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The Oriole, a quarterly journal of Georgia ornithology, publishes original articles that advance the study of birds in the state of Georgia and adjoining regions. *The Oriole* welcomes submission of articles describing the occurrence, distribution, behavior, or identification of birds in Georgia, as well as scientific studies from all fields of ornithology.

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FIRST RECORD OF A NORTHERN WHEATEAR IN GEORGIA

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A Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) made a brief appearance on Jekyll Island, Glynn County, Georgia, on 10 October 1998. The basic-plumaged bird was observed at relatively close range several different times over the course of approximately 1 hr in a residential area at the south end of the island. The bird was photographed as well. This paper describes the observations of two separate observers.

Observations by Lydia Thompson. — On 10 October 1998, I accompanied Joe Greenberg and his birding class on a field trip to Jekyll Island. As the group was leaving the parking area for the Jekyll Island banding station at approximately 11:30, Sally Ramer asked about a bird perched on a wire at the corner of South Beachview Drive and Macy Lane. The bird gave the impression of a short-tailed mockingbird. Its head was warm gray-brown with a white supercillium, darkish cheek patch, and white mustache. The bill was straight and black, like that of a bluebird but a bit longer. The throat, breast, belly, and shoulder were warm buff; the back of the bird was a warm cinnamon brown-gray. The dark primaries with light edgings resulted in a contrast between the folded wings and the back. The tail of the perched bird was not long and appeared dark. When the bird flew from the wire to the bicycle trail on the opposite side of South Beachview, the white rump and upper tail coverts were conspicuous.

I watched the bird for approximately 30 min with 10X Optolyth

binoculars at distances of 12–15 m under sunny skies. There were also a few Kowa spotting scopes focused on the bird as the group observed it in the grass along the bicycle trail. Observers included Gail Casteel, Richard Hester, Sally Ramer, Ed and Betty Turlington, Louella Weld, and Marianna Wilson. When all observers had agreed that the bird was a Northern Wheatear, I returned to the banding station to alert others.

Observations by Nancy Gobris. — While working at the Jekyll Island banding station on 10 October 1998, I was alerted to the presence of a Northern Wheatear by Lydia Thompson. The bird was still in view when I reached the group of observers at the corner of South Beachview and Macy Lane. I observed the bird for several minutes with Pentax 10X binoculars. The body plumage was warm brown and there was a light supercilium. On the folded tail, a black terminal band and proximally white outer rectrices were visible.

After the bird flew out of sight, and several of the assembled birders departed, Jan Pitman, Darrell Lee (who had seen wheatears before in Alaska), Charles Ratliff, and I waited for about 10 min until the bird returned. It flew onto a lamppost in the front yard of 796 South Beachview Drive. We viewed the bird from 10–12 m as it scanned the ground from the top of the 2.5-m lamppost and as it flew to the lawn to capture an insect. Jan Pitman photographed the bird from a distance of about 4.5 m with a 75–300-mm lens. The bird's head, nape, and back were warm brown, the head with a darker auricular forming an indistinctly defined mask. There was a conspicuous light buff supercilium. The bill was all dark, straight, and relatively thin. The wings were also warm brown, but a shade darker than the upperparts. The wing feathers were lightly edged, and the coverts were tipped whitish, appearing scalloped. The throat and breast were warm brown, blending to a lighter belly and crissum. We watched the bird for 10–15 min before a Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) chased it away. The wheatear flew up and over the house next door, at which time Jan Pitman was able to photograph it in flight. The black and white inverted "T" pattern on the tail was conspicuous when the bird flew.

The bird reappeared about 5 min later and flew up Macy Lane, landing on the power line at the corner. When viewed from below, the bird appeared to have a golden cinnamon wash on the breast. As Jan photographed the bird on the wire, Don Cohrs, Roger Atchison, Page Mulhollan, and Michael Hodge came to observe the bird. Both Roger and Page had seen wheatears in Alaska. After about 5 min on the wire, the bird flew to an exposed tree branch next to the bicycle trail, then, at about 12:30, flew off over the trees toward the interior of the islands. It was not seen again despite searches later in the day and the following morning.

I was unable to determine the age and sex of the bird. The basic plumage of male and female hatching-year birds is similar to that of adult females (Kren and Zoerb 1997, Pyle 1997), making them essentially indistinguishable in the field (Clement 1987). All three plumages include brown upperparts, an indistinct mask, and a buffy supercilium. Adult male basic plumage is similar enough to that of females and immatures that differences can be difficult to discern in the field. Variable features that may distinguish winter adult males include some gray visible in the brown upperparts (brown feather edges in fall abrade and reveal underlying gray by spring), blackish wing feathers, a more distinct dark mask and black lores, and a white supercilium (Clement 1987, Cramp 1988, Kren and Zoerb 1997, Pyle 1997). Based on these characters, my observations seem to indicate an immature male or female or an adult female, while Lydia's observations suggest a possible adult male.

Pattern of Vagrancy

Two distinct populations of Northern Wheatears are found in North America. The nominate *O. o. oenanthe* breeds in Alaska and northwest Canada, including the Yukon and Mackenzie District of the Northwest Territories. The Greenland race, *O. o. leucorhoa*, breeds in Greenland and northeast Canada, including Baffin Island, the northern tip of Quebec, and Labrador (Snow 1953, Kren and Zoerb 1997). Both subspecies leave North America to winter in sub-Saharan Africa, the nominate race migrating across Asia and the Middle East, the Greenland race migrating southeastward across the north Atlantic into western Europe, then south to western Africa. Sightings reported in eastern North America are presumed to be of the Greenland race.

Through 1996, vagrant Northern Wheatears had been reported in 33 states and Canadian provinces (Kren and Zoerb 1997). Most records in the Lower 48 are from the Northeast in the fall, with at least 130 records since 1975 (Mlodinow and O'Brien 1996). In the Southeast, there are fall records from Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina. One wheatear wintered in Louisiana in 1992–1993 (Mlodinow and O'Brien 1996). Published records exist for the states neighboring Georgia. Florida has four confirmed fall records between 1955 and 1994 (Smith and Woolfenden 1995). North Carolina has a fall sight report from 1981 (Murphy 1982) and confirmed fall records from 1987 (Fussell 1992), 1994 (Davis 1995), and 1995 (Davis 1996). South Carolina has one fall sight record (Chamberlain 1960), which places the species on that state's hypothetical list.

This sighting of a Northern Wheatear, officially accepted by the Georgia Bird Records Committee in December 1998, is the first

documented record of the species in Georgia.

Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge Jan Pitman for photographing the wheatear for documentation. We thank Lex Grover and Harry LeGrand for information on wheatear records in South Carolina and North Carolina, respectively. Thanks to reviewers Jerry and Marie Amerson, Giff Beaton, Darrell Lee, Andrea Litt, Senta McAdoo, and Jan Pitman.

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GENERAL NOTES

VIRGINIA'S WARBLER AT KENNESAW MOUNTAIN, COBB COUNTY, GEORGIA — On the morning of 17 September 1997, Shawn Reed and I discovered a Virginia's Warbler (*Vermivora virginiae*) at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Cobb County, Georgia. As we observed a flock of warblers near a scrubby patch of low bushes and scattered deciduous trees below the uppermost parking lot on Kennesaw Mountain, a warbler-sized bird flew into a low tree about 15 m away. Using 8x42 binoculars I saw a gray warbler with bright lemon undertail coverts. The bold and complete eye-ring stood out, and on the middle upper breast there was a lighter and less intense yellow patch (in comparison to the yellow undertail coverts). The chin and throat were light gray, whereas the lower breast and belly were dull grayish white. The wings were darker gray than the rest of the body.

After about a minute of observation, the bird flew across the road into a deciduous tree where Shawn Reed first observed it, noting the same field marks stated above. As Shawn and I discussed the sighting, I suggested that the bird was a Virginia's Warbler, based on my previous observations of this species in Arizona a month prior, and elsewhere.

About 15 min later, Shawn again saw the bird fly into some low bushes in the same area. We could now see the back and rump and noted that the crown, nape, upper back, and lower back were uniformly light gray. The rump and the uppertail coverts were a muted yellow-green, as contrasted with the bright lemon-yellow undertail coverts. As the bird foraged low in the brush, it continuously pumped its tail. We soon lost sight of the bird, but it reappeared as we followed it to the overlook at the top of Kennesaw Mountain.

