



NORTH ALABAMA BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

SCHEDULE AND DESCRIPTION OF TRIPS, 2011-2012



VOLUME 35

Kenneth Ward, President

OUR 35th SEASON

Rufina Ward, Editor

Hello, folks! For those of you new to us, the North Alabama Birdwatching Society (NABS) is truly a birding group for everyone, from beginners to experts. We have been around since 1976 and are the only birding group in northern Alabama to offer a set of regularly scheduled trips each year. We visit a variety of areas across northern Alabama, most of which are included on the North Alabama Birding Trail (NABT; <http://www.northalabamabirdingtrail.com/>). By birding with NABS, you'll have the opportunity to go out with experienced people who are familiar with the places we visit and who love to share their knowledge. NABS also provides greater access to certain natural areas where birding by car is restricted to groups.

Although the focus is on birds, NABS outings also offer opportunities to become more generally familiar with many of the beautiful and diverse natural areas characteristic of northern Alabama. The places we'll visit provide excellent opportunities to observe, study and appreciate a variety of flora and fauna, including wildflowers, trees, insects, herpetofauna (snakes and frogs, ☺) and mammals. Some NABS regulars have considerable knowledge of these other groups and would be glad to answer questions and provide information during trips.

Our regular meeting time is Saturday, 7:00 am for most trips, although we have a few Sunday outings, one late morning meeting time and several earlier meeting times (6:00 am) for migration trips. Half-day trips are the norm, although some will include extended birding into the afternoon for those interested. Please note that, although it's usually easy to leave early, there are a few trips behind locked gates that involve a minimum 2 to 3-hour time commitment (see Wheeler NWR trip descriptions). Bring your binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides, refreshments, bug repellent and raingear. We very seldom cancel trips; if the weather is bad (heavy rain) or dangerous (icy roads, severe storms) enough to warrant cancellation, we will send out an email notice.

If we don't already have your email address, please consider sending it to us to add to the NABS mailing list. We can then email you this schedule, as well as trip reminders, lists of what birds we see and a few other items of interest. In addition, a copy of the schedule will appear on both the NABS (www.northalbirding.com) and Tennessee Valley Audubon Society (www.tvas.org) websites.

Send your comments, questions and suggestions to Rufina or Ken Ward, 1689 Longleaf Drive, Huntsville, AL 35806 (256-837-5646; bustmilo@knology.net).

Below are descriptions of the trips scheduled for this season, with directions (including GPS coordinates, for the first time), trip leaders and contact numbers. We have also included some "Events of Interest" for nature lovers. Thanks for your support and we look forward to seeing you this season!

2011-2012 NABS SCHEDULE AND DESCRIPTION OF TRIPS

1. Leighton Area Shorebird Trip, Wheeler Dam (NABT) – 27 August, 2011 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

We will explore the Leighton area and swing by Wheeler Dam on this trip. We'll be looking primarily for shorebird migrants, whose movement through our area should be peaking; our success will depend largely on water levels. We should pick up some neotropical songbird migrants as well. We'll meet at the west parking lot (next to the street) of the Holiday Inn in Decatur, near the river bridge (34.364073N -86.584270W). - **John Ehinger, Leader (256-536-2716)**

2. Monte Sano State Park/Hays Preserve (NABT) – 10 September 2011 (SATURDAY) 6:00 am

Fall migration continues to heat up for neotropical migrants as we approach mid- to late-September; this trip takes us to 2 of the better spots in our area to see migrating songbirds. We'll meet in Monte Sano SP at the Camp Store; park in the gravel if there is room (34.444374N -86.304360W). We'll then head to the Hays Preserve, which is not far from Hampton Cove off Hwy 431; this is largely a bottomland habitat along the Flint River (34.383944N -86.275860W). To get to the park, take Monte Sano Blvd (off Governors Drive) to Nolen and follow the signs. You might want to bring some

mosquito repellent for this trip, especially for Hays. PLEASE NOTE THE EARLY MEETING TIME – WARBLER BIRDING IS MOST CONSISTENTLY PRODUCTIVE FROM ROUGHLY SUNUP TO 45 MINUTES THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY AT THE OVERLOOK. IF YOU PREFER TO COME LATER, LOOK FOR US THERE. - **Bill McAllister, Leader (256-534-8354)**

