this is a bumble bee (fig. 1). We might feel kindly toward this big bumbling creature visiting our flowers, but if I said “Pick it up,” you would quickly hide your hand behind your back.

Do you realize instinct has helped to program your response, that you have responded in much the same way a bird or lizard or even many insects might have? What we are responding to is the color and the pattern on its back. Black and yellow are warning colors; they signal to us and other creatures that this thing either tastes bad or bites or stings.

Most of you recognize this first bumble-bee mimic, the Snowberry Clearwing (fig. 2).

You probably don’t recognize this creature as a bumble-bee mimic. This is an American Carrion Beetle (fig. 3), a common visitor to road-kill corpses (don’t confuse its name with the endangered American Burying Beetle).

The one in the picture is on the back of a dead...
opossum. Here on the corpse it doesn’t seem much like a bumble bee. It doesn’t have a furry thorax, which would just get bloody and messy in its line of work. But it has a pretending yellow furry thorax, with a pretending bald spot in the center. I didn’t think it was a very good disguise, until one day I saw one flying swiftly to a dead animal, following the scent trail. It was buzzing loudly like a bee and sweeping around at about eye height, again like a bumble bee, and it looked so much like a bumble bee I had to look and look to be sure it was a beetle, and I have a lot of experience with these mimics.

I’ve shown so far a moth and a beetle as bumble-bee mimics. This one is a fly, *Laphria affinis* (fig. 4). In the genus *Laphria* there are dozens of species, and the great majority are bumble-bee mimics; they carry the mimicry to a high art. They are such a successful group that I am sure they get the full advantage of looking like something with a painful sting, which they do not have.

But here the discussion gets complicated. So far I have shown harmless creatures pretending to be dangerous. But this *Laphria* really is dangerous. It’s a robber fly, a powerful killer of other insects, using not a stinger but a beak which injects neurotoxins and digestive enzymes that kill quickly and turn the insides of its prey into soup, which it sucks up its hollow beak. If you try to pick this one up, it is capable of giving you a stab you won’t forget. They wait in an open place, and if a suitable prey insect flies over, they fly up like a falcon and snatch it out of the air, too fast sometimes for you to see.

So is it possible that this species of robber fly, a specialist in beetles, also relies on the other part of the bumble bee’s reputation—the reputation for inoffensiveness—in order to cozy up to the creatures it is hunting? There is defensive mimicry and offensive mimicry. Or at least there is a hotly contested theory that some mimicry can be predatory in intent.

I was always skeptical of that second theory. For one thing, it is axiomatic that robber flies very seldom visit flowers, and if you see one that landed on a flower it is probably a coincidence. So, how is it going to cozy up to insects that hang out in the same places that bumble bees do, namely, flowers?

Well it was this very species, *Laphria affinis*, that I one day saw bumbling and buzzing clumsily around some big sprays of flowers, often stopping to hang from them as if he were interested in their pollen. And I happened to have an insect ecology class with me and I was explaining this theory to them and how skeptical I was of it. A number of orange soldier beetles were visiting the flowers, paying no more attention to the big fly than they were to the real bumble bees also there, and before we knew it, he had one (fig. 5).

“Now, lots of harmless insects that are very good eating would like to have the bumble bee’s dangerous reputation, as it might discourage predators from attacking. In fact, a surprisingly large number of insects imitate the bumble bee, as closely as they can manage, for just that purpose.”
An unprecedented 20,000 Ross’s Geese, including 2 “Blue” Ross’s, were counted on the Pine Bluff CBC, Jefferson 20 Dec (Kenny & LaDonna Nichols).

There were 11 reports of Trumpeter Swan. Most unusual were the 3 reported from Lake Fayetteville, Washington 12 Dec (David Chapman, Joe Neal, Mike Mlodinow, m.ob.), 4 near Jonesboro, Craighead 16 Dec (Ron & Linda Howard), 4 in Little Rock, Pulaski 5 Feb (Danny & Rhonda Townsend), and 2 on the Arkansas River at Ft. Smith, Sebastian 12 Feb (John & Larry Pearce).

There was one report of Tundra Swan. A single bird was seen near Heber Springs, Cleburne 21 Feb (Larry Jernigan, Terry Butler, Dale & Craig Provost, Gunnar Numme). This species is rare but annual in this area.

Considered a rare winter visitor, a lingering adult male Surf Scoter was observed on Lake Dardanelle, Yell 22 Feb–5 Apr (K&LN).

