

THE ORIOLE

A Quarterly Journal of Georgia Ornithology : Official Organ of the
Georgia Ornithological Society



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STATUS OF THE GRAY KINGBIRD IN GEORGIA

DON E. EYLES

Scattered reports of the occurrence and nesting of the Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis dominicensis*) in Georgia have appeared in the literature over the past six decades. It is the object of this paper to summarize and evaluate these reports, and at the same time add other data yet unpublished. Misstatements of the status of this bird have occurred

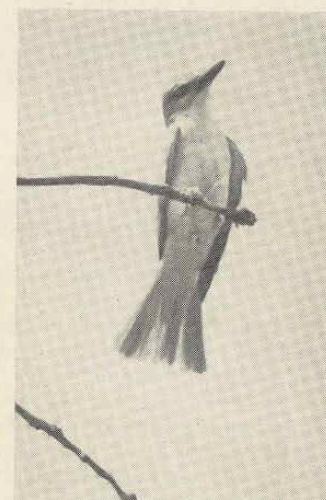


Figure 1. Breeding Gray Kingbird on Cockspar Island, Georgia, July, 1938.
(Photograph by Ivan R. Tomkins.)

in the literature and in correspondence, and it is the hope of the writer that this summary will encourage anyone in possession of additional information to publish it. And in addition, if any reports have been overlooked, it is hoped that the omissions of this writer will be subsequently pointed out.

Many ornithologists do not recognize a new occurrence for a species until a specimen has been collected and positively identified from the

State in question. The Gray Kingbird deserves a place on the Georgia list for it has been collected at least once.

According to Rudolphe M. de Schauensee of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, there is a specimen, a male, in their collection taken on St. Simons Island [Glynn County], Georgia, September 1, 1859 by John Krider. The writer has not seen this specimen but he is assured by de Schauensee that the identification is correct. To the knowledge of the writer this occurrence has not been previously recorded in the literature (there are extant printed collections of the notes of Krider which the writer has not examined).

Advices from Alexander Sprunt indicate that a bird of this species was taken by Isaac Arnow at St. Marys, Camden County, Georgia, August 1, 1905. A specimen was reported by Troup D. Perry (Oologist 28:176-177, 1911) and reference to it was not made by this writer in a previous report on the Gray Kingbird in this journal (Oriole 3:24-25). The Perry reference vaguely mentions that Arnow has taken the Gray Kingbird and no data at all were given. The writer does not know the source of Sprunt's date, but he does not believe that Arnow personally reported this collection.

The writer visited Arnow on January 25, 1941, to try to obtain details concerning this collection. Arnow allowed the writer together with Ivan Tomkins and Walter Erichsen to go through his bird collection and, excepting ordinary Eastern Kingbirds, only one Kingbird was found. This was taken at first to be a Gray Kingbird, but later measurements proved it to be a partial albino Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus tyrannus*). This bird was said to be the Gray Kingbird by Arnow and he recalled collecting no albino Eastern Kingbird. Unfortunately, the bird bore a blank label with Arnow's collection number, so the writer cannot say for certain that this is the bird referred to by Perry or Sprunt. Arnow hopes to locate old collection data in order to clear up any misunderstanding.

For the present, it may only be assumed that Perry or Arnow was mistaken in his identification and the Krider specimen is the only definite collection from the State. Significantly, specimens of all of the other rare species collected by Arnow were present in his collection (with the exception of Kirtland's Warbler which had been given to La Prade). Also there is no Gray Kingbird among the Arnow specimens in the LaPrade collection at Emory University. The albino Eastern Kingbird which the writer believes to be the bird reported by Perry is being deposited in the Emory University Museum. It bears Arnow's collection number 732.

After the presence of a species in a state has been confirmed by a collection, sight records may be considered. Later compilers can only determine the validity of such records by estimating the reliability of

the observer. Doubt is often removed when conditions of the observation are given in the report. The attention of the writer was also directed by Sprunt to a sight record of the Gray Kingbird by Walter John Hoxie, reported by William G. Fargo in the Wilson Bulletin (46:190, 1934). This report is based upon an account embodied in a list of birds of Chatham County, Georgia, prepared by Hoxie and published in the Savannah Morning News. Fargo abstracted this list and summarized the Gray Kingbird as follows: "Gray Kingbird: rare summer resident."

This being a second-hand report, the writer consulted the files of the Savannah Morning News in order to get at the original source of Fargo's report. The findings of the writer on referring to the Savannah Morning News emphasize the importance of getting at original sources when preparing ornithological papers of an historical nature. The Gray Kingbird is listed by Hoxie but he does not state that he himself saw the bird! He merely states that the presence of this bird in Chatham County was reported to him. Thus the Gray Kingbird would belong in the hypothetical list of Fargo which includes those species not actually seen by Hoxie. As a matter of fact the statement from Fargo, quoted above, is misleading in its connotation if not actually a misstatement, for Hoxie states in the Savannah Morning News (No. 15650, p. 12, June 11, 1911): "445. Grey Kingbird. Reported this year from Tybee. We are well within the range of this bird and it has been taken both sides of us. Should be a rare summer resident."