3. Monte Sano State Park (NABT) – 17 September, 2011 (SATURDAY) 6:00 am

This trip targets neotropical songbird migrants, either breeding residents heading south or transients passing through from the north, mostly on their way to Central and South America. More birds actually pass through our area in the fall than in spring, but the migration period is longer and a defined peak is hard to pinpoint. Still, late September is considered a good time for fall migration birding around here. We'll meet at the Camp Store (see trip #2). PLEASE NOTE THE EARLY MEETING TIME – WARBLER BIRDING IS MOST CONSISTENTLY PRODUCTIVE FROM ROUGHLY SUNUP TO 45 MINUTES THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY AT THE OVERLOOK. IF YOU PREFER TO COME LATER, LOOK FOR US THERE. – **Dick Bruer, Leader (256-772-0411)**

4. Monte Sano State Park (NABT), Huntsville – 24 September 2011 (SATURDAY) 6:00 am

We will be looking again for fall migrants, especially warblers; Monte Sano SP is one of the better birding spots in the state during migration. We'll meet at the Camp Store (see trip #2). PLEASE NOTE THE EARLY MEETING TIME – WARBLER BIRDING IS MOST CONSISTENTLY PRODUCTIVE FROM ROUGHLY SUNUP TO 45 MINUTES THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY AT THE OVERLOOK. IF YOU PREFER TO COME LATER, LOOK FOR US THERE. - **Milton Harris, Leader (256-533-0529)**

5. Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge (NABT) Fall Migration Count – 1 October, 2011 (SATURDAY) 5:30 am

The format for this count is similar to that used for Audubon Christmas Counts (see trip #12) – identify and count all birds seen or heard from dawn to late afternoon/dusk; different groups bird different parts of the refuge and nearby areas. This count is always scheduled during the peak fall migration period. Birders of all skill levels are welcome; we need all the eyes and ears we can get! We'll regroup at the Wheeler NWR Visitor Center (34.547406N -86.951136W) around 6 pm for compilation. Since there is no longer a single gathering spot for folks to meet and join a group, new participants should contact the Refuge Manager, Dwight Cooley. – **Dwight Cooley, Leader (256-353-7243)**

6. Indian Creek Greenway – 8 October, 2011 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

The Indian Creek Greenway has been an interesting late spring migration spot for NABS the last few years; figured we'd give it a shot in the fall. Meet at the Greenway parking lot at the head of the trail on Old Madison Pike, just east of its intersection with Slaughter Rd (34.423220N -86.420558W). – **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

7. Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, The Big Sit (NABT) - 9 October 2011 (SUNDAY) 4:00 am until dusk

“THE BIG SIT!” is an annual, international, non-competitive birding event hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest and founded by the New Haven (CT) Bird Club. The National Wildlife Refuge System has adopted it as an activity for National Wildlife Refuge Week. The idea is simple – we'll count from a 17-foot diameter circle, set up chairs, scopes and binoculars, and identify as many birds as we can. This is our fifth year and we will count from a point near the west end of White Springs Dike (34.623178N -86.951292W). Access to the site will be through the second Refuge gate east of Day Park, not the one directly across from the Park. Because you can only access the gate from Alabama 20 east, anyone coming from the east or north should travel to the Decatur Boat Harbor and turn back north on U.S. 31/Alabama 20, taking Alabama 20 to the gate. The gate will be closed, but unlocked. After carefully exiting from Alabama 20, just open the gate, drive through, close the gate behind you, and follow the dike road to the site. Although we'll start at 4:00 am, participants can show up and leave at any time. – **Dwight Cooley, Leader (256-353-7243)**

