## MISSISSIPPI COLONIAL WATERBIRD COUNT

Mary P. Stevens, Coordinator 5120 Reddoch Drive Jackson, MS 39211

Dear Mississippi Colonial Waterbird Count Participant:

Enclosed are the results of the 1998 Mississippi Colonial Waterbird Count (MCWC). There was no count in 1999. If you contributed to this count, thank you for your effort. The success of the MCWC depends on volunteer work and expanding the count to cover more of the state and include more volunteers.

As you know, Allan Muellar, the previous coordinator, moved to Arkansas last year to accept a different position with the USFWS. I knew Allan wanted to continue this project (started in 1994), so I volunteered to continue as Coordinator. I look forward to the challenge and to learning about Mississippi's colonial waterbirds.

Our goal is to count the number of each species nesting in each colony in the state once every year. This year is the sixth for the MCWC and we still have a long way to go to get complete coverage of the state. If you find a flight line of herons/egrets, follow it; ask land managers about colonies on their land; talk to birders and other knowledgeable individuals that we may have missed in our request for help; explore that block of woods you have always wanted to go into. Feel free to call me if you have questions or suggestions. I look forward to hearing from you.

As coordinator, my duties will be to try to find a volunteer to count each known colony each year, provide guidance to the volunteers, collect the data sheets from the volunteers, and compile the data sheets into the state list. I do not have a complete file of maps denoting the location of each colony. If you have maps of your colony sites please forward them to me so I can compile a statewide map of our sites.

Enclosed are your data forms, an instruction sheet explaining their use, and a return envelope. The count period is <u>June 1- June 19, 2000</u>. As always, we will accept counts from any time that the colonies are active, but information from within the count period provides more consistent data. This period was selected as a compromise between the early and late nesting species. Please count the colonies listed on the attached forms and return the completed forms to me by June 30, 2000. Let me know if you will not be able to visit these colonies. Also, please report any other colonies you may find.

Thanks for helping with this important survey.

Mary Post | File | Post | Post

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO USERS**

## Mississippi Colonial Waterbird Count

- Side 1 Please familiarize yourself with the form and instructions before going afield. Those items preceded by "\*" must be completed for any site surveyed; those preceded by a # must be completed for new sites or initial description.
  - \*1. <u>Colony Name</u> Insert existing colony name. If a new colony site, insert a name that characterizes the site for later reference -- limited to 25 characters.
  - \*2. <u>Colony Code No.</u> This 6-digit code must be entered for previously known sites. <u>Leave blank</u> for new colony sites; a code will be assigned later by the compiler.
  - \*3. Active or Inactive ONE BLANK MUST BE CHECKED
  - \*4. Survey Date A full date must be entered; FORMAT = 06-04-86.
  - \*5. Observer(s) Put name of person responsible for count on first blank and list other participants on Cooperator blanks. LEAVE COMPILER USE BLANKS EMPTY.
  - \*6. <u>Survey Vantage Point</u> One box <u>must be</u> check-marked; check the box that represents the closest applicable vantage point used to examine the site.
  - \*7. <u>Time</u> Start and end times (<u>24-hr military format</u>) <u>must be</u> entered. (2:00 p.m. = 1400 military format)
  - \*8. Status Check box 1, 2, or 3 as applicable (check only one). A colony not previously known is always box 1; check box 2 only when site description update data are marked on side 2.
  - \*9. <u>Predominant Reprod. Stage</u> Enter the single code for each species at the site that represents the prevalent stage for each species.
  - \*10. Survey Type Enter the single code in each column for each species surveyed that represents how nests and adults were enumerated. (Codes are in boxes at bottom of page.) An approximation or guess = visual estimate (code 2). Sampling process (code 3) is used for any sampling scheme or when subcounts are expanded to a total for any species.
  - \*11. No. Active Nests and No. Adults Enter based on your counts, sampling, or estimate.
  - \*12. <u>Est. breeding Pairs</u> Enter your <u>best estimate</u> of breeding <u>pairs</u> (not individual birds) represented at the site. This is always considered an estimate and MUST BE ENTERED.
- Side 2 This side should be completed as fully as possible for new colony sites. For description updates enter applicable changes as below:
  - #1. County Write in full county name.
  - #2. <u>Size</u> Enter hectares to nearest tenth. If unfamiliar with hectares, divide acres by 2.5 and enter that number.
  - #3. <u>Latitude/Longitude</u> Enter after consulting appropriate maps. FORMAT: 30°27'N 97°31'W = Lat. 3027 Long. 09731. If lat./long. not known, submit a map with the form to identify the colony location to the compiler.