As I stood near the overlook, the bird appeared in some low brush about 3 m away. I could see the dark pointed bill and dark legs. I observed at this closer range the plain gray of the face and upper parts. The wings had no hint of wingbars and the wing coverts, back, and wing feathers were gray with no trace of olive green as in the Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*). The bird seemed somewhat long-tailed at this viewing. The tail was gray.

A few minutes later, Shawn relocated the bird near a paved path leading from the parking lot to the overlook. The bird flew into a low tree where we observed it for several minutes. At some point during these observations, we were joined by Larry Edmonds who also saw the bird.

I returned to Kennesaw Mountain with Shawn Reed, Chuck Hunter, and Bob and Deb Zaremba on the early morning of 18

September 1997. I relocated the bird foraging near the ground with a flock of warblers on the lower side of the road below the main upper parking lot on Kennesaw Mountain. All present saw the bird. On 19 September 1997, Giff Beaton and Shawn Reed again found the bird in the spot where it had originally been seen. The bird was not seen again. A total of seven observers saw the bird during these three days. Based on the observations of all seven observers, the bird was agreed to be a Virginia's Warbler.

According to the *Field Guide to Warblers of North America* (J. L. Dunn and K. L. Garret, 1997, Houghton Mifflin Company) Virginia's Warblers breed on brushy mountain slopes within, or adjacent to, coniferous forests in the Great Basin mountain ranges and Rocky Mountains (i.e., from extreme southern Idaho, central and southwest, Wyoming, south through appropriate mountain habitat in east and south Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and the Davis and Guadalupe Mountains of west Texas, and sparingly in mountains of east-central, and southern and central California). It winters mainly in west Mexico and casually in coastal southern and central California. This sighting is the first in Georgia and only the twelfth sighting east of the Mississippi River, where it is a vagrant. There are three May records for southern Ontario, one spring record for Michigan, one mid-December record for Louisiana, two fall records for New Jersey, one fall record for New Brunswick and one fall record for Nova Scotia, one record for Goose Bay, Labrador on 21-22 September 1994, and one record for Grand Bahama Island, Bahamas, 8 March 1993.

Pierre Howard, *One Atlantic Center, 1201 West Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30309-3424*

GOLDEN EAGLE IN BIBB COUNTY — On 2 January 1998, Aubrey Scott and I were birding at Ocmulgee National Monument just east of Macon. At about 13:30 ET, as we walked back from the mounds to the visitor center, we spotted a large eagle soaring, along with a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*), about 100 meters above us.

It was a sunny day, winds were calm with light gusts, and the temperature was around 18 C. Using 8x42 binoculars, I first noticed the relatively long tail, which projected beyond the body at least twice the length of the head. The tail had a well-defined dark subterminal band with a very narrow white tip. The white base of the tail extended all the way to the tail edge. As the bird banked, this feature could be readily seen on the upperside of the tail. The undertail coverts were golden brown, contrasting with the mostly dark brown body. The

underwing coverts and body were dark brown with some scattered white mottling and the axillars were dark. The long tail projection made the wings appear narrow, and the trailing edge of the flight feathers was a bit jagged, due to a few retained juvenile secondaries. The undersides of some of the flight feathers had white at the base. Scott noticed a golden color on the nape and a tawny bar on the upperwing coverts.

The bird continued to soar on flat wings for about one minute, gaining altitude, then gave two to three slow, shallow wingbeats, before going out of sight. These characteristics led us both to conclude that the bird was a subadult Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*).

Haney et al. (1986, *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS Occasional Publ. No. 10) state that the Golden Eagle is a rare transient and winter resident throughout the state. The American Ornithologists' Union (1983, *Check-list of North American Birds*, 6th ed.) says the bird winters in North America throughout the breeding range, casually to the Gulf coast from Texas, east to central Florida.

Michael Bell, *131 Doe Valley Rd., Tallapoosa, GA 30176*

GOLDEN EAGLE SIGHTINGS IN UPSON AND MONROE COUNTIES — On 7 February 1998, while birding near Thomaston in Upson County, I observed a Golden Eagle fly overhead. Because it was an overcast morning, the large bird appeared totally black, except for a small, white, triangular patch in the center of each wing. The bird glided out of sight to the south, flapping once or twice.

On 11 October 1998 at approximately 11:30, I discovered an adult Golden Eagle at Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area, Monroe County. I took detailed notes as the eagle hunted over the pine forests beside the lake for over 15 min. It was a sunny day, and the head and neck feathers shined an intense golden brown. The underparts, including the wings, wing linings, breast, and belly were dark brown. The brown tail contained several thin, light bands, both above and below, though these were difficult to see. The bird hunted by circling repeatedly until reaching a great height, then diving towards the forest below. Although the bird did dive into the forest twice, it returned both times without prey and eventually sailed off toward the dam.

On 1 January 1999, at the same site at Rum Creek as the previous sighting, I flushed an immature Golden Eagle from a tree and watched it fly across the lake and out of sight. I returned on 3 January and relocated the bird, this time off Ebenezer Road as it hunted low over the trees beside the lake. As it circled, large triangular white patches could be seen under the wings, and the tail was white with a prominent

black band at the tip, both above and below.

Terry Johnson, program manager for the Department of Natural Resources, reports that Golden Eagles have been seen twice before at Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area in the few years prior to my sightings, and that they are rarely seen at nearby Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge. Both of these areas probably contain good habitat for Golden Eagles, but only time will tell if these numbers are increasing in the state.

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STOPOVER BY MIGRATING SANDHILL CRANES IN SOUTH GEORGIA — At about 17:00 on 13 February 1999, we were in the Hunters Creek bottomland northeast of Osierfield, Irwin County, Georgia. Hearing the calls of Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*), we headed uphill towards open land in an attempt to see the birds. A number of cranes had already alighted in an open peanut field approximately 1 km north of Osierfield. The temperature was 8–10° C, and a gusty NNW wind had buffeted the area throughout the day. These cranes had apparently been flying northward against this strong head wind, and this may account for the stopover we observed.

As we watched the flock from a distance of approximately 500 m, we heard other cranes calling from the south. They soon began circling over the area at heights of 240–350 m and descending in tight spirals with wings set and legs extended. The arriving cranes came into the field in small groups of several to several dozen, with a few isolated individuals landing alone. Whether the flying birds were attracted to the grounded birds by sight or sound is unknown, but most of the birds were calling. After 15–20 min, all of the 300+ birds took to the air and headed north just over the treetops. We suspect that a low flying Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) caused the birds to take flight.

At 17:30, MH went to an area about 1 km north of where we had last seen the cranes. This area, about 100 ha of open land lying in adjacent Ben Hill Co., has been a traditional stopping point for cranes over the last 15–20 years. Large numbers of cranes were on the ground at 17:45 and were actively foraging in last year's peanut and corn fields, but most of the flock had walked eastward into an adjacent area of planted pine seedlings. Here there were elevated beds of soil about 3–4 m apart separated by lower areas with standing water. The cranes were pecking at the soil and a few were drinking water.

On 14 February 1999 MH returned to this area at 07:30. Skies

were clear with a temperature of 0° C and light NW breeze. It appeared that all of the cranes seen the previous day plus additional ones (a total of 400+ birds) were congregated in a 300-m-long line in the field. The birds on nearby uplands almost appeared to be a mirage in the early morning light, their gray color blending perfectly with the gray loamy soil on which they rested. The rising sun glistened on their red-topped heads. Few were calling; others were leaping into the air for short flights or sparring with one another. Others stood motionless except for moving necks and beaks in the act of preening. A Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) soared over the flock about 30–40 m above the ground but elicited no response.

At 10:00, two Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) began to spiral upward on weak thermals as the soil warmed. Between 10:00 and 10:20, over 300 cranes took flight. Most made a springing leap from the ground, and a few ran forward before taking off. They left the ground by groups of 18–25, but circled above waiting for stragglers to reach their altitude. The remaining birds, nearly 100, stretched their necks with bills pointed skyward and called incessantly. The cranes in the air reached 300–400 m altitude with a little flapping and much circling and sailing, and then rapidly disappeared northward until out of sight and hearing.

At 11:15 there were still nearly 100 birds on the ground. Bubba Hopkins reported that these birds were still present at 16:00, but by 18:00 all had left the area. During the following 3 weeks, observations were made up to five times daily. Crane numbers fluctuated from 69 to 29 during the first week, 42 to 19 the second week, and 17 to 2 the third week.