EVENT OF INTEREST: Coastal Birdfest (<http://www.alabamacoastalbirdfest.com/schedule.htm>), Fairhope, AL – 6-8 October 2011 (Linda Reynolds, 256-582-2970)

EVENT OF INTEREST: Alabama Ornithological Society/Florida Ornithological Society Fall Meeting, Dauphin Island – 14-16 October 2011 (Linda Reynolds, 256-582-2970)

8. Wheeler NWR (White Springs Dike), Swan Creek WMA (NABT)– 12 November 2011 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

The White Springs Dike area on Wheeler NWR is among the best places in Alabama to get great looks at a variety of waterfowl, which should just be arriving to overwinter. Birding with a group like NABS provides an opportunity to drive behind locked gates (provided we have at least eight people!), thus gaining access to the best areas to see lots of ducks and

geese. We'll be birding by car to cover the necessary area, but there will be plenty of stops and opportunities to walk around and enjoy the refuge. We will also be looking for Sandhill Cranes, White Pelicans, late shorebird migrants (especially at Swan Creek Wildlife Management Area), raptors and returning winter resident songbirds. We'll be behind locked gates for 2-3 hours and should be done around lunchtime, when we'll likely head to Applelane Farms to eat, for those interested. Take the Mooresville exit off I-565, go south on Mooresville Road and meet at the parking area near where it intersects with old Highway 20 (34.373878N -86.524839W). – **Harry Dean, Leader (256-461-0626)**

9. Wheeler NWR, White Springs Dike (NABT) - 19 November 2011 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

We'll return to the White Springs Dike area for more quality waterfowl birding; please see trip #8.

Dick Bruer, Leader (256-772-0411)

10. Wheeler NWR – Wildlife Observation Bldg, Garth Slough (NABT) - 3 December 2011 (SATURDAY) 8:00 am

This trip is designed to emphasize education on birds and birding and we want to invite anyone out there who wants to learn more, especially young folks. We'll meet at the Wheeler NWR Visitor Center (34.547406N - 86.951136W) off Hwy 67. From I-65 take exit 334 and head toward Decatur; after crossing the water, the road to the Visitor Center will be on the left. We'll first head to the wildlife observation building, which overlooks a pond, and is designed to allow close observation of waterfowl. From there, we'll go to Garth Slough on the Refuge and bird along the Tennessee River and slough, looking for passing waterfowl, gulls and eagles, songbirds, raptors and possibly some shorebirds, depending on water levels. Wintering sparrows should be around in numbers and we should see a good variety, including Song, Swamp, White-throated, White-crowned, Fox and, possibly, Lincoln's. NOTE THE 8:00 AM MEETING TIME. – **Dwight Cooley, Leader (256-353-7243)**

11. Wheeler NWR – White Spgs Dike, Beaverdam Peninsula (NABT) - 10 December 2011 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

Our third trip to the White Springs Dike area should be productive. Waterfowl variety and numbers will likely be impressive and all of the winter resident songbird species will be around. We'll head first to the goose tower observation platform, then bird Beaverdam Peninsula, which is the best place on the refuge to get good looks at thousands of overwintering geese. We'll get Canada, Snow and White-fronted geese, perhaps Ross's and, possibly, Cackling geese. Afterwards we'll bird White Springs along our regular route, where we'll be behind locked gates for 2-3 hours. We should be done by lunch; Applelane Farms, anyone? Meet in Mooresville, intersection of Mooresville Road and Old Hwy 20 (see trip #8). – **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