It seems that the above discussed sight record was made by an anonymous observer under unknown conditions and is not of a type which contributes to sound ornithological knowledge.

A sight record which the writer believes to be valid is that of Gilbert R. Rossignol, reported by Ivan Tomkins in the Auk (51:252-253, 1934). Rossignol, to the knowledge of the writer who was closely associated in the field with him for several months, is a dependable observer. The bird in question was observed by him at the Quarantine Station on Cockspur Island in Chatham County, Georgia, on June 8, 1933.

Robert Norris reports this species from St. Simons, Glynn County, Georgia (Oriole 4:30, 1939). Norris observed the birds upon three occasions during the month of June, 1939. It was certain that at least two individuals were present for the bird first observed had an injured leg. It might be pointed out that at least one of Norris' records was from Sea Island, close by St. Simons and commonly considered to be a portion of the latter island. The writer believes that this is a reliable record.

The following unpublished sight records of the Gray Kingbird are reported here through the courtesy of William W. Griffin and Ivan Tomkins. They include a single bird seen at Fort Pulaski on Cockspur Island, Sept. 4, 1939 (Griffin) a bird seen at Lazaretto on Tybee Island, April 29, 1939 (Tomkins) a bird seen on Long Island (close and directly

connected to Cockspur Island), May 30, 1939 (Tomkins) and a bird seen on Cockspur Island, Sept. 3, 1939 (Tomkins). All of the above observations are from Chatham County.

The preceding paragraphs summarize the reports of Gray Kingbird occurrences of which the writer is aware. Concerning breeding, the attention of the writer was also called by Sprunt to a report of the eggs of this species supposedly from St. Simons Island in Glynn County. These eggs were included in a collection purported to have been taken in Georgia by S. W. Wilson between 1853 and 1865. The report was published by H. B. Bailey in the Nuttall Bulletin (8:39, 1883), and the eggs are said to have been taken in Wayne and McIntosh Counties and on St. Simons Island. To quote Bailey concerning the Gray Kingbird: "Nests on the horizontal limbs of oak-trees, near the top, and loosely constructed of twigs, 'with little or no lining' eggs always three. Those of a set taken June 8 (no year given) measure respectively: 1.03x.75; 1.06x.75; 1.08x.75; they are salmon-colored with blotches of reddish brown on the large end." No definite locality is given.

The above record is made less dependable by the fact that 13 other species of birds which were reported nesting in the area in the same report apparently do not nest there at the present time. Wayne in The Auk has challenged the validity of at least three of the records reported by Bailey; namely: the Bank Swallow, Short-billed Marsh Wren, and Cowbird. Taking into account these considerations and the fact that the entire note is inexact as to data, it seems uncertain whether or not this breeding record should be accepted. A point in its favor is that the Krider specimen was taken during the period Wilson was collecting in Georgia.

It is well that our knowledge of the status of the Gray Kingbird need no longer depend upon the preceding apocryphal report, for there are more recent and better-substantiated nesting records. The first of these is the report by this writer of a pair of these birds nesting on Cockspur Island in Chatham County in July, 1938 (Oriole 3:24-25, 1938). A photograph of one of these birds appeared in the Savannah Evening Press of July 22, 1938. The pair of birds in question was observed not only by the writer but by Ivan Tomkins and other Savannah bird students.

A second nesting, not yet reported, is that of presumably the same pair of birds referred to in the preceding paragraph. The nest was found on June 24, 1939, in a Chinaberry Tree on Cockspur Island close to the tree in which the 1938 nest was situated. Ivan Tomkins and the writer observed this nest but later it was destroyed by dredging operations. Whether or not the birds returned in 1940 is uncertain.

The above summarizes the nesting reports for the Gray Kingbird known to the writer. Reference in correspondence has been made to eggs supposedly collected by Troup D. Perry and Isaac Arnow. Arnow

denied that he had ever found this bird nesting at St. Mary's, and Walter Erichsen, the closest remaining friend of Perry, had never heard Perry mention such a record.

The status of the Gray Kingbird in Georgia might be summarized finally as follows: Rare, perhaps casual, summer resident which has been seen in Georgia as early as April 29 and as late as September 4. Nests are definitely known from Cockspur Island, Chatham County, and one is reported from St. Simons Island, Glynn County. One specimen, taken by Krider on St. Simons Island and deposited in the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia collection, is known from the State.