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Frankie Snow, Science/Math, South Georgia College, Douglas, Georgia 31533

POSSIBLE FOOD-STORING OF A GREEN ANOLE BY A RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER — I observed a male Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinensis*) possibly store a green anole (*Anolis carolinensis*) at 08:45 ET on 7 March 1997, near Sumatra, Liberty County, Florida. The habitat was slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*) flatwoods. The woodpecker ascended from the forest understory grasping the lizard's midbody crosswise in its bill. The woodpecker landed 17 m up a 25.5-m slash pine at the base of a short (0.5 m) broken limb stub. Although the woodpecker delivered short jabs to the anole for the next 40 seconds, I never observed it feeding on the lizard, nor did I observe swallowing movements. I did not see the

lizard stored, but the woodpecker left the tree without it. A slab of bark formed a narrow (approximately 20 cm), nearly vertical crevice just above the limb stub on the northwestern side (310°) of the trunk. It appeared that the lizard possibly was stored in that crevice.

This observation of possible food-storing of a green anole by a Red-bellied Woodpecker is unusual because food-storing of vertebrate prey has not been documented before, although Red-bellied Woodpeckers have been reported storing insects (L. Kilham, 1963, *Wilson Bull.* 75:227-234), as have other melanerpine woodpeckers (R. C. Roberts, 1979, *Am. Nat.* 114:418-438). The predation of green anoles by male, Red-bellied Woodpeckers also has been reported before (e.g., G. A. Smith and J. A. Jackson, 1994, *Mississippi Kite* 24:7-8). A few bones of a tree frog were found in the stomach of a Red-bellied Woodpecker collected in Florida (A. C. Bent, 1939, *U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull.* 174). Also, a number of observations exist of Red-bellied Woodpeckers consuming eggs and nestlings of both open-cup (e.g., S. P. Rodgers, Jr., 1990, *Florida Field Nat.* 18:57-58) and cavity-nesting species (e.g., A. J. Neill and R. G. Harper, 1990, *Condor* 92:789). Red-bellied Woodpeckers also may kill nestlings and not consume them (e.g., T. L. Roach, 1975, *Florida Field Nat.* 3:19).

My observation of predation on a lizard augments our knowledge of the Red-bellied Woodpecker's opportunistic capacity to capture vertebrate prey. The possible storage site, high on the northwestern face of the trunk, may reduce spoilage of the prey caused by sunlight and heat.

I thank B. J. Bergstrom, L. Carlisle, R. N. Conner, W. Post, and an anonymous reviewer for reviewing a draft of the manuscript.

Douglas B. McNair, *Tall Timbers Research Station, Route 1, Box 678, Tallahassee, Florida 32312*

FROM THE FIELD

August–November 1998

This was a remarkable fall season. I think we would have to go way back to find so many exceptional records. This fall we had two first state records, a Northern Wheatear and a Calliope Hummingbird. Causing as much excitement as these two was a South Polar Skua, beached at Jekyll Island for about three weeks and, while it was not the state's first, it was the first to be seen onshore, so scores of birders made the trip to see it. Unfortunately, only two birders saw a possible Fork-tailed Flycatcher, another long-distance vagrant that would be a first for Georgia. This Central and South American wanderer has been seen in several neighboring states, so perhaps we are overdue for ours. Another tantalizing report came of a *Myiarchus* flycatcher, possibly an Ash-throated Flycatcher, but once again circumstances did not afford a definite identification and no photographs were taken. This species, too, would be a state first and is another western vagrant that sooner or later, no doubt, will be seen in this state. Also a western vagrant was the state's second Anna's Hummingbird that, unfortunately, did not stay long.

The weather this fall was probably a factor in many of the extralimital reports. An unusually active hurricane season saw two storms sweep across Georgia in September, Hurricane Earl and Hurricane Georges, and both transported birds inland that are normally coastal or pelagic. Earl in early September brought a Black Skimmer and Black Tern to Thomas County, and Georges carried a Magnificent Frigatebird, a Bridled Tern, a Royal Tern and a Black Skimmer to Lake Walter F. George. Who knows what others were missed at other lakes in the storms' paths that no one was there to see? In November, a monstrous winter storm raged out of the Rockies and across the upper mid-west and Great Lakes states, disrupting the southward migration of many gulls, geese, waders, and Sandhill Cranes. Huge numbers of Snow Geese, and to a lesser extent, Greater White-fronted Geese were blown east. Most of these thousands of geese did not get as far south and east as Georgia, but enough did to be the biggest invasion of our state by Snow Geese of which I am aware. There were small flocks literally all over the state and in one site, the largest single flock I have heard of in Georgia. Unprecedented, too, was the Franklin's Gull flight, although this event was not related to the November storm. This species enjoyed a successful breeding season in its mid-continent breeding area and in making their way south to the western coast of South America for the winter, eleven strayed eastward down the Chattahoochee River corridor, the most ever seen in Georgia. I could go on about the many outstanding events of this fall, but due to time and space limitations, I

must ask readers to study the species' accounts to discern the other noteworthy avian happenings this fall.

As previously announced in *The Goshawk*, this is my last season as editor of "From the Field." The reins are being handed over to Michael Bell of Tallapoosa. I urge you to give him the support and encouragement he will need. I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to submit the records of their sightings over the years. This is an important endeavor because these field notes are the only comprehensive, long-term compilation of avian history for the entire state. I hope that members in areas of the state that are not well covered will now determine to submit reports so that the avifauna in your area will be adequately documented for the future.

Many thanks to Georgann Schmalz for typing these notes. Without her assistance, we would not have been able to bring "From the Field" and *The Oriole* current. Much appreciation, too, to Mim Eisenberg for her proofreading of these notes, without which many errors would go unnoticed.

Abbreviations used include: AAS - Atlanta Audubon Society, ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, APFA - Arrowhead Public Fishing Area, Floyd Co., ASWMA - Altamaha State Waterfowl Management Area, McIntosh Co., CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Cobb. Co., ELHLAF - E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton Co., GOS - Georgia Ornithological Society, KMNBP - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Cobb Co., NAMC - North American Migration Count, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park, Douglas Co., SCRBA - South Georgia Rare Bird Alert, WMA - Wildlife Management Area

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- RED-THROATED LOON - An early arrival was spotted on 8 November at Brunswick (Mike Chapman).
- COMMON LOON - On a 30 November pelagic trip out of Savannah, Giff Beaton et al. counted 114, some as far as 65 miles out.
- HORNED GREBE - Almost a new early arrival record was the one seen on 27 September off Jekyll Is. (Lydia Thompson, Darrell Lee).
- EARED GREBE - Birders new to Georgia or those just beginning may be surprised to know that the status of this bird in the ACOGB (1986) was "accidental," as nowadays we expect small numbers in the fall at certain places. On 29 October, two were seen at Jekyll Is. (Pierre Howard, Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen), a flock of nine was seen at Lake Lanier near the dam from 15 November (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Earl Horn) to 25 November (Jim Flynn, Rusty Trump), and two were noted at Lake Walter F. George near the dam on 28 November (Giff Beaton).

- CORY'S SHEARWATER - This fall, three pelagic trips were taken to the Gulf Stream. Fourteen Cory's were seen on 24 August (Giff Beaton et al.), on four were seen on 30 August (Bill Blakeslee, Bob Manns, et al.), and three were found on 30 November, this last date besting the ACOGB (1986) late date of 10 November.
- AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER - On the 24 August pelagic trip, nine Audubon's were counted, a good number (Giff Beaton et al.), but no petrels at all were seen.
- NORTHERN GANNET - Good numbers were reported all along the coast, with the high count coming from Wassau Is., where on 27 November Steve Calver tallied 191.
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - This western species is becoming more of a presence on our coast as a winter visitor and, indeed, the flock on the St. Mary's River on the GA/FL line may include a few year-round non-breeders. This fall one was seen off Andrews Is., Brunswick, on 17 October (Billy and Brenda Dunbar), and on 19 November, 20 were spotted flying low over trees on Skidaway Is. (Mary Elfner). Back on the St. Mary's River, Sheila Willis saw 45 on the Florida side on 21 November and 16 on the Georgia side on 22 November.
- MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD - This was a banner season for this rare coastal vagrant. On 26 September three were spotted flying south along the intracoastal Waterway off Jekyll Is. There was one adult, one immature, and one thought to be an immature (Darrell Lee). These birds were heading back south after possibly being carried north by one of the several hurricanes earlier in the month. The one seen on 30 September was definitely hurricane related. On that day, following the passage of Hurricane Georges, Doug Robinson and Geoff Hill were birding Lake Walter F. George and saw the frigatebird as well as several other pelagic species that will be mentioned later.
- AMERICAN BITTERN - Singles were seen in Laurens Co. on 2 October (Giff Beaton, Tommy Patterson et al.), at the APFA on 3 October (Michael Bell), and at the ASWMA also on 3 October (Giff Beaton, Pierre Howard et al.).
- GREAT BLUE HERON - The one seen on the 30 November pelagic trip 50 miles out at sea was interesting, but not unprecedented (Giff Beaton et al.). Do you suppose this bird was headed for the Bahamas?
- GREAT EGRET - We expect some northward post-breeding dispersal of waders in late summer and fall, but this fall was outstanding, perhaps due to dry conditions and forest fires in south Georgia and in Florida. On 5 September, 29 were counted at ELHLAF (Jeff Sewell) and 80 were seen in Macon on 3 October (Ty Ivey). Late departures included 12 still in Macon on 21 November (Ken Clark et al.), one in Spalding Co. at the Griffin Reservoir on 11 November (Paul Raney), and one through November at Lake Blaylock, ELHLAF, Henry Co. (Carol Lambert).
- SNOWY EGRET - This species, too, staged a good post-breeding flight northward. At ELHLAF, six were seen on 6 August (Rusty Trump), 14 on 14 August (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell), and six on 6 September (fide Terry Moore).
- TRICOLORED HERON - This species set a record, I believe, for inland sightings this period with at least five birds. One bird was discovered at the