12. Wheeler NWR Audubon Christmas Bird Count (NABT) - 17 December 2011 (SATURDAY) 5:00 am

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count is the oldest and largest citizen science event in the world. For over a hundred years, people have gathered during the winter holiday season to identify and count birds. In the process, they have created a vast pool of bird data that is a valuable source of information on the status and distribution of early winter bird populations. Parties of birders are assigned to different parts of a 15 mile-radius count circle to identify and count all birds seen or heard from dawn to dusk. There are currently 10 count circles in Alabama and over 2000 nationwide. Wheeler is one of the more productive inland count areas around, usually yielding 115-120 species, and always including some unusual birds. Birders of all skill levels are welcome and needed; we go in all types of weather. To join a party, meet at the Wheeler NWR Visitor Center (34.547406N -86.951136W) south off Hwy 67, east of Decatur. From I-65 take exit 334 and head toward Decatur; after crossing the water, the road to the Visitor Center will be on the left. We'll regroup there at sundown for the tally (compilation), which is a lot of fun. Bring binoculars, a spotting scope if you have one and lunch, plus \$5.00 participation fee. – **Dwight Cooley, Leader (256-353-7243)**

13. Cullman Audubon Christmas Count – 18 December 2011 (SUNDAY) 6:30 am

Another Christmas Count that sometimes gets overlooked in northern Alabama is held in the Cullman area, usually the day after the Wheeler Count. Counters meet at Culpepper Real Estate (2069th Street SW, Cullman, AL 35055) to assign areas to be covered; anyone interested in doing some owling can contact Jimmy Wells for an earlier start. This count is always short-handed, so we hope some of you will consider helping out; anyone new to the count will be assigned to a party with people familiar to the area. Compilation is usually held at Berkeley Bob's Coffee House at 5 pm. Those who want to help for just part of the day can also be accommodated. As with all Christmas Counts, there is a \$5.00 participation fee. – **Jimmy Wells, Leader (256-739-0933; jas.f.wells@gmail.com)**

14. Guntersville Audubon Christmas Bird Count (NABT) - 26 December 2011 (MONDAY) 5-6:00 am

This Count, in another well-known birding area in northern Alabama, yields a wide variety of songbird, raptor and waterfowl species. The format is the same as the Wheeler Count, i.e., all day, \$5.00 fee. Unlike the Wheeler Christmas

Count, there is no single gathering spot for folks to meet and join a group. For this reason, please contact Linda if you are interested in joining one of the eight parties of counters; meeting times for different parties may vary. The meeting spot for compilation is tentative at this time; contact Linda for more information. – **Linda Reynolds, Leader (256-582-2970)**

15. Wheeler NWR – White Springs Dike (NABT) – 7 January 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

Join us for our final trip to the White Springs Dike area, as we look for overwintering waterfowl, hawks, Sandhill Cranes, etc. Expect to be behind locked refuge gates for 2-3 hours. We'll finish up looking for White-crowned Sparrows at a couple of spots, then lunch at Apple Lane Farms. Meet in Mooresville, intersection of Mooresville Road and Old Hwy 20 (see trip #8). – **Dick Bruer, Leader (256-772-0411)**

16. Guntersville, Guntersville Dam North/Hawk Farm (NABT) -14 January 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

This trip has been expanded to include the city of Guntersville. We'll meet in Guntersville, at the Chamber of Commerce parking lot on the south end of the Hwy 431 bridge (34.214906N -86.171793W). We'll bird first along the lakefront, then head back toward Huntsville on Hwy 431 to the north side of Guntersville Dam. Meet at the picnic pavilion parking lot, to the left as you face the dam, at 10 am. After birding near the dam, we'll visit the nearby hawk farm. The hawk farm is privately owned and ordinarily closed to the public, but permission is granted to bird there on this trip. **We'll all need to be together when we visit the farm and are not allowed to bird past the corral.** The dam area and farm are both excellent for raptors. There should be nesting Bald Eagles around, both types of vultures, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, Kestrels and Harriers; our chances of seeing an Osprey are excellent. If we are lucky, we may pick up one or two unusual species that have been seen irregularly over the years, e.g., Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Rough-legged Hawk, or Golden Eagle (seen during 2010 Christmas Count). – **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

17. Town Creek Embayment, Wheeler Dam, Wheeler SP (NABT) – 21 January 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