Errors and omissions have been characteristic of correspondence and literature concerning the Gray Kingbird in Georgia, the writer's own being no exception. While it is not claimed that these notes are complete, it is hoped that the inquiries and opinions of the writer will be useful to Georgia bird students.

Henry R. Carter Memorial Laboratory,
Savannah, Georgia,
January, 1941.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF ATHENS, CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA

THOMAS D. BURLEIGH

Since the publication of Occasional Paper No. 1 of the Georgia Ornithological Society (*The Birds of Athens, Clarke County, Georgia*), occasional visits have been made to Athens, and as much time as possible devoted to the study of the bird life of Clarke County. This field work has resulted in the gradual accumulation of a number of records adding to the present knowledge of the bird life of this corner of the state, and in order to bring the original list up to date these records are offered at this time for what they may be worth. They cover an interval of approximately four and a half years, from April, 1935 through September, 1940.

Botaurus lentiginosus. American Bittern.—A single bird seen December 1, 1937 in the Sandy Creek bottoms is my first definite winter record for this species here. Heretofore it had not been recorded later than October 30 (1921).

Sterna hirundo hirundo. Common Tern.—In view of the extreme scarcity of this species as a fall transient it is of interest to record a single bird seen August 18, 1939, feeding with Black Terns over the Sandy Creek bottoms that were under several feet of water at the time.

Riparia riparia riparia. Bank Swallow.—On the few occasions that this species has been observed in the fall only one or two individuals

have been recorded with flocks of other swallows. Rather exceptional then, and worthy of comment, was the appearance of twenty of these birds on August 18, 1939, feeding over the flooded Sandy Creek bottoms.

Hirundo erythrogaster. Barn Swallow.—A single bird seen April 6, 1937 is my earliest record by three days for the appearance of this species here in the spring. My previous earliest record was April 9 (1927).

Helmitheros vermivorus. Worm-eating Warbler.—Although heretofore only infrequently seen before the latter part of July, in 1939 the Worm-eating Warbler was fairly plentiful throughout the entire month, being first noted July 1, again on July 4, and at frequent intervals thereafter.

Vermivora chrysoptera. Golden-winged Warbler.—An immature female taken August 13, 1939 is my earliest record by one day for the occurrence of this species in the fall. My previous earliest record was August 14 (1925).

Vermivora celata celata. Orange-crowned Warbler.—The Orange-crowned Warbler appeared unusually early in the fall of 1937, for while I had never before recorded it before October 21 (1925), it was seen in 1937 on October 12, four birds being noted that morning in the Sandy Creek bottoms. One, a female, was collected then to verify the identification of this rather obscure species.

Dendroica tigrina. Cape May Warbler.—I recorded this species for the first time during any fall migration on October 12, 1937, a single bird, an adult male, being seen that day.

Dendroica cerulea. Cerulean Warbler.—An immature male taken on July 28, 1939 is my earliest record by two weeks for the occurrence of the Cerulean Warbler here in the fall, my earliest previous record being August 10 (1929). Normally rather scarce as a transient this species was fairly plentiful throughout all of August, 1939, and was frequently seen in the scattered stretches of woods.

Dendroica fusca. Blackburnian Warbler.—A rather early record for the appearance of this species in the fall was that of two birds, both in immature plumage, seen on the college campus on August 4, 1939. My earliest previous record was August 31 (1928), but I am inclined to believe now that it usually arrives earlier than this, but was overlooked.

Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea. Yellow Palm Warbler.—In addition to the two birds previously recorded from Athens I now have two more records for the occurrence of this eastern race here. A single bird, a male, was seen April 10, 1935, and another male was noted April 2, 1937. There is no question, however, but that the Yellow Palm Warbler is extremely scarce about Athens as a transient.

Sieurus aurocapillus. Oven-bird.—Although heretofore not recorded

in the fall until August 18 (1929), in 1939 the first Oven-bird was noted on August 2, and not infrequently during the following two weeks.

Wilsonia pusilla pusilla. Wilson's Warbler.—A male taken September 2, 1939, in underbrush in the Sandy Creek bottoms, is but my third record for the occurrence of this species about Athens in the fall, and by over two weeks my earliest date of arrival.

Pipilo erythrophthalmus erythrophthalmus. Red-eyed Towhee.—A male taken April 10, 1935 is my latest record by just a month for the occurrence of this northern race here in the spring. My latest previous record was March 10 (1929).

Passerherbulus caudatus. Leconte's Sparrow.—A male taken at the edge of the Sandy Creek bottoms on April 6, 1937 is my first record for the occurrence of Leconte's Sparrow about Athens. Such an elusive bird as this, however, could easily be overlooked, so it may be commoner than this one record would indicate.

Gulfport, Mississippi,
February, 1941.