ELHLAF ponds on 1 August (Kevin Danchisen); one was seen at the Wetlands Center two miles away on 2 August; the same, or possibly, another bird was seen on 15 and 16 August at the Wetlands Center; and the same or another at one of the interior lakes at ELHLAF on 20 August (all by Carol Lambert). Eran Tomer spotted one on 7 August on the Chattahoochee River in Cobb Co., Karen Theodorou found one at Dyar's Pasture WMA, Greene Co. on 9 August, Brad Bergstrom saw one at the Grand Bay WMA, Lowndes Co. on 28 September, and, for a late inland sighting, one was reported by Giff Beaton on 15 November at Lake Seminole, Decatur Co.

REDDISH EGRET - The status of this coastal wader has changed dramatically since the ACOGB was published in 1986. So many were seen this fall, mostly ones and twos, that I am not going to give all the details for all the reports. Most sightings were in August and came from Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is. (still the most reliable, accessible place for them), Jekyll Is., Cumberland Is., Andrews Is. near Brunswick, and Wassau Is. The high count was of four at Gould's Inlet on 2 August (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell, Jeff Sewell). On 3 October, at the fall GOS meeting, three birds were seen in three locations in Glynn Co. (many observers), and a late bird was still at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is., on 29 November (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott).

CATTLE EGRET - Approximately 500 were counted at a heronry in Bulloch Co. on 13 August (Andy Kinsey), and one was seen at the ELHLAF on 9 August, where they are rare (Patrick Crisse). Four at the Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co. on 30 October were late (Giff Beaton), and 30 seen in Clay Co. on 22 November were very late departing (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - An immature, first seen on 8 August (Bill Harbin), spent most of the month at a sod farm in Floyd Co. (many observers).

WHITE IBIS - The most noteworthy reports were of 100 on 13 August in Bulloch Co. (Andy Kinsey) and a late bird at the APFA on 3 October (Michael Bell). There were numerous reports of post-breeding dispersal from quite a few other locations well north of their coastal plain breeding sites, including five that spent most of August at a sod farm in Floyd Co. (many observers).

GLOSSY IBIS - One seen in Augusta on 9 October was unusual so far inland (Steve Wagner), although this species can turn up just about anywhere in the state in late summer and early fall.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL - The post-breeding roost site off U.S. 17 south of Brunswick once again proved fruitful for observers of this species. On 2 August, 18 were seen there (Giff Beaton, Karen Theodorou, Malcolm Hodges), 25 on 12 September (Darrell Lee), with the last report being of two on 25 October (Michael Bell). This species is given to wanderings well inland, as we have noted in the past. This fall one was discovered at Hard Labor Creek State Park, Morgan Co. on 5 September (Bryan Thomas).

WOOD STORK - Wanderings of the Wood Stork carried them as far inland as ELHLAF, Athens, Macon, Augusta, Greene Co., Johnson, and Laurens counties. The high count was in Macon where the numbers grew to 20

on 3 October (Ty Ivey et al.). Brad Winn reports that there are two large rookery sites in Jenkins Co. with a total of 200-300 nesting pairs and that there are about 18 breeding sites in the state, mostly close to the coast.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - Riding the wave of Snow Geese (see below) that came south well east of their usual mid-continent route were several of this rare vagrant to our state. On 13 November two were found at ELHLAF (Joe Schlemmer). In Laurens Co. one was spotted on 24 November (Giff Beaton, Tommy Patterson), and on 28 November seven were seen at the Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co. (Giff Beaton).

SNOW GOOSE - Thanks no doubt to the great storm that raged out of the west and across the upper tier of states from 9-11 November, Georgia saw its greatest influx of Snow Geese in anyone's memory. There were reports from every corner of the state, including some of the largest flocks ever recorded in Georgia. Even coastal Georgia had numerous sightings. Only the highlights are mentioned here, but I hope someone will write more about this phenomenon. Just contemplate the numbers and localities of these reports: 67 at the Rum Creek WMA, Monroe Co. (Terry Johnson) on 14 November; 25 at Lake Walter F. George on 14 November (Giff Beaton); 27 on a barrier island, Wassau Is., on 15 November (Peter Range *vide* Steve Calver); 19 in Baker Co. on 17 November (Leslie Welch *vide* SGRBA); 37 on 21 November at the Augusta brickyards (Steve Wagner, Alex Christensen); 27 in Miller Co. on 29 November (Jerry and Marie Amerson); and another coastal report, two at Ft. Pulaski, near Savannah on 26 November (Todd Plummer). Reports of smaller flocks are too numerous to mention.

MOTTLED DUCK - This species was introduced by South Carolina game officials in the 1970s and seems to be doing well in Georgia, as indicated by the 23 seen on 2 August at the ASWMA, the best spot to see them (Giff Beaton, Malcolm Hodges, Karen Theodorou). Six were seen on Little St. Simons Is. on 3 October on a GOS field trip. An island resident reported to Paul Sykes that they have nested there.

NORTHERN PINTAIL - An eclipse male was found among Mallards at ELHLAF on 23 August by Jim Flynn. It was last seen on 24 September (Jim Flynn et al.). This is the first Atlanta area record for August.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - On 15 August three early birds were noticed at ELHLAF (Jeff Sewell). The ACOGB's (1986) early arrival date is 6 September.

REDHEAD - A flock of 25 first reported on 2 November at Lake Lanier (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Earl Horn), stayed most of the month (many observers), and on 15 November a nice-sized flock of 67 was observed at West Point Lake (Giff Beaton).

RING-NECKED DUCK - Two males summered at ELHLAF and greeted the fall arrivals (Carol Lambert). This has occurred before here and at a few other places in the piedmont.

GREATER SCAUP - Only one bird was seen this fall, which is a little unusual these days. It was spotted on 28 November at Lake Walter F. George (Giff Beaton).

SURF SCOTER - A good fall flight for this species, both inland and coastal, was noticed by a number of observers. Early arriving were the seven seen on

1 November at Wassau Is. (Steve Calver). More in the normal time frame were the two on 24 November at West Point Lake, eight at Lake Walter F. George on 28 November (both by Giff Beaton), and 22 on the same date off the north end of Jekyll Is. (Jeff Sewell), the most reliable spot to find them.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - It was also a good fall for this, our rarest scoter. In the huge flock of mostly Black Scoters and Lesser Scaup that gathered off the north end of Jekyll Is. in late November were six White-wingeds, seen on 28 November (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).

BLACK SCOTER - This species staged a remarkable invasion of the waters off Jekyll Is. in November. Beginning with the 500 or so seen on 4 November (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell), their numbers grew through 28 November, when Jeff Sewell estimated the number of close-in, identifiable Black Scoters at 6,000. Farther out, but not identifiable to species, were 20-30,000 ducks, undoubtedly mostly this species and Lesser Scaup. On Wassau Is., Steve Calver saw 162 on 1 November. The species is probably our rarest scoter inland, so one seen at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co., is noteworthy (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Malcolm Hodges).