COUNTY: Adams Co	ytru		SIZE: 4.0	hectares
	LONGITUDE: 90° 25' N	OWNER: US	FWS	
NEAREST CITY/TOWN: Sibles	1 MS	Distance: 1.6 kr	m. Direction To Colon	y:_ <u>SW</u> _
DISTANCE TO NEAREST ROUTINELY OCC	•	M COLONY K		USE N, S
DISTANCE TO NEAREST HIGHWAY, CANA	AL, AIRPORT, PARK, RAILROAD, ETC	. WITHIN 1 km FROM COLOR	W NA	E, W NE, SE
HEIGHT OF LOWEST NESTS ABOVE NORM	MAL WATER LEVEL	meters	. L	NW, SW
WOULD SOME NESTS BE FLOODED BY E	XTREME HIGH WATER LEVELS EXPE	ECTED AT THE COLONY?	Yes	
GEN. DESCRIPTION:	. 1.			
GEN. DESCRIPTION.				
IS COLONY SPECIFICALLY MANAGED OR PROTECTED FOR WATERBIRDS?:	Yes No			
GENERAL HABITAT: (Check as applicable)				
peninsula saltwater non-barrier island shoreline/lake, pond, impoundment riparian/river, stream	barrier island freshwater island shoreline/ocean, estuary other	upland wooded bottomland hardwood		
SPECIFIC HABITAT: (Check as applicable)		1161		
_ salt marsh	fresh marsh	spoil/fill area sand bar		
wooded swamp	bog rooftop	shrub swamp		
salt flat	gravel or shell beach	dune		
sandy beach deciduous trees	evergreen trees	_ mixed trees		
parking lot	_ pier, jetty, dock, breakwater	_ mixed forbs/shrubs/grass		
man-made structure	_ other	_ bottomland hardwood		
IMPORTANT VEGETATION: (Check as App	olicable) - Not Limited to vegetation suppo	rting nests.		
Baccharis	Elm	Prickly Pear	OTHERS (print in)	
Bald Cypress	Green Ash	Red Maple		
Black Mangrove	Hackberry	Tupelo		
Black Willow	Honey-locust	Salt Cedar		
Bulrush	Juniper	Salt March Grass		
Buttonbush	_ Live Oak	Sea ox-eye		
_ Cane	_ Nuttall Oak	_ Water Elm		
_ Cattail	Oak	_ Water Oak		
_ Cedar Elm	_ Osage Orange	Wild Rose Willow		
_ Cherrybark Oak	Pecan Pine	Willow Oak		
Chinaberry Chinese Tallow	Post Oak	Winged Elm		
Cottonwood	_ 100.04.	_		
GROUND SURFACE: (Check as Applicable)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
sand	shell	cobble		
rocks	cliff dead herbaceous/wrack/drift	salt/mud flat		
soil other	dead neroaceods/wrack/drift			c: lwp51 lwork/allan/comma

1 NEW COLONY	2 PREV. KNOWN COLONY (COUNT + DESCRIPTION. UPDATE)			TE) 2 PREV.	✓ 3 PREV. KNOWN COLONY (COUNT ONLY)			
	Predominant Reprod. Survey Type (enter code) Stage (enter 1 code) NESTS   ADULT		No. Active Nests	No. Adults	Est. Breed. Pairs			
Brown pelican								
Dblcr. Cormorant								
Anhinga	3	<u>a</u>	2	2	3	2		
Great Blue Heron								
Great Egret	3	<u>a</u>	2	13	8	8		
Snowy Egret						4		
Little Blue Heron					1 1 m 1			
Tricolored Heron								
Reddish Egret								
Cattle Egret								
Blcr. Night-Heron								
Ycr. Night-Heron					-127			
White Ibis								
White-faced Ibis								
Roseate Spoonbill								
Laughing Gull								
Gull-billed Tern								
Caspian Tern								
Royal Tern								
Sandwich Tern								
Forster's Tern								
Least Tern								
Black Skimmer								
			_					
	T	T	1					

Prenesting Eggs in Nests	= 1 = 2	Recent Fledglings Post nesting	= 4 = 5	Total Count Visual Estimate	= 1 = 2	Sampling = 3
Unfledged Young	= 3			Other	= 0 =	specify in comments

COMMENTS: There were 3 empty mests distrived with mo adults