THE CHRISTMAS CENSUS IN GEORGIA, 1940

This year we present the 1940 Christmas censuses taken in Georgia. Below you will find all of them in tabulated form. All of the censuses printed here were also published in the January-February Supplement to *The Audubon Magazine*, 1941, pages 105-107. They are reproduced here so that a number of Georgia bird students who would otherwise not have the chance to see them might do so through the pages of *The Oriole*.

Some 128 species and subspecies make up the composite list for Georgia. Atlanta had the largest number of species with 74; however, Savannah led with the largest number of individuals. Savannah observers counted 37,963 birds. Among the rarer birds reported on the various censuses were the following: Red-throated Loon (Brunswick), Double-crested Cormorant (Mt. Berry), Old-Squaw (Savannah), Duck Hawk (Savannah), Catbird (Fitzgerald), Brewer's Blackbird (Atlanta), and Henslow's Sparrow, (Atlanta). Particularly interesting is the number of ducks reported at Savannah, over 32,000 of them. We note also that seven species of warblers were recorded by Stoddard at Sherwood Plantation.

Atlanta (Silver Lake, South River, Decatur, Waterworks, and all areas between). Dec. 22, 5:30 A. M. to 5:30 P. M. Clear at start, cloudy in P. M., foggy, no wind, temp. 28-50. Total hrs., 58; total miles, 77. Observers in nine parties. Mrs. H. M. Daniel, Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Dennington, Mrs. Ruth Taylor, Ralph Ramsey, Thos. Hill, Mrs. Frances Hames, Mrs. J. E. Boyd, Mrs. H. H. Harris, Berma Abercrombie, Mabel Abercrombie, Mr. Sam Slicer, Robert Gordon, Mrs. Lewis Gordon, Mrs. J. C. Oliver, Mary Grady, Glenn Bell, R. B. Belser, Ray Werner, Wallace Dreyfuss, Nelson Spratt, Bill Griffin.

Savannah (Savannah River reservation, Port Wentworth to Georgia-Carolina bridge, cypress-maple-pine woods to south, old rice fields to north; county farm,

Bethesda, Rosario Gardens, Wormsloe, Thunder bolt). Dec. 27, 8:30 A. M. to 4:30 P. M. Overcast, light rain, wind south, temp. 64 at start, 62 at return. Total hrs., 40; total miles, 142. Observers in two parties. Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Wingo, Mrs. T. F. Walsh, Mrs. J. R. Cain, Anne Reddy, Marie Reddy.

Altamaha Plantation, Brunswick (old rice fields, cypress and oak swamp along river, salt marshes on St. Simon's Is. and Sea Is.). Dec. 22, 8:30 A. M. to 6:00 P. M. Thickly overcast, slight north wind, temp. 55 at start, 62 at return. Total hrs., 13½; total miles, 55. Observers usually separate. William J. Cordes, Jr., and Thomas R. Paxton.

Mt. Berry (college, Girls School, Victory Lake, Boys School, reservoir, return to school via County road and Possum Trot; shrubbery, lawns, fields, orchards, ponds, hardwoods, pine flatwoods, mountain mixed woods). Dec. 26, 8:00 A. M. to 6:00 P. M. Overcast, misty, no wind, temp. 54 at start, 60 at return. Observers together. Robert B. Jones and Harold C. Jones.

Sherwood Plantation, Grady County (within 1500 acres of upland fields, cultivated and fallow (10%), pineland (75%), and mixed hardwoods with small pond). Dec. 25, 6:50 A. M. to 7:00 P. M. Heavily overcast, fog in morning, later mist and drizzling rain, light easterly winds, shifting to southerly, temp. 57 at start, 62 at return. On foot and by car. Herbert L. Stoddard.

Fitzgerald (Area within 15-mile diameter including woodland stream, pineland, upland fields, and two cypress swamps; Bowen's Mill and Lake Beatrice). Dec. 25, 7:15 A. M. to 6:00 P. M. Overcast, with some misty rain, calm, temp. 57 at start, 60 at return. Observers largely together. Milton Hopkins, Charles Norris and Robert Norris.

Screven County (area on the C. B. Pfeiffer farm home; pine-oak-gum woods, orchards and old fields, swamps bordering the Savannah River). Dec. 27, 1:00 P. M. to 5:00 P. M. Intermittent sunshine and overcast skies, occasional slight northwest wind, temp. 66 at start, 69 at return. 7 hours, 12 miles. Grace Pfeiffer, Anne Pfeiffer Hamilton, and R. E. Hamilton.

Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, Round Oak (Blountsville Lake to Round Oak, Wayside returning to refuge headquarters via Five Points. Juliette to refuge headquarters then to transit station No. 93 and return). Dec. 22, 6:00 A. M. to 5:30 P. M. Clear morning but cloudy afternoon, wind light, northeast, temp. 38 at start, 58 at return. Total hrs., 14; total miles, 76. Raymond J. Fleetwood, Joe Morton, and Dunbar Robb.