OLDSQUAW - The best place to find this rare coastal visitor is among large rafts of Black Scoter and Lesser Scaup such as the assemblage that gathered off the north end of Jekyll Is. On 26 November one was seen there, and two days later a differently plumaged bird was spotted (both by Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - Some good counts were observed on inland waters. It is difficult to say with certainty that these excellent numbers are related to the great mid-western storm discussed in the introduction, but the eastward and southward shift of many species of waterfowl following the storm would suggest a correlation. On 24 November Giff Beaton saw 43 at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co. and 47 at West Point Lake. At Lake Lanier on 25 November, 124 were counted (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn, Rusty Trump), whereas ten days earlier on 15 November only 5 were there (Earl Horn et al.). On 28 November 300 were seen at Lake Walter F. George, and the number at West Point Lake had grown to 120 (Giff Beaton).

RUDDY DUCK - An early bird was seen on 10 August in Augusta (Steve Wagner) although the species has rarely summered in the piedmont. The best place to see large numbers in the Atlanta area is SCSP, which on 26 November hosted 70 to 80 (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell).

OSPREY - A late-departing bird was seen at Lake Carroll, Carroll Co., on 18 November (Michael Bell).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - A kettle of kites contained four Swallow-tails on 1 August at Doctortown, Wayne Co., on the Altamaha River (Jeff Sewell et al.). Three were reported near Hoboken, Brantley Co., on 4 August (Ginger Anderson *vide* Sheila Willis). Rather late was a bird seen in McIntosh Co. on 7 September (Doris Cohrs).

MISSISSIPPI KITE - In the same Doctortown kettle on 1 August as the Swallow-tails were two Mississippi Kites (Aubrey Scott et al.). Ed Sheeley reported that two fledglings left their nest in Valdosta on 17 August, Giff Beaton saw three in Clayton Co. on 31 August, an

excellent count so far north, and a late bird (but not a record) was seen in Grady Co. on 28 September (Patsy Poppel *vide* Gail Menk).

BALD EAGLE - I am pleased to report that too many of our national symbol were seen this period to report them all, many away from the more productive coastal locations. All areas of the state were represented, except the mountain areas.

NORTHERN HARRIER - An early arrival was spotted in Greene Co. on 22 August (Paul Sykes).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK - Small numbers were reported by various observers around the state, with the only good-sized flocks being the 52 seen on 12 September in east Cobb Co. (Chuck Saleeby) and the 35 seen at KMNBP on 24 September (Kevin Danchisen). The most unusual sighting was the one spotted on 31 October on Sapelo Is. (Kristi Avera *vide* Brad Bergstrom), this being noteworthy for the coastal location as well as the late date.

GOLDEN EAGLE - Away from the old hack site at the Pigeon Mt. WMA in Walker Co., sightings of this species are few and far between, so one seen on 11 October at Lake Juliette, Morgan Co., was excellent. A detailed report was received (Michael Boehm).

MERLIN - This species was well reported both inland and from the coast, mostly as singles or in twos, with the high counts being five on 25 September at Jekyll Is. (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Lex Glover, Shawn Reed). A brown-plumaged bird was seen on 31 October in Greene Co. (Paul Sykes).

PEREGRINE FALCON - Georgia had a great flight of this falcon as well. There were seven sightings in the Atlanta area during September (includes the resident pair) and numerous reports from the coast. On 4 October at the GOS fall meeting, members of the field trip to Little St. Simons Is. recorded an outstanding 16 birds.

NORTHERN BOBWHITE - This species is not usually mentioned in these field notes, but a few reports merit consideration. On 19 September the Monroe Co. NAMC tallied 12, truly outstanding for the first time the species has been seen on the count, and this correlates to a DNR report that the species had a good breeding season for a change. On 17 October one was seen, in of all places, the south end of Jekyll Is. This is so unusual as to lead the observers to speculate that the bird had been released there or had escaped (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee).

BLACK RAIL - Careful observation of a marsh on private property in Greene Co. by Paul Sykes revealed as many as four breeding territories, with at least five birds being counted on 29 August and 6 September. None were seen or heard after 10 October, when he counted only one. How many other such similar marshes on private property do you suppose there are that harbor this secretive species?

KING RAIL - The Greene Co. marsh also produced a few of this migrant: singles on 10 and 24 October and two on 14 November (Paul Sykes).

VIRGINIA RAIL - The high count from marshes in the piedmont was of eight on 28 November at a marsh at Berry College in Rome (Marion Dobbs). The marsh at the KMNBP hosted them all period, with a high count of four on 11 October (Giff Beaton, Bob Zaremba).

- SORA** - This species migrates through north Georgia on the way to the coast and points south. Unexpected for the terrain and a bit early was one seen at the Johns Mt. WMA, Whitfield Co. on 30 August (Jim Flynn). Also a surprise were two at the ELHLAF ponds on 15 September (Earl Horn, Brock Hutchins), a first for this well-known shorebird stopover site.
- PURPLE GALLINULE** - Seven, a new high, was tallied on 19 September on the Lowndes Co. NAMC (*fide* Brad Bergstrom).
- COMMON MOORHEN** - Also a new record of 67 was spotted on the 9 September Lowndes Co. NAMC (*fide* Brad Bergstrom).
- AMERICAN COOT** - As usual, a few spent the summer at interior lakes. ELHLAF again had one summering, as did Lake Carroll in Carroll Co. (Michael Bell). By 21 November, 570 had arrived at the Griffin Reservoir in Spalding Co. (Paul Raney).
- SANDHILL CRANE** - Southbound birds moved through the state in November in below average numbers perhaps due to the warm weather, the largest flock reported being 300-400 birds on 17 November over Cobb Co. (Terry Moore, Ernie Clark).
- AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER** - This fall marked the discovery by Nelson and Marion Dobbs of another productive sod farm. It is located in western Floyd Co. and beginning on 16 August and continuing through the last report on 7 September hosted one, sometimes two, of this species (Nelson and Marion Dobbs). The Bulloch Co. sod farm produced one on 9 September (Earl Horn), as did the Peach Co. sod farm on the same day (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell), and that old reliable spot, the ELHLAF, had one for a few days beginning on 23 September (Brock Hutchins).
- WILSON'S PLOVER** - A GOS field trip on 3 October to Little St. Simons Is. counted 30, an excellent number.
- SEMPALMATED PLOVER** - Three arrived somewhat early at the ELHLAF on 15 August (Jeff Sewell).
- PIPING PLOVER** - On 2 August an early arrival was seen at Gould's Inlet, St. Simon's Is., and two were seen the same day at Tybee Is. (Aubrey Scott, Michael, Jeff Sewell). Good counts came from Cumberland Is. on 23 August, when 11 were seen (Sheila Willis), from Little St. Simons Is. on 3 October with 15 (Paul Sykes, Kevin McIntyre et al.), and from Jekyll Is. on 6 November, when ten were tallied (Aubrey Scott).
- BLACK-NECKED STILT** - This species is accidental inland, so one that strayed to Augusta and was seen on 10 and 11 October was unusual (Steve Wagner). The date is also unexpected, as it is the only inland fall record I know of.
- AMERICAN AVOCET** - Somewhat unusual for the summer were two birds in the Brunswick area on 2 August (Jeff Sewell, Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). Giff Beaton, Lex Glover, Jim Flynn, and Shawn Reed had an excellent count of 49 at Andrew Is. near Brunswick on 25 September. Also at Andrews Is., Brad Bergstrom had 50 on 8 November, and Mike Chapman had 48 on 18 November.
- UPLAND SANDPIPER** - The new Floyd Co. sod farm had at least one bird from 11 August-15 September, peaking at three on 21 August (Giff Beaton). Singles were seen on 17 August at the Peach Co. sod farm (Paul Johnson) and at a sod farm in the Sumter/Crisp county area on 24 September (Terry Johnson).