Possibly due to extensive ice cover on the Great Lakes, White-winged Scoters and Long-tailed Ducks invaded the state in record numbers. There were nine scoter reports, the most unusual being an unheard of 12 birds on Beaverfork Lake, Faulkner 31 January (Michael Linz). Similarly, there were nine Long-tailed Duck reports, the most interesting being 3 birds seen on Bear Creek Lake, Lee 10 Feb (Tara Gillanders & Susan Winston).

An adult male Barrow’s Goldeneye was present on Lake Dardanelle, Yell 2–6 Jan (K&LN). This would be the sixth occurrence for the state.

Rare in winter, Common Mergansers were reported from three locations: 3 on Beaver Lake, Benton 5 Feb (JN, Joan Reynolds), one near Wynne, Cross 25 Feb (KN), and the unusually large number of 8 at Lake Frierson State Park, Greene 15 Feb (David M & David L Quinn).

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A well-described Pacific Loon was seen on Lake Maumelle, Pulaski 12 Jan (Jim Dixon). This species is rare in winter.

Western Grebe is a rare winter visitor. One was reported near Cabin Creek Rec Area on Lake Dardanelle, Johnson 1 Jan (Leif Anderson, Teresa Matthews).

Very rare and possibly the same bird from the previous winter, an adult Neotropic Cormorant was reported on Lake Conway, Faulkner 15 Dec (K&LN) and 26 Dec (Rob Doster).

A Cattle Egret seen near Grand Lake, Chicot 3 Jan (Rick Burson, Emma Burson & Kelly Chitwood) and the 5 counted near Lonoke, Lonoke 22 Dec (DH, Elenore Bragg) were seasonally noteworthy.

An immature Black-crowned Night-Heron near Lonoke, Lonoke 22 Dec (Ed Laster, Judy Hunt, Justin Brand) was an exceptional find of this very rare winter resident.

Rare in winter, a White Ibis was observed near Felsenthal NWR, Union 11 Jan (KC, EB).

About the seventh state occurrence and most likely the same bird that wintered at the same location the previous winter, an adult Ferruginous Hawk was seen and photographed near Cash, Craighead 6 Feb (K&LN).

A very rare dark-morph Rough-legged Hawk was reported from Goshen, Washington 9 Feb (Joanie Patterson, Donald Ouellette).

Virginia Rail is a very rare and local winter resident. One was seen and heard at the University of Pine Bluff Aquaculture Research Station, Jefferson 20 Dec (Dan & Samantha Scheiman); another responded to a tape on the Arkadelphia CBC, Hot Springs 14 Dec (LA, TM); and 4 were heard at Lake Saracen, Jefferson 28 Dec (Devin Moon).

Rare and local, 2 Soras were noted near Brinkley, Monroe 18 Dec (LA, Terry Singleterry).

Rar in winter, Sandhill Cranes were reported from three locations: one near Magness Lake, Cleburne 11 Jan (LJ, Kenny Nations) was thought to be a county first; 3 (and later 7) east of Little Rock, Pulaski 19 Dec (Cindy Franklin, m.ob.); and 8 at Choctaw West WMA, Desha 10 Jan (Karen Rowe, Mike Budd, Andy Van Horn & David Luker).

The outstanding total of 24 American Woodcocks were counted at Scatter Creek WMA, Greene 21 Feb (ASU Ornithology Class).

Very rare anytime, a first-winter Little Gull was discovered on Lake Conway, Faulkner 9 Dec (K&LN, ML ph.). This would be the seventeenth occurrence in the state.
An adult plumaged Thayer’s Gull was carefully observed on Lake Dardanelle, Yell 14 Dec (K&LN). There are only about nine previous records of this species.

Rare but annual, 2 adult Lesser Black-backed Gulls were present throughout the season on Lake Dardanelle, Yell (K&LN, LA, m.ob.).

The first ever January report of Caspian Tern was a bird seen on the Lake Dardanelle CBC, Johnson 1 Jan (I.A., TM).

The high count of 500 Eurasian Collared-Doves along with a rare White-winged Dove were observed at a feed mill in Springdale, Washington 14 Dec (David Chapman).

Another White-winged Dove was noted east of Little Rock, Pulaski 28 Dec (Dottie Boyles, Doris Boyles, Bill Holimon, Devon Holimon).

There were two Inca Dove reports: one in Pine Bluff, Jefferson 20 Dec (DS) and the excellent count of 10 birds east of Little Rock, Pulaski 23 Dec (ML, Patty McLean).