	Atlanta Dec. 22	Savannah Dec. 27	Brunswick Dec. 22	Mt. Berry Dec. 26	Grady Co. Dec. 25	Fitzgerald Dec. 25	Screven Co. Dec. 27	Round Oak Dec. 22
Total species	74	60	41	60	58	50	61	
Total individuals	12,236	37,963	3,859	1,823	1,222	926	610	2,369
No. Observers	22	6	2	2	1	3	3	3
Red-throated Loon			3					
Pied-billed Grebe	9							
Brown Pelican			2					
Cormorant				1				
Great Blue Heron	2	3			3	1	1	
American Egret			2					
Louisiana Heron			5					
Little Blue Heron		1						
Canada Goose		12						
Mallard	2	8,000		15				4

	Atlanta Dec. 22	Savannah Dec. 27	Brunswick Dec. 22	Mt. Berry Dec. 26	Grady Co. Dec. 25	Fitzgerald Dec. 25	Screven Co. Dec. 27	Round Oak Dec. 22
Black Duck	2	8,000		12				
Gadwall		100						
Baldpate		800						
American Pintail	3	5,000						
Green-winged Teal		500						
Shoveller		500						
Wood Duck		5,000	20		3			
Ring-necked Duck	8	1,000		2	7			
Greater Scaup Duck		200						
Lesser Scaup Duck	1	4,000	7					
Bufflehead		200						
Old-Squaw		6						
Hooded Merganser	1							
Red-breasted Merganser			9					
Turkey Vulture	11	1	1	7	8		8	18
Black Vulture	17		27	6	13		16	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk				1	1		1	1
Cooper's Hawk	1	2			1	1		2
Red-tailed Hawk	1	12			3		1	5
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	12	1		1			
Bald Eagle		1						
Marsh Hawk	1	10	4	1		1	1	2
Duck Hawk		2						
Sparrow Hawk	2	7	2		3	1	1	1
Bob-white	52			8	48	37	37	33
Eastern Turkey		10			3			
King Rail			1					
Virginia Rail			1					
Coot		1,000						
Semipalmated Plover			1					
Killdeer	1	5						
Black-bellied Plover			1					
Woodcock						1		
Wilson's Snipe	36	10				9		1
Willet		12	2					
Greater Yellow-legs		2	4					
Lesser Yellow-legs		3	2					
Red-backed Sandpiper			22					
Western Sandpiper			136					
Sanderling			8					
Herring Gull		64	16					
Ring-billed Gull			56					
Common Tern			6					
Royal Tern			4					
Black Skimmer			400					
Mourning Dove	37	14	1	44	31	37	44	58
Ground Dove		2						
Screech Owl	1							1
Great Horned Owl								6
Barred Owl			2		6			
Belted Kingfisher	5	3	4	1	1	4		1

	Atlanta Dec. 22	Savannah Dec. 27	Brunswick Dec. 22	Mt. Berry Dec. 26	Grady Co. Dec. 25	Fitzgerald Dec. 25	Screven Co. Dec. 27	Round Oak Dec. 22
Flicker	32	1	1	5	12	20	8	20
Pileated Woodpecker	7		2		10	1		1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	14		4	1	28	8	4	13
Red-headed Woodpecker	6			1		2		
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	1		1	6	1	2	5
Hairy Woodpecker	8				3	1	1	4
Downy Woodpecker	43		2	2	7	8	5	4
Red-cockaded Woodpecker					2	2	11	2
Phoebe		8	1		4	3	2	4
Horned Lark	35							4
Blue Jay	318	2	1	26	22	13	13	31
Crow	92	1,104		13	40		5	72
Fish Crow			19					
Carolina Chickadee	62	14	3	3	14	4	6	15
Tufted Titmouse	77		2	6	21	18	11	9
White-breasted Nuthatch	36			1	8		8	
Brown-headed Nuthatch	34				11	2	8	9
Brown Creeper	11				2	1	4	
House Wren		2			3	1		
Winter Wren	6	2				4		8
Bewick's Wren	1					2	1	1
Carolina Wren	67	4	1	1	21	4	8	10
Short-billed Marsh Wren						1		2
Mockingbird	59	9	1	2	10	8	6	8
Catbird						1		
Brown Thrasher	12	2	8	4	3	10	1	5
Robin	3	140						
Hermit Thrush	20	1	1		10	6	3	20
Bluebird	94		2	3	17	13	16	38
Golden-crowned Kinglet	29			2		9	11	12
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	23	2	3		46	13	11	14
Amer. Pipit	3	150			5	9		
Cedar Waxwing	76					33		35
Loggerhead Shrike	6	11	6		1	6	1	9
Starling	1,427			21	7			28
Blue-headed Vireo					6		2	
Black & White Warbler					2	2		
Orange-crowned Warbler					2			
Myrtle Warbler	22		132		78	12	6	15
Yellow-throated Warbler			1		1			
Pine Warbler	3		1		235	21	4	1
Palm Warbler			4		15	15		1
Yellow-throat	2		3		7	11		1
English Sparrow	278	59		20		35	31	5
Meadowlark	203	150	20	5	10	8	35	27
Red-wing	4,800	1,000	1,598	300	5			5,100
Rusty Blackbird	122			500		150		
Brewer's Blackbird	5							
Boat-tailed Grackle			2					
Grackle	1,426	500	233	700		37		
Cowbird	175							

