

A LIST OF BIRDS OBSERVED AT GAINESVILLE,  
FLORIDA.

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GAINESVILLE is situated in the southeastern part of Alachua County, midway between the Gulf and the Atlantic, a position which, during the winter, proved excellent collecting ground for the species which should occur there at that season, but the distance from either coast rendered it a comparatively isolated point during migration.

Evidently the peninsula acts as a wedge dividing into two waves, which flow up either coast, the sea of north-bound migrants; from these waves small streams of summer residents penetrate the interior in search of breeding places, and these, in addition to occasional ripples caused perhaps by a high-tide, constitute the entire migration.

How closely migrating birds adhere to the coast is well illustrated by the fact that of the thirty-five arrivals noted, twenty-six are summer residents of the Louisianian Fauna, leaving but nine strictly transient birds as the number observed, where forty or more might have occurred. The capture of four species which have not, to my knowledge, been before recorded from Florida during the winter, may also be due to this inland position; for these birds probably drifted in with flocks of true winter residents, and being thus removed from the coast currents, were left stranded. The country surrounding Gainesville is favorable for occupation by all the species which should occur there, there being, 'black-jack' and palmetto pineries, hummocks, thickets, clearings, swamps, 'prairies,' numerous small ponds and streams, and Alachua Lake, about nine miles long and averaging two or more in width. This lake, as the chief ornithological point of interest, deserves particular mention; a large portion of its surface is covered with a dense growth of yellow pond lilies (*Nuphar advena*), locally known as 'bonnets,' affording a home to innumerable Coots (*Fulica americana*) and Ducks. At its eastern end is an immense savanna bisected by an inflowing creek, and dotted with clumps of cypresses and numberless small pools. A few years ago Herons were abundant and bred

here; today it is comparatively deserted, the result of merciless persecution by plume hunters. One other locality remains to be noticed,—an almost impassable swamp, known as 'Sugar-foot Prairie,' a favorite breeding ground for several species of Herons.

March 8, I visited this place and my notes for that day record: Great Blue Heron, Great White Egret, and Little White Egret, all common; Little Blue Heron, abundant; Black-crowned Night Heron, one; Bittern, three. April 17, 20, and 21, I again went there and the total number of Herons seen on the three days was: Great Blue Heron, two; Great White Egret, one; Louisiana Heron, one; Little Blue Heron, ten.

Later I learned that a plume hunter's camp, with its pile of decaying carcasses, had been found there, and the cause of the disappearance of the Herons was no longer a mystery.

The following notes are based almost entirely on observations made from November 27, 1886, to May 27, 1887; for, although a return was made to the same locality the following winter, my stay was a comparatively short one and permitted but little additional work.

All data, therefore, unless the contrary is stated, refer to the first mentioned period. I have to thank Mr. Roth Reynolds for permission to examine a number of Gainesville birds in his possession, mounted by himself, mention being made in each case when a record is based on such examination.

For comparison I append the mean temperature of each month during the winter and spring of 1886-7: December, 53.2°; January, 50.9°; February, 66.4°; March, 61.8°; April, 68.6°; May, 77.1°.

1. *Podilymbus podiceps*. PIED-BILLED GREBE. 'DIE DIPPER.'—Common; none were observed after April 27.
2. *Urinator imber*. LOON.—From March 31 to April 17 about fifteen were seen flying over at a great altitude.
3. *Anhinga anhinga*. ANHINGA.—Three extremely wild birds wintered among the cypresses on the lake; April 12 two flocks of seven or eight each were seen passing over, and on the 26th a flock of six more.
4. *Lophodytes cucullatus*. HOODED MERGANSER.—A rare winter resident.
5. *Anas boschas*. MALLARD.—Not uncommon.
6. *Anas obscura*. BLACK DUCK.—Not uncommon.  
The Florida Black Duck was not found, and was unknown to local sportsmen, even as a summer resident.
7. *Anas strepera*. GADWALL.—A female was taken February 8, the

first one, I think, reported from the State. Six were seen and one killed January 11, 1888.

8. *Anas carolinensis*. GREEN-WINGED TEAL.—Common.
9. *Anas discors*. BLUE-WINGED TEAL.—Rather more common than the last. Last records were April 27, two, and April 29, one.
10. *Anas americana*. BALDPATE.—Not uncommon.
11. *Spatula clypeata*. SHOVELLER.—A single specimen in Mr. Reynolds's possession.
12. *Dafila acuta*. PINTAIL.—Not uncommon.
13. *Aix sponsa*. WOOD DUCK.—Common resident.
14. *Aythya affinis*. LESSER SCAUP DUCK.—Common.
15. *Aythya collaris*. RING-NECKED DUCK.—The most abundant Duck. At the time of my departure, May 27, a flock of cripples, four males and three females, was in an arm of the lake, and I was told that crippled Ducks (the results of flock shooting during the winter) of different species frequently remain through the summer, but although, as in the present instance, both sexes may be represented, they have never been known to breed.
16. *Erismatura rubida*. RUDDY DUCK.—Not uncommon.
17. *Ajaja ajaja*. ROSEATE SPOONBILL.—None were observed by myself, but three were reported to me by my friend Mr. Bell on April 23, and Mr. Reynolds had a specimen in his collection.
18. *Guara alba*. WHITE IBIS.—March 4, 1887, and January 11, 1888, one observed each day.
19. *Botaurus lentiginosus*. AMERICAN BITTERN.—Locally common.
20. *Ardea herodias*. GREAT BLUE HERON.—Common.
21. *Ardea egretta*. AMERICAN EGRET.—Not uncommon during the winter, and frequently observed until its plumes were sufficiently grown to render them worthy the plume hunter's attention, when it became almost rare and exceedingly shy.
22. *Ardea candidissima*. SNOWY HERON.—The same remarks apply to this species.
23. *Ardea tricolor ruficollis*. LOUISIANA HERON.—Not uncommon. Almost all those observed were adult birds.
24. *Ardea cærulea*. LITTLE BLUE HERON.—The most common Heron. The blue slightly outnumber the white birds, and but three in intermediate plumage were seen.
25. *Ardea virescens*. GREEN HERON.—One seen January 28 was the only one observed until April 4, when new arrivals were noted. They were common throughout May, and on the 25th of that month young just from the nest were taken.
26. *Nycticorax nycticorax nævius*. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON.—Locally common.
27. *Rallus elegans*. KING RAIL.—Two specimens taken by Mr. Reynolds at the lake.
28. *Porzana carolina*. SORA.—A single specimen in Mr. Reynolds's possession was taken at the lake.