Undoubtedly, the bird of the season was an immature Snowy Owl. First discovered in the industrial park area of east Little Rock, Pulaski 3 Dec (Lenord Vaughn), it remained unknown to the birding community until word leaked out and it was rediscovered in the same area 17 Dec (K&LN, ph). It was subsequently seen and photographed by dozens of excited birders. What was most likely the same bird was photographed in Lonoke, Lonoke 25 Dec (Christy Long) and later found dead at the same location 27 Dec (Gail Miller).

Very rare in winter, a Common Nighthawk was seen flying over the observer’s house in Little Rock, Pulaski 1 Dec (BH).

There were two separate Rufous Hummingbird reports: an immature in Little Rock, Pulaski 5-8 Jan (Karen Hart, Neill Hart, Gail Miller ph., DotB, DorB) and an adult female, also in Little Rock, 6 Dec (DH, Adam Haynes, Lincoln Haynes).

A Say’s Phoebe photographed near Pettus, Lonoke 22 Dec (K&LN) during the Lonoke CBC was possibly the same bird that wintered in this area one year earlier.

Peregrine Falcon was well represented with four reports: one east of Little Rock, Pulaski 17 Dec (K&LN); possibly the same bird in the same location 10 Jan (DS, m.ob.); one at Two Rivers Park, Pulaski 25 Jan (DH, AH); and a bird carrying a coot near Cabin Creek Rec Area, Johnson 1 Jan (LA, TM).

Very rare in the middle of winter, Tree Swallows were noted from two locations: a single at Saul’s Fish Farms, Prairie 30 Jan (TB, Judy Butler) and 3 at Lonoke, Lonoke 22 Dec (JD).

Rare and declining, Bewick’s Wrens were described from both the Lonoke CBC, Lonoke 22 Dec (DS) and the Mt. Magazine CBC, Logan 4 Jan (K&LN).

Always a nice winter find, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was tallied on the Arkadelphia CBC, Hot Springs 14 Dec (LA, TM).

Another nice CBC find was a Gray Catbird, discovered on the Lonoke CBC, Lonoke 22 Dec (DS, SS).

Extremely rare in winter, a Louisiana Waterthrush was seen and photographed at Lake Fayetteville, Washington 23 Jan (DN, Mike Mlodinow, Mitchell Pruitt). Surprisingly, there are two previous winter records, both from the same location.

Single Common Yellowthroats were recorded from three locations: the Pine Bluff CBC, Jefferson 20 Dec (RD); Arkadelphia CBC, Hot Springs 14 Dec; and the Lake Dardanelle CBC, Johnson 1 Jan (both LA, TM).

Rare but nearly annual in winter, single Palm Warblers were found near Searcy, White 25 Dec (K&LN) and Beaverfork Lake, Faulkner 21 Dec–28 Feb (ML).

The outstanding count of 136 Yellow-rumped Warblers was made at AD Smith Hunt Club, Hempstead 19 Feb (DS).

Lone Spotted Towhees were reported from Springdale, Washington 11 Jan and 5 Feb (MP, DC, David Oakley) and Little Rock, Pulaski 14 Dec (DS, SS, Jeremy & Katie Chamberlain, Jen Wang).

Outside of extreme northwest AR, American Tree Sparrow is considered very rare; therefore, the 9 seen near Lake Georgia-Pacific, Union 5 Jan (LA, TM) and 1 at the same location 15 Jan (KC, EB) were exceptional finds.

Very rare in winter, a single Lark Sparrow was identified near Smyrna, Pope 17 Dec (LA).

Unprecedented, a “Slate-colored” Fox Sparrow (P. s. schistacea) was carefully observed in the company of two “Red” Fox Sparrows on the Mt. Magazine CBC, Logan 4 Jan (K&LN).

Lincoln’s Sparrow is a rare winter resident. One was in Cabot, Lonoke 6 Dec (K&LN) and another in Rogers, Benton 4 Feb (JN).

Very uncommon outside the extreme northwest corner of the state, Harris’s Sparrows were recorded from three locations: an adult on the Mt. Magazine CBC, Logan 4 Jan (K&LN); one in east Little Rock, Pulaski 7 Jan (Cindy Franklin); and 2 near Holla Bend NWR, Yell 18 Jan (DS, SS, ML, Karen Holliday).

Rave in winter, a female Indigo Bunting visited a feeder in Jonesboro, Craighead 1 Feb (Norman & Cheryl Lavers).
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