	Atlanta Dec. 22	Savannah Dec. 27	Brunswick Dec. 22	Mt. Berry Dec. 26	Grady Co. Dec. 25	Fitzgerald Dec. 25	Screven Co. Dec. 27	Round Oak Dec. 22
Cardinal	182	19	19	9	79	27	13	35
Purple Finch	6	2						
Goldfinch	132	8	10	5	32	64	10	35
*Towhee	143	1		12	29	74	11	45
Savannah Sparrow	26				8	1		30
Henslow's Sparrow	1							
Sharp-tailed Sparrow		25						
Vesper Sparrow	11	9			67	65	7	
Slate-colored Junco	386			32	25	24	31	208
Chipping Sparrow	96	47		8	15	5	131	40
Field Sparrow	670	7		16	26	6	31	132
White-throated Sparrow	341	180	69	19	88	46	7	135
Fox Sparrow	9	2					16	75
Swamp Sparrow	81		23		32	19	3	15
Song Sparrow	318			2	17	3	16	48

*At Sherwood Plantation, Grady County, Ga., Stoddard identified 18 Red-eyed Towhees (*P. e. erythroptalmus*) and 11 Alabama Towhees (*P. e. canaster*).

GENERAL NOTES

A GEORGIA SPECIMEN OF THE ICELAND GULL.—A large white-winged gull was collected on the Savannah River, about three miles east of Savannah, on February 13, 1941. At first I thought it a Glaucus Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*), but the measurements conclusively proved it to be an Iceland Gull (*L. leucopterus*). The specimen bears my serial number 665, and will be deposited in the Charleston Museum.

This species is uncommon south of the Great Lakes and Long Island, and in such of the literature as is available, I have found but one account of it in the southeastern states, a single specimen collected at Crystal River, Florida, and recorded in Howell's "Florida Bird Life," p. 255.

On February 1, 1941, a similar gull was seen on the river in front of the city, but I then thought it a Glaucus Gull, a species that is almost as rare along the south Atlantic coast. Most of the records for that species (*L. hyperboreus*) have been made here along the Savannah River, and though the three specimens I have taken here have been recorded elsewhere, for the sake of completing the record in this note, I give the dates and serial numbers of the specimens. These are: #285, February 28, 1931; #305, April 14, 1931; and #523, February 14, 1935, respectively.—IVAN R. TOMKINS, U. S. Dredge DeWitt Clinton, Savannah, Ga.

OCCURRENCE OF THE WESTERN GRASSHOPPER SPARROW IN GEORGIA.—On January 27, 1936, while enroute to Thomasville, a brief stop was made at Newton, Baker County, and among the few birds taken during the hour or two spent in the field was a male Grasshopper Sparrow that

proved to be typical of the western race, *bimaculatus*. It was feeding at the edge of a field overgrown with broomsedge, a site much favored by these elusive sparrows during the winter months, and had it not flown on my approach its presence would never have been suspected. This is apparently the first definite record for the occurrence of this subspecies in the state, but it is possible that further collecting would reveal this race as not uncommon in Georgia both as a transient and, in the southern half of the state, as a winter resident.—THOS. D. BURLEIGH, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Gulfport, Miss.*

FOUR UNPUBLISHED GOLDEN EAGLE RECORDS FROM GEORGIA—On about January 10, 1941 Wildlife Ranger Webster W. Dockery found a live Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*) caught in a steel trap in the Chattahoochee National Forest near Vogel State Park. The bird was given to Charles Elliott and kept by the Division of Wildlife at the game farm near Atlanta for several days until its death. The dead bird was given to Charles Wharton who mounted it for the State Museum. I am indebted to Mr. Wharton and to Mr. D. L. Rainey of Toccoa, Georgia for the details of this record.

On February 14, 1941 Carl Fitts, a resident of Pickens County, shot an adult Golden Eagle on his farm 4 miles east of Jasper, Georgia. Fitts shot the bird in the act of eating a freshly killed raccoon. The wing spread was seven feet, three inches. Charles Wharton secured the specimen and mounted it for the State Museum.

