

# Delta Wind Birds

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18 June 2016

Tara Sistrunk  
Human Resources and Employee Relations Manager  
Jackson County Utility Authority  
1225 Jackson Ave.  
Pascagoula, MS 39567

Dear Tara:

I'm writing to thank you for your support of our Big Day birding fundraiser this past spring, by allowing us to visit and look for birds at the Seaman Road Sewage Lagoons (as you did in 2015). As you may recall, our goal was to break the Mississippi record for most bird species found (seen or heard) in one 24-hour period, while raising money to provide habitat for migratory shorebirds in the Mississippi Delta. In advance of the event, we received pledges totaling more than \$27 per species.

During the week of April 11, it began to look like the weather conditions might be good for us to make our Big Day attempt—songbird migration was kicking into gear, and it looked like a storm system might settle over the coast and force the migrants to stay on the ground where we could see them. As the week progressed, it became clear that Saturday, April 16 would be a good day, so we finalized our plans. We started at midnight near the Ross Barnett Reservoir in Jackson, birded our way to Hancock County by dawn, and worked our way along the coast during the morning.

Our stop at the Seaman Road Sewage Lagoons during the middle of the day was essential, and very productive! We found 77 species of birds at the Lagoons, worth more than \$2000 of donations for bird habitat! Our final total on the day (after 20 hours of birding) was 167 species (just 8 short of the record 175), so our visit to the Lagoons provided a crucial 46% of our species for the day. We hope we might again count on your support in 2017, when we plan to try again (this time with an even better plan to break the record!). The Seaman Road Lagoons represent a truly special and important habitat for birds and other wildlife, and we are grateful for your continued management of it as a natural resource.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Hoeksema".

Jason Hoeksema  
President, Delta Wind Birds