This trip primarily targets waterfowl and other waterbirds, but also includes some productive songbird areas, especially in the state park. We'll meet at the WalMart parking lot off Hwy 72 W in Athens (34.471348N -86.572933W). - **Dick Bruer and Harry Dean, Leaders (256-772-0411).**

EVENT OF INTEREST: Winter Meeting, Alabama Ornithological Society, location TBA, 27-29 January 2012 (Linda Reynolds, 256-582-2970)

18. Guntersville City Waterfront/Guntersville Dam South (NABT) – 28 January 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

This trip starts on Sunset Parkway along the west side of Guntersville. We should see a great variety of ducks, many loons and grebes, possibly some odd terns and gulls, eagles, etc. Meet in Guntersville at the Chamber of Commerce parking lot on the south end of the Hwy 431 bridge (see trip #16). From there, we'll go west on the Lake Loop Road to the Kiwanis Club parking lot. The tour will then go south and across the Hwy 69 Causeway to the south end of Guntersville Dam. – **Bill McAllister, Leader (256-534-8354)**

19. Mallard Fox Creek WMA/Wilson Dam/Key Cave NWR (NABT) – 4 February 2012 (SATURDAY) 11:00 am

We'll start with the Mallard-Fox Creek Wildlife Management Area and work our way west, including Wilson Dam and Key Cave NWR, where we'll look for Short-eared Owls at dusk (we got them in 2010). Mid- to late-February is a transition period for waterfowl and other birds and weather will play a key role in what we see. We'll meet at the west parking lot (next to the street) of the Holiday Inn (see trip 1) in Decatur, near the river bridge. **NOTE THAT THE MEETING TIME FOR THIS TRIP IS LATE MORNING; WE'LL STOP ALONG THE WAY FOR LUNCH.** – **Dwight Cooley, Leader (256-353-7243)**

20. Guntersville Waterfront Trip (NABT) – 11 February 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

We'll head to Guntersville again to look for waterfowl, raptors and songbirds. This area is an exciting place to be for birders in February; it's not unusual to have a couple of odd species around and there should be a variety of diving ducks, some in large numbers. Meet in Guntersville at the Chamber of Commerce parking lot on the south end of the Hwy 431 bridge (see trip #16). – **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

21. Talladega National Forest, Talladega Division – 18 February 2012 (SATURDAY) 8:00 am

This is a different sort of trip for us which targets 3 bird species that are hard to find in our area. We should encounter and hope to get good looks at: Red Crossbill, which is found year-round in this area but hardly anywhere else in AL; Red-cockaded Woodpecker, an endangered species which requires open pine habitat for breeding; and Bachman's Sparrow, a secretive and uncommon species more often found in the southern half of the state. Additionally, this is the only place we

visit where you might see all 3 nuthatch *and* 8 woodpecker species found in Alabama. To get to the meeting place, take Hwy 431 through Anniston to Oxford, then take I-20 E. We'll meet at the Hardee's located near the Heflin exit off I-20 (33.372603N -85.360092W). Please note that the Hardee's meeting place is a 2-2 ½ -hour drive from Huntsville. This trip should be over by late morning; we'll eat barbeque afterwards, for those so inclined. – **Dick and Linda Reynolds, Leaders (256-582-2970)**

22. Monte Sano State Park (NABT) – 24 March 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

On this trip we hope to catch some early spring migrants, especially Louisiana Waterthrush. We will meet at the camp store parking; park in the gravel if there is room (see trip #2). – **John Ehinger, Leader (256-536-2716)**

23. Monte Sano State Park/Hays Preserve (NABT) – 7 April 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

We'll be looking for some early spring migrants on beautiful Monte Sano, one of the best migration birding spots in the state; there should be some significant activity. You are also encouraged to bird here at other times on your own in order to see the most birds; generally late April thru the first week of May is best, as we should be at migration peak by then. Be watching for a nice day shortly after a front has moved through, which often holds up and concentrates the birds. We'll then visit the Hays Preserve, where there should be some good birds by this time. We'll meet at the Camp Store (see trip #2). – **Dick Bruer, Leader (256-772-0411)**