- LONG-BILLED CURLEW** - Kevin McIntyre saw one bird several times between 24 August and 12 September on Little St. Simons Is.
- MARbled GODWIT** - GOS members counted a whopping 275 on Little St. Simons Is. on 3 October (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee et al.).
- RED KNOT** - On the same field trip as above about 3000 of this species were counted (Kevin McIntyre et al.).
- SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER** - Besting the early arrival date for Augusta was a flock of 26 that was seen on 10 August (Steve Wagner).
- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** - The newly discovered Floyd Co. sod farm hosted at least one between 9 August (Nelson Dobbs) and 30 August (Jim Flynn), peaking at four on 10 August (Nelson Dobbs). At the sod farm in Peach Co. singles were seen between 15 August and 13 September (Paul Johnson, Giff Beaton).
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** - This rare fall transient was reported three times this fall, well above average. Paul Johnson found one at the Peach Co. sod farm on 15 August, and on 30 August Jim Flynn found one in Forsyth Co. and one at the Floyd Co. sod farm.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER** - One bird discovered on 1 November in the jetty rocks at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is. was thought to be the first for this location (Lydia Thompson). Three were seen at the usual Tybee Is. site on 26 November (Todd Plummer).
- DUNLIN** - On 30 October, two were seen at the ELHLAF (Rusty Trump). One of these remained through the end of the period (Carol Lambert et al.). In Greene Co. one was spotted on 14 November (Paul Sykes) and the one seen on 22 November in Augusta was only the 11th record since 1969 (Steve Wagner).
- STILT SANDPIPER** - Only two reports were received this fall, well below the average for recent years. One bird arrived at ELHLAF on 24 August (Eric Beohm), the same or another was noted on 30 August (Brock Hutchins) and one turned up in Thomas Co. on 3 September, following Hurricane Earl (Robert Crawford *fide* Gail Menk).
- BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** - What a flight of this species this fall! For what is probably the first time, it can be said that the reports are too numerous to list them all. The first record was one bird at the Floyd Co. sod farm on 16 August (Nelson and Marion Dobbs) and the last date they were reported was on 24 September, when Terry Johnson saw 35 in Sumter Co. at a sod farm. Other high counts were the 36 seen at the Peach Co. sod farm on 5 September (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott), and 25 at the Floyd Co. sod farm on 7 September (Earl Horn, Jeff Sewell). Two were at ELHLAF on 12 September (Jim Hanna) and, most unexpected on a barrier island, one was at Jekyll Is. on 7 September (Darrell Lee per SGRBA).
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** - Of the few reports received, the most interesting was a flock of seven seen at ELHLAF on 23 August. The flock was first seen on the wing, then they circled the place and headed out without landing (Jim Flynn).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** - Good numbers of this rare migrant were reported this period. The first report was of two near Brunswick on 23 August (Giff Beaton, Lex Glover). On 19 September, two were reported on the Glynn Co. NAMC (*fide* Terry Johnson). Two birds were noted at Jekyll

Is. on 17 October (Paul Sykes, Earl Horn, Jeff Sewell), and at the ELHLAF one found on 22 October (Carol Lambert) stayed through 25 October (Aubrey Scott).

COMMON SNIPES - One seen in Bartow Co. on 9 August was an early arrival, besting the ACOGB early fall date by five days (Jeff Sewell).

WILSON'S PHALAROPE - This rare transient is even rarer inland, so one seen 10 and 11 August in Augusta was noteworthy (Steve Wagner).

RED PHALAROPE - The 992 seen on a pelagic trip on 30 November out of Savannah was astounding. In addition, 242 phalaropes were not identified as to species (Giff Beaton et al.).

SOUTH POLAR SKUA - In spite of the fact that it was not a first state record, the bird found on 16 October on Jekyll Is. by Steve Holtzman caused a great deal of excitement, maybe even more than the two first state records seen this fall. This was the first time this species had been found on land in Georgia, the first three birds having been seen well offshore, one each in 1983, 1984, and 1994. This bird, which allowed extremely close approach, was molting, may have been infested with parasites, and looked bedraggled. Perhaps it had been exhausted battling Hurricane Georges as it passed through the Caribbean Sea. It was last seen on 5 November (Aubrey Scott). Even more amazing, two other South Polar Skuas were found on Atlantic beaches in Florida, one on 7 October not too far away at Ft. Clinch State Park at the north end of Amelia Is., and the other at Smyrna Dunes Park in November.

POMARINE JAEGER - On the previously mentioned 30 November pelagic trip out of Savannah, two of this species were seen (Giff Beaton et al.).

PARASITIC JAEGER - The hurricane activity no doubt had something to do with the sightings of no less than three beached Parasitics this fall. On 19 September two were found: one at Tybee Is. (Steve Calver) and one on Jekyll Is. (Darrell Lee et al.). Yet another was seen on Wassau Is. on 14 November (Steve Calver).

LAUGHING GULL - Apparently unrelated to hurricane activity were the two seen on 1 November at Lake Walter F. George (Chris Loudermilk).

FRANKLIN'S GULL - This species staged an unprecedented flight this fall into the states just south of its northern Great Plains breeding areas, with huge gatherings recorded in Iowa. Small numbers spread eastward, turning well away from their usual flight path down the center of the continent. On 30 October Giff Beaton located one at Lake Walter F. George and the next day 11 were seen over the lake (Jim Flynn, Bruce Dralle, Pierre Howard, et al.). This is far and away the most ever seen at one time in the state. After their foraging efforts were interrupted by a Bald Eagle, the flock was last seen headed south down river.

LITTLE GULL - Should the one seen on 19 September at Jekyll Is. by Lydia Thompson be properly documented and accepted by the Checklist and Records Committee, it would provide Georgia's third official record of this species, all in this decade.

BONAPARTE'S GULL - Two early birds were spotted on 2 August at Jekyll Is. (Jeff Sewell). A good count of 65 was made at Lake Lanier on 25 November (Carol Lambert, Earl Horn, Jeff Sewell).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - On 3 October, 27 Lesser Black-backed were counted on the north end of Wassau Is. by Steve Calver and Charles

Warnock. This is more than five times the previous high count in the state for this relatively recent invader from Europe, first seen in Georgia in 1977. Until this sighting the most seen in this state in one place was five, a record, incidentally, equaled by the five seen on 9 August at Jekyll Is. (Eric Beohm), which is also much earlier than the ACOGB early fall arrival date. In addition, seven were observed at Tybee Is. on 2 October (Giff Beaton, Bruce Hallett, Bob Zarembo). Could these huge counts be hurricane related? One has to wonder what ecological niche this species fits into and what effect it will have on native avifauna.

GLAUCOUS GULL - Unusual for early fall was a first- or second-winter bird seen on Cumberland Is. on 20 September (Steve Ehly).

CASPIAN TERN - This species is rare but regular inland. This fall one was spotted at the dam at West Point Lake on 16 August (Jim Flynn), and two were seen on 19 September at ELHLAF (Eric Beohm). Sheila Willis had an excellent count of 82 on 23 August on Cumberland Is.

ROYAL TERN - This species is one of the tern species likely to be blown inland by a hurricane, but the one seen on 2 August at Callaway Gardens, Harris Co., did not appear to be related to any weather activity. However, the one seen at Lake Walter F. George on 30 September appeared in the wake of Hurricane Georges along with several other storm-tossed waifs (Doug Robinson, Geoff Hill).

SANDWICH TERN - Wassau Is. again provided huge numbers. On 22 August Steve Calver tallied 354 of this species, which I believe is also a high count for the state. His last sighting there was seven on 4 November. Funny, isn't it, that the islands with the least human presence produce the most birds. A late bird was sighted on 26 November at Tybee Is. (Todd Plummer).

COMMON TERN - Several observers reported a good flight of this species. Two early arrivals were spotted near Brunswick on 2 August (Jeff Sewell, Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott), but the big numbers came later: 253 on 30 August at Wassau Is. (Steve Calver), 400 at Jekyll Is. on 13 September (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee), and 191 on 19 September at Tybee Is. (Steve Calver).

FORSTER'S TERN - A few inland sightings were reported, as usual. Three sightings came from ELHLAF with seven on 9 August at the ponds (Patrick Brisse) and singles on 23 August at Lake Blalock (Jim Flynn) and 24 August at the ponds (Carol Lambert). A single was also at Lake Meriwether on 24 November (Giff Beaton). With the addition of West Point Lake to the regular route of some birders, we are aware now of an inland lake where much larger numbers winter. By 24 November, 30 had gathered at the usual spot just behind the dam (Giff Beaton).

LEAST TERN - Four seen on Cumberland Is. on 20 September were late departing (Steve Ehly).

BRIDLED TERN - On 24 August, 17 were seen on a pelagic trip out from Savannah (Giff Beaton et al.), and on 30 August eight were tallied on another trip out of Savannah (Bill Blakeslee, Bob Manns, et al.). A third pelagic expedition out of Savannah on 30 November unexpectedly spotted a late-departing bird (Giff Beaton et al.). The most interesting sighting of all, however, was the one seen at Lake Walter F. George on 30

September following the passage of Hurricane Georges (Doug Robinson, Geoff Hill).