In the Emory Museum there are two additional specimens from the northern half of the State. The first is an adult male which was caught in a steel trap on the top of Brasstown Bald in Union County, Georgia on December 18, 1919 by Bonnell H. Stone. The second is also an adult male, poorly preserved, which was collected in Butts County, Georgia on April 23, 1913 and prepared as a skin by several people under the leadership of F. N. Duncan.

The writer would like to point out that at least 17 records of Golden Eagles in Georgia have now been published.—WILLIAM W. GRIFFIN, *Biology Department, Emory University, Ga.*

ANOTHER WINTER SPOTTED SANDPIPER IN GEORGIA—On January 25, 1941 the writers observed a Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) along the edge of Jones Creek on St. Simon's Island in Glynn County, Georgia. This is the second winter occurrence for this species on the island. The writers also recorded a bird in Atlanta in December, 1936.—GEORGE W. SCIPLE, JR. AND WILLIAM W. GRIFFIN, *Biology Department, Emory University, Georgia.*

BLUEBIRD NESTING IN GROUND—While patrolling the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge April 26, 1940, the writer saw a Bluebird fly from a hole in a road bank, one mile east of Juliette, Georgia. Upon investigation a

partially completed nest was found about twelve inches from the entrance. The nest was again visited May 16 and the female was sitting on the nest. Time did not permit further observations during the brooding, however the fledglings had left the nest when it was visited several days later.

This is the only record of the underground nesting of the Bluebird (*Sialia sialis sialis*) that is known to the writer, so it is considered worthy of publication.—RAYMOND J. FLEETWOOD, *Refuge Manager, Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, Round Oak, Georgia.*

LINCOLN'S SPARROW IN JONES COUNTY, GEORGIA—While doing field work on the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge April 28, 1940, the writer found three individuals of Lincoln's Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolni lincolni*) in a briar field about four and one half miles southwest of Round Oak. The marking, song and habit indicated that the birds were this species. This is the first record of the species for the refuge.—RAYMOND J. FLEETWOOD, *Refuge Manager, Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, Round Oak, Georgia.*

COASTAL OBSERVATIONS FROM MCINTOSH COUNTY, GEORGIA—On the lonely beach we knew that we could rely on the sandpipers, plovers, and we found Ruddy Turnstones, flying gulls, terns, and several Black Skimmers with their long odd bills. Cormorants flew over the water, occasionally relaxing to glide. But in January, January 9, 1941, to be exact, we hoped to see something unusual on this Sea Island.

Athos looked through the binoculars at two birds that rested on the beach ahead of us. "Oyster-catchers." I took the glasses to focus on the birds of long red bills, black and white bodies. Slowly, casually, we walked nearer the birds that were regarding us also. As we approached, they flew a short distance away, alighting on the beach. For an hour we pursued them, never getting very close. Yet we had ample opportunity of being positive in our identification and observing them through the glasses before they chose a sand bar far from the shore.

As we sauntered back, this time walking among the driftwood that had been left by exceptionally high tides, all of a sudden a Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia subsp.*) dashed away from us. He had been only ten or fifteen feet before us, and without aid of glasses we were sure of our bird. Nor did he seem particularly afraid of us; for he alighted on the beach merely a stone's throw distant and stood on his long legs (for an owl) peering at us.

After observing him a time, we pretended to go away, the while keeping our eyes on him. We were not letting him out of sight, for we realized that it was unusual to find a Burrowing Owl so far north. Athos, my husband, had seen them in the Kissimmee region of Florida, but here we were observing one on the coast of Georgia.

After a few minutes the owl returned to what we thought was the

same place we had flushed him. Again we disturbed his peace by turning back, and he flew a short distance to watch us.

"His roosting place must be here somewhere," Athos said as we reached the vicinity from which the owl had hurriedly departed twice.

We knew that Burrowing Owls live in holes in the ground, but following a hunch, we started looking among the old logs lying about. I found a rotten, hollowed log and peered inside; there were owl pellets and scattered feathers. We carefully examined the inside of the log and found only matted pellets and old feathers. Then! Half of the body of a plover that had recently been killed was found. Perhaps we had interrupted the owl at a meal.

Not only had we found a Burrowing Owl in an unusual locality, but we had found one that had adapted himself to different conditions by living in a log, and eating what was close at hand and easily caught.—SARA MENABONI, 4556 Jett Road, Rt. 6, Atlanta, Georgia.

SEASONAL NOTES FROM ATLANTA—Activity during the winter months was rather limited and few noteworthy records were made. As a whole the winter was mild, the rainfall medium.

Will Cordes observed a Broad-winged Hawk on December 30, interesting since this bird is rare in winter.