24. William B. Bankhead National Forest (NABT) – 14 April 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

Bankhead National Forest (BNF) in northwestern Alabama is 180,000 acres of mesic hardwood, mixed pine-hardwood, shortleaf pine, oak-hickory, hemlock-white pine and mountain longleaf pine forest, with many limestone bluffs, swift flowing streams and waterfalls, through which flows Alabama's only nationally designated Wild and Scenic River, the Sipsey. The 26,000-acre Sipsey Wilderness, the second largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi, is also found here. BNF is considered an important block of habitat for forest interior birds, especially neotropical migrants, several species of which are in decline. Migration birding this time of year is usually quite productive in BNF if you hit a variety of spots. We'll be birding the northern part of the forest, including the Sipsey picnic grounds, Brushy Lake, Northwest Road, Borden Creek Trailhead, etc.; please visit the BNF website for more information. We'll meet at the Warrior Mountain Store, at the intersection of Hwy 33 and 36 near Wren. From west Huntsville/Madison the meeting place is a 50-60-minute drive, via Decatur (Hwy 24 west to 33, go south past Moulton to meeting place; 34.260419N - 87.173516W). - **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

25. Goldsmith-Schiffman Sanctuary (NABT) – 15 April 2012 (SUNDAY) 7:00 am

Join us for our second spring trip to Goldsmith, where we'll be looking primarily for songbirds as the migration season heats up. To get there, take Governors Drive south over the mountain (Hwy 431) and turn right on Sutton Road, then left on Taylor Road and follow it to where it intersects with Terry Drake (34.374374N -086.290290W). – **John Ehinger, Leader (256-536-2716)**

26. Monte Sano State Park/Land Trust Parking Lot (NABT) – 22 April 2012 (SUNDAY) 6:00 am

Join us for some great birding on Monte Sano as we approach migration peak, including the Land Trust parking lot off Bankhead Parkway. Monte Sano can be very productive this time of year, with a nice variety of warblers, along with good looks at tanagers, orioles, grosbeaks and vireos. PLEASE NOTE THE EARLY MEETING TIME – WARBLER BIRDING IS MOST CONSISTENTLY PRODUCTIVE FROM ROUGHLY SUNUP TO 45 MINUTES THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY AT THE OVERLOOK. IF YOU PREFER TO COME LATER, LOOK FOR US THERE. We'll meet in the park at the Camp Store parking lot; park in the gravel if possible (see trip #2). – **Milton Harris, Leader (256-534-8354)**

EVENT OF INTEREST: Earth Day Festivities, Hays Preserve – 21 April 2012, including a birding hike at 7:30 am (Susan Weber, 256-509-1219); **John Ehinger (256-536-2716, TENTATIVE)**

EVENT OF INTEREST: Alabama Ornithological Society Spring Meeting, Dauphin Island – 20-22 April 2012 (Linda Reynolds, 256-582-2970)

27. Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Spring Migration Count (NABT) – 28 April 2012 (SATURDAY) 5:30 am

The format for this count is similar to Christmas Counts – identify and count all birds seen or heard from dawn to late afternoon/dusk; different groups bird different parts of the refuge and nearby areas. Birders of all skill levels are welcome and needed. We'll regroup at the Wheeler NWR Visitor Center (34.547406N -86.951136W) around 6:00 pm for

compilation. If you are interested in joining a party, contact Refuge Manager Dwight Cooley. – **Dwight Cooley, Leader (256-353-7243)**