SOOTY TERN - The 24 August pelagic trip out of Savannah tallied seven (Giff Beaton et al.).

BLACK TERN - This species staged a fairly good flight this fall, although one observer (Steve Calver) mentioned that numbers were down at his usual spots. The first report came on 3 August, when two were seen at Sapelo Is. (Giff Beaton, Pierre Howard), and the last was of six on Wassau Is. on 13 September (Steve Calver). In between, 29 were spotted at West Point Dam on 16 August (Jim Flynn), 121 on the 24 August pelagic trip (Giff Beaton et al.), 170 on the 30 August pelagic trip (Bill Blakeslee, Bob Manns et al.), 60 on 3 September in Glynn Co. (Mike Chapman), and the most interesting sighting, that of four on 3 September in Thomas Co. that were apparently transported by Hurricane Earl (Robert Crawford *vide* Gail Menk).

BLACK SKIMMER - Two rare inland sightings were the result of the two hurricanes that passed through the state this fall. On 3 September following the passage of Hurricane Earl, Thomas Co. had its first (Robert Crawford *vide* Gail Menk), and at Lake Walter F. George, Doug Robinson and Geoff Hill saw one on 30 September with other storm-transported birds following Hurricane Georges.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - This rare but regular fall transient was seen twice, or about average: one at Fernbank Forest, DeKalb Co. on 26 September (Georgann Schmalz) and one at KMNBP on 1 October (Bruce Dralle, Giff Beaton).

SHORT-EARED OWL - Imagine the astonishment on 9 October when birders at the top of Kennesaw Mtn, KMNBP flushed a Short-eared Owl (Kevin Danchisen, Giff Beaton), a first for the mountain. Four were seen on 29 November at the usual wintering site near Cobb, Sumter Co. (Jerry and Marie Amerson).

COMMON Nighthawk - Only a few flocks of appreciable size were reported. The 125 on 28 August in Rabun Co. was good (Brock Hutchins), two or three flocks were seen in Valdosta on 30 August (Brad Bergstrom), and 100 or so were seen on 31 August in east Cobb Co. (Chuck Saleeby). Lesser numbers were reported by several observers. Beating the ACOGB late date by several days was one seen on 26 November at Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co. (Todd Plummer).

WHIP-POOR-WILL - One was heard calling in Decatur on 1 August (Anselm Atkins). Also unexpected were three calling at the Clybell-Marbin WMA, Jasper Co., on 9 August (Jim Flynn). Doris Cohrs reported one on 26 November in McIntosh Co.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - Good numbers were reported from several locations, none associated with feeders. At the CRNRA on 5 September, 40 were tallied (Helen Ogren) and a week later, 12 September, 50 were counted (Anne Mursch et al.). Paul Sykes had 25 on 19 September at a marsh in Greene Co. for his high count there.

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD - Georgia's second Anna's was first seen on 26 November at the feeder of Helen Gliadte in Smyrna and banded on 28 November by Bob and Martha Sargent. It was not seen after that.

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD - A Rufous that arrived in early August at the feeder of Billy and Dianne Raines of Loganville, Gwinnett Co., was captured on 17 September by Dwayne and Donna Burger and discovered to have been previously banded in Gainesville, FL on 30 January 1997. Another report came from Cumming in September (unconfirmed), and Sheila Willis reported several from feeder-watchers in Ware and Brantley counties.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD - The state's first Calliope was first reported on 5 November at the home of Edda Hale in Gwinnett Co. It was banded on 9 November by Bob and Martha Sargent, seen briefly on the morning of 10 November, but never again. Based on records from surrounding states, Georgia was a bit overdue getting this bird.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER - It was an above-average flight for this rare transient, with four sightings this fall. KMNBP had the first one on 28 August (Pierre Howard), and the Wetlands Center of the ELHLAF had two, one on 29 August that stayed a few days (Aubrey Scott), and another for one day on 9 September (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell). The last one was spotted on 11 September just below Buford Dam on the Forsyth Co. side (Bob Zaremba).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER - What a season for this rather rare transient, though records seem to have increased considerably in this decade. This is due in no small part to the expertise of our state's birders and to their increase, although I must say that great care should be taken when identifying this species, especially in the fall, when Yellow-bellieds and Acadians can look very similar. Also, Kenn Kaufman notes in *Advanced Birding* (1990) that in late summer and fall heavily worn, non-calling Yellow-bellieds may not be safely distinguished from Least Flycatchers. Having said that here are the reports, all singles: 30 August, Whitfield Co. (Jim Flynn); 19 September at the Wetlands Center, ELHLAF, (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell) and another there on 25-26 September (Carol Lambert); 19 September in Glynn Co. (Darrell Lee); 3 October at Fernbank Forest, DeKalb Co. (Georgann Schmalz). The only sighting of more than one was at the usual spot, Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon, where on 13 September five were seen along a trail (Jerry and Marie Amerson, Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen).

WILLOW FLYCATCHER - Rare for the Atlanta area was one seen on 15 August near Cartersville (Bob Zaremba). One was reported on the North American Migration Count in Lowndes Co. on 19 September (*vide* Brad Bergstrom), and the resident breeder at the Greene Co. marsh was last seen on 26 September (Paul Sykes).

LEAST FLYCATCHER - Four were reported this fall, a bit above average and due, I think, to more birders in the field and a better reporting network. On 15 September one was seen at the APFA (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen), Eric Beohm saw one in Thomaston on 17 September, Frank McCamey had one in Dawson Co. on 23 September, and Paul Sykes sighted one in Greene Co. on 26 September.

EASTERN PHOEBE - A migrating flock of 75 was seen at Jekyll Is. on 11 October (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee).

MYIARCHUS FLYCATCHER - A bird seen on 27 November in Augusta by David Mizrahi (*vide* Steve Wagner) was thought to be an Ash-throated

Flycatcher, but Great Crested could not be ruled out due to lighting conditions and the brief look obtained. The date would argue against Great Crested as this is past their usual departure date, though there are one or two records of them wintering, and Ash-throateds have a penchant for wanderlust. There are quite a few records in the east of Ash-throated, so we may be overdue for one.

WESTERN KINGBIRD - One was reported, which is about average. On 6 October Lydia Thompson and Terry Johnson found one in Glynn Co.

GRAY KINGBIRD - Is the Jekyll Is. population expanding or not? The following records might indicate a modest, slow extension of their Georgia range. On 2 August two adults and an immature were noted at the south end of Sea Is. (Pierre Howard), one bird was seen the same day at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is. (Jeff Sewell), and also the same day at least two were seen on Jekyll Is. away from the Convention Center (Giff Beaton). Their home base is, of course, the Convention Center on Jekyll Is., where on 9 August five were seen (Eric Beohm).

FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER - A detailed report was received of this vagrant from the tropics. On 23 August Michael and Eric Beohm reported seeing one near Greenville, Meriwether Co. The bird seen was said to have a dark brownish-black cap and a longish forked tail, much longer than the tail of an Eastern Kingbird, but not as long as the fully grown tail streamers of an adult Forked-tailed, leading to the conclusion that this was an immature bird. Unfortunately, no photographs were taken and no one else saw it the next day, so under the rules for acceptance of new species this report cannot be accepted. Of course, this would be a first record for Georgia, if accepted, and, in fact, we may be overdue for one. There are about 120 accepted records for North America, most in the east and most of them concentrated on the northeast coast between New Jersey and Massachusetts. In the southeast, there are several records for coastal Alabama, two records on the South Carolina coast, one from North Carolina, several from Virginia and many from Florida, mostly south Florida.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - This now nearly annual vagrant from the west was seen on 6 and 8 November in Brooks Co. (*vide* Brad Bergstrom).

WARBLING VIREO - The one report came from KMNBP on 21 September (Giff Beaton).

PHILADELPHIA VIREO - This species was well reported, especially from the Atlanta area, which furnished 12 separate reports. The first was three birds at KMNBP on 9 September (Bruce Dralle). The last came from Fernbank Forest, DeKalb Co. on 24 October (Georgann Schmalz). The largest number of reports came during the period from 20-26 September. Elsewhere, single birds were seen in Jones Co. on 5 September (Marie Amerson) in Greene Co. on 19 September (Paul Sykes, Marion Dobbs, et al.), at the State Botanical Gardens in Athens from 21-24 September (Marion Dobbs, David Galewski), at Jekyll Is. on 4 October (Brad Bergstrom), and in Haralson Co. on 8 October (Michael Bell).