An American Merganser was found dead in a field near Stone Mountain by Mr. Sam Hunter on December 16. The writer examined the specimen, a female, but it had deteriorated too far for preservation.

On the Christmas Census the only unusual bird was a Henslow's Sparrow which Mrs. Hugh Harris and Mrs. Maurice Abercrombie studied at the Walter Candler Estate. At present the status of this species here is rather confused, however it is certainly a rare bird in the area.

Grackles and Starlings roosted in great numbers near the State Capitol and in the trees along Central Avenue and Washington Street. An estimated 20,000 birds were present on February 15. About one-third of them were Grackles and the rest were Starlings with a few Red-wings.—WILLIAM W. GRIFFIN, *Biology Department, Emory University, Ga.*

NEWS AND REVIEWS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETING—The ninth semi-annual meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society will be held at Emory University and Atlanta on April 19 and 20, 1941. There will be a morning session beginning at 10:30 A. M. at the University at which papers will be read and demonstrations held. Lunch will be served at the Emory Cafeteria. Following a tour through the Emory Museum and the LaPrade Collection of Birds, the afternoon and business sessions will be held. The banquet will be held Saturday night with an excellent program in store.

Breakfast will be served in the field on Sunday and an interesting

field trip will get under way. The trip will wind up in beautiful Fernbank Forest where lunch will be served. Following this a check-up on all birds observed will be made, and the meeting will adjourn.

Mrs. James C. Oliver is the local chairman of arrangements. Details of the meeting with a complete program and prices of meals will be mailed to all members at a later date.

NEW COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA—The Department of Zoology, University of Georgia, announces the following new courses to be offered beginning in the fall quarter, 1941.

309. Animal Ecology. 5 hours. Fall quarter. Eugene P. Odum. This course deals with the methods of study and identification of animals in the field, biotic and physical factors of the environment, animal communities, and the application of ecological principles to wildlife conservation and management.

381. Ornithology. 5 hours. Spring quarter. Eugene P. Odum. An introduction to the study of birds emphasizing the identification, classification, life histories, and economic importance of Georgia species.

Doctor Odum is also planning to carry on more extensive research problems in ornithology as opportunities arise.

OBITUARY

J. M. MALLORY, a resident of Savannah, Georgia and a member of the Savannah Audubon Society died on June 4, 1940. Mr. Mallory was a charter member of the G. O. S.

MRS. HAL HENTZ died in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 11, 1941. Although a new member of the Society, she had long been interested in birds. The Habersham Garden Club of Atlanta is developing a bird sanctuary in her memory, a fitting tribute to a bird lover.

The sympathy of the Society is with the friends and loved ones of these two fine people.—W. W. G.

WILLIS W. WORTHINGTON, noted naturalist and bird collector, died at Shelter Island, New York, on October 4, 1940, in his seventy-ninth year. About forty-five years ago he collected birds along the Georgia coast. In one account (*Young Oologist*, 1885, 5) he tells of skinning 1,300 birds in two months, and in another account mentions coming in at night with thirty-eight ground doves all plugged and ready for skinning.

Worthington's Wren (*Telmatoodytes palustris griseus*) was named for him by William Brewster. The type locality is Sapelo Island, Georgia.—I. R. T.

THE ORIOLE

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EDITORIAL

As you have been told before, this is your magazine. Your contributions are absolutely necessary for its continuation and upbuilding. A word now to all prospective contributors.

Manuscript should be typed (double-spaced) on only one side of regular letter sized paper of good quality. The title should be brief and should be relative to the subject. The scientific names of species mentioned more than casually should be included. Do not specify on the manuscript as to the type of print to be used. The address of the author and the date of submission of the manuscript should be given at the end. All articles will be accepted with the understanding that they have not been published or accepted for publication elsewhere.

Photographic prints intended for text illustrations should be unmounted and should have a brief legend attached. *The Oriole* is not financially able to have many illustrations; therefore, we are always willing for the cost of engraving to be assumed by the author. On payment of postage all cuts donated will be returned to the author.

Galley proof will be furnished to the authors before publication only on request. In such cases it must be returned promptly, and expensive alterations must be charged to the author.

Reprints will be furnished to contributors at cost. It will be necessary, however, for orders to accompany the original manuscript. For 100 reprints, one to four pages will cost \$2.25; five or six pages, \$4.00; and seven or eight, \$5.00. All contributors are urged to take advantage of this offer.

Your new editor would like to acknowledge his appreciation of the many helpful suggestions made in regard to *The Oriole* and its editorial policy. Special thanks go to Mr. T. E. Dennington, our printer, and to Mrs. Hugh Harris, the former editor. Don Eyles, another former editor, has given much good advice in addition to contributing an important paper. Ivan Tomkins has also made many helpful suggestions. To all of these and to many more go your editor's sincerest thanks.

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