28. Monte Sano State Park (NABT) – 29 April (SUNDAY) 6:00 am

Join us at migration peak as we bird one of the best spots in the state for spring migration. The Park can be filled with birds this time of year, including 15-20 species of beautiful, breeding plumage warblers, all thrush species we can see in this area, orioles, grosbeaks, both species of tanagers, 4-5 species of vireos, etc. The birds are often relatively easy to see too; several hotspots near our meeting area are nearby and easy to find, including the overlooks, camp store, Japanese garden, planetarium, cyclists and hikers parking lots, etc., not to mention numerous accessible trails. We'll meet at the Camp Store; park in the gravel if possible (see trip #2). PLEASE NOTE THE EARLY MEETING TIME – WARBLER BIRDING IS MOST CONSISTENTLY PRODUCTIVE FROM ROUGHLY SUNUP TO 45 MINUTES THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY AT THE OVERLOOK. IF YOU PREFER TO COME LATER, LOOK FOR US THERE. – **Harry Dean, Leader (256-461-0626)**

29. Alabama A&M University Research Farm (NABT) – 5 May 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

The Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Station (WTARS) is a 900-acre farm with lots of open grassland and pasture areas, plus small patches of forest. It is one of the best places in the state to observe open country birds and always makes for a great trip. There are breeding Scissor-tailed Flycatchers here, Grasshopper Sparrows, Dickcissels, Lark Sparrows, Loggerhead Shrikes, Blue Grosbeaks and transient Bobolinks. From Huntsville, take Hwy 431 north past Meridianville, turn right on Walker Lane, then right again onto the farm; park at the first building on the right (34.540308N - 86.333681W). – **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

30. Monte Sano State Park Late Migration Trip (NABT) – 6 May 2012 (SUNDAY) 6:00 am

This is our latest trip to Monte Sano and will likely be a little past migration peak, but there should still be some nice birds in the park, including a variety of tanager, oriole, vireo and warbler species that return here to breed. We'll meet at the Camp Store parking lot (see trip #2). PLEASE NOTE THE EARLY MEETING TIME – WARBLER BIRDING IS MOST CONSISTENTLY PRODUCTIVE FROM ROUGHLY SUNUP TO 45 MINUTES THEREAFTER, ESPECIALLY AT THE OVERLOOK. IF YOU PREFER TO COME LATER, LOOK FOR US THERE. – **Milton Harris, Leader (256-533-0529)**

31. Leighton Area, Town Creek (NABT) - 12 May 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

We will explore the Leighton area and Town Creek, targeting shorebird migrants, whose movement through our area should be strong at this time of year. Our success will depend largely on water levels and weather. Meet at the west parking lot (next to the street) of the Holiday Inn in Decatur, near the river bridge (see trip #1). - **Milton Harris, Leader (256-533-0529)**

32. Indian Creek Greenway (NABT) – 13 May 2012 (SUNDAY) 7:00 am

The Indian Creek Greenway is a pleasant place to bird, with opportunities to get good looks at migrants. The major reason this trip was planned a few years back was to look for Mourning Warblers. This species is a secretive late spring migrant through this area that is rarely seen. We have had good trips here the past 2-3 years with Mourning, Wilson and Canada Warblers, Warbling Vireo, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, many Magnolia Warblers and a variety of other species. Meet at the Greenway parking lot at the head of the trail on Old Madison Pike, just east of its intersection with Slaughter Rd (see trip #6). – **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

33. Alabama A&M University Research Farm (NABT) – 19 May 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

We'll return to WTARS to look for open country birds, late migrants and opportunities to observe breeding Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and Lark Sparrows. Please see trip #29 for more information and directions to the meeting place. - **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**

34. Paint Rock Valley/Skyline/Hytop – 26 May 2012 (SATURDAY) 7:00 am

This is a new trip for us, up into the beautiful hills of Jackson County. We'll meet at the Madison County High School parking lot gate just west of Gurley off Hwy 72 E (34.441364N -86255132W) From there we'll go east and take Hwy 35 and 79 to Hytop. We'll bird the trailheads of the Walls-of-Jericho horseback and hiking trails (we won't hike a lot). We'll then head over to Hwy 65 via CR 146 and bird to the south, visiting TNC (Nature Conservancy) property along the way. Breeding bird activity should be at a peak and we should see a really nice variety of species. Please be looking for more information on this trip, which is still in the planning stages. - **Ken Ward, Leader (256-837-5646)**