COMMON RAVEN - A bit unusual was a fall report, on 20 October, of one bird flying north along Hwy. 17/75 just north of Helen, White Co. (Georgann Schmalz).

HORNED LARK - Seven birds were seen at the sod farm in Bulloch Co. on 3 August (Giff Beaton, Karen Theodorou, Bob and Deb Zaremba). Other good counts came from the sod farm in Peach Co. with 17 on 5 September (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott) and 25 on 25 September (Giff Beaton, Lex Glover, Jim Flynn, Shawn Reed).

TREE SWALLOW - The first reports of migrants came from KMNBP on 1 September (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen, Pierre Howard). Some late birds were the seven at Beaver Ruin Lake in Gwinnett Co. on 7 November (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn), and a single at Lake Juliette on the same day (Jim Flynn, Giff Beaton, Malcolm Hodges). Along the coast a huge flock was seen at the ASWMA on 28 November. This flock was estimated at 600,000 by Aubrey Scott and Michael Bell.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW - Terry Johnson reported seeing an aggregation of several hundred in Sumter Co. on 24 September.

BANK SWALLOW - The species, usually seen in twos and threes at a few well-known locations, staged an impressive showing this fall. At ELHLAF, always a good place to look for them, I had these reports: two on 9 August (Patrick Brisse), ten on 31 August (Giff Beaton), and six on 6 September (AAS). Elsewhere, six were seen on 5 August in Greene Co. (Bob Zaremba, Giff Beaton) and 26 there on 26 September (Paul Sykes), 20 at the Peach Co. sod farm on 22 August (Giff Beaton), and 20 plus at the Bartow Co. sod farm on 12 September (Michael Bell).

CLIFF SWALLOW - Another swallow with impressive numbers, but then we should be seeing more of this species in the fall, as it has increased exponentially in Georgia in this decade. The best of the reports were 13 on 9 August at the Bartow Co. sod farm (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell, Jeff Sewell) and 18 at the new sod farm in Floyd Co., also on 9 August (Jeff Sewell, Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). Three birds were seen at the ELHLAF on 3 September (Carol Lambert), and two were unusual at KMNBP on 24 September (Kevin Danchisen). A late bird was seen at Jekyll Is. on 4 October by Giff Beaton, Bruce Hallett, and Bob Zaremba.

BARN SWALLOW - A small area in Greene Co. hosted a nice-sized flock of about 175 in late August and early September (Paul Sykes), at ELHLAF Carol Lambert counted about 300 on 3 September, and on 30 August the number estimated along the lower Altamaha River in McIntosh Co. was 4000 (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee)!

CAROLINA CHICKADEE - This first albino of this species that I recall being reported came from Columbus on 9 October (*vide* Terry Johnson).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - The only report was of one at the CRNRA on 3 October (Jim Wilson).

WINTER WREN - One seen on 21 September at KMNBP was a bit early (Kevin Danchisen).

SEDGE WREN - Reports of this species are just about too numerous to list, which is perhaps attributable to more birders checking their marsh habitats nowadays. The first was seen on 3 October at the APFA (Michael Bell). There were many reports from the marsh at the KMNBP beginning 11 October, a report from the Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co., and several reports from the Paulk's Pasture WMA, Glynn Co., where on 28 November at least ten were flushed (Darrell Lee, Jeff Sewell, Lydia Thompson, Mike Chapman).

- MARSH WREN - Noteworthy inland was one seen at the CRNRA on 3 October (Jim Wilson).
- GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET - Many observers reported above average numbers for this wintering species. For example, at Fernbank Forest, DeKalb Co., on 24 October, 36 were counted on a morning field trip (Georgann Schmalz).
- NORTHERN WHEATEAR - Georgia's long-anticipated first Northern Wheatear was seen in the subdivision at the south end of Jekyll Is. on 10 October by Sally Ramer, a new birder, who spotted it on a telephone wire and asked her companions, Joe Greenberg and Lydia Thompson, what it was. The folks at the nearby Jekyll Island Banding Station were alerted, and eventually about 17 people saw it. Luckily, Jan Pitman was present with her camera and got sufficient photographs to document it. The bird stayed in the area for about an hour, but flew off after continued harassment by the resident Northern Mockingbird, never to be seen again in spite of a careful search of the island the next day.
- VEERY - Some pre-dawn counts yielded some rather impressive totals of this species. One such count at KMNBP was 12 on 6 September (Giff Beaton), whereas counts at the same location on 23 September tallied 57 and on 24 September, 31 (Giff Beaton et al.). The best "ground" count was five at KMNBP on 9 September (Bruce Dralle). Along the coast, a pre-dawn count at Jekyll Is. reported two birds on 3 October (Giff Beaton et al.).
- GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - This species was better reported than usual during the period. During September the Atlanta area had ten separate reports starting on 17 September at KMNBP (Kevin Danchisen), with the last report coming from KMNBP (Bruce Dralle) and Fernbank Forest, DeKalb Co., on 3 October (Georgann Schmalz). However, some pre-dawn counts yielded some impressive numbers: 84 at KMNBP on 23 September and 27 on 24 September (Giff Beaton et al.). Six birds were heard during a pre-dawn count at Jekyll Is. on 3 October (Giff Beaton, Bob Zaremba, Bruce Hallett, Pierre Howard).
- SWAINSON'S THRUSH - Normal "ground" counts of this species at KMNBP were 12-18 from 10 September-9 October (Kevin Danchisen). Pre-dawn counts at KMNBP tallied 57 on 6 September, a remarkable 444 on 23 September, and a mere 281 on 24 September (Giff Beaton et al.). A total of 41 were heard on the 3 October pre-dawn count at Jekyll Is. mentioned above. Best "ground" count on the coast was the six Mike Chapman had in his yard in Brunswick on 28 September.
- HERMIT THRUSH - A record early arrival was reported from Crooked River State Park, Camden Co., on 27 September (Kristi Avera).
- WOOD THRUSH - The previously mentioned pre-dawn counts at KMNBP yielded 27 on 6 September, 91 on 23 September, and 45 on 24 September (Giff Beaton et al.).
- GRAY CATBIRD - On 1 October, 28 southbound migrants were counted at KMNBP (Bruce Dralle) and on 11 October a fallout of several species including this one was witnessed on Jekyll Is. by Paul Sykes and Bill Blakeslee when they counted 150.
- AMERICAN PIPIT - A couple of good-sized flocks were reported. On 21 November about 100 were counted on a field trip in Monroe Co. (Earl

- Horn) and on 29 November, 105 were tallied at the new Floyd Co. sod farm (Marion Dobbs).
- WARBLERS - For those of you who look forward to a detailed account of each warbler species for this fall period, I hope the following abbreviated list will not disappoint you. The fact is most of it is simply a list of the high counts from one or two hot spots and this year was not a significant departure from the last several falls, so the following report is really the highlights.
- NASHVILLE WARBLER - KMNBP was again the place to be for viewing this species. Between 4-22 September the species was reported on six days, on four of which two birds were seen. Keep in mind, those of you who do not go there regularly, that the mountain is heavily birded, usually every day of the week, and usually by at least five birders, swelling on the weekend to 20-30. Elsewhere singles were seen near Rome on 27 September (Marion Dobbs), in Watkinsville on 1 October (Billy Dunbar), and Floyd Co. on 30 October (Michael Bell). Doris Cohrs reported that one was banded on Jekyll Is. in October.
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - On the late date of 24 November a dead bird in good plumage was found in Decatur (Anselm Atkins).
- PALM WARBLER - It was a good flight for this species, with large numbers being reported from both inland and coastal locations. On 20 September Chris Lambrecht came across "hundreds" in north Fulton Co. and on 1 October Billy Dunbar saw 34 just in his yard, some of which stayed a week. In the previously mentioned fallout on 11 October at Jekyll Is., 500 plus were seen (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee).
- AMERICAN REDSTART - On 26 September, 30 were found in a small patch of woods in Glynn Co. (Darrell Lee, Lydia Thompson).
- WORM-EATING WARBLER - An interesting report was received from Paul Sykes of an adult with a young fledgling seen in northern Greene Co. on 8 August. This is well south of their breeding range in the mountains.
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER - The only report for the period came from Athens, where on 17 September one was seen (Marion Dobbs).
- MOURNING WARBLER - This extremely rare migrant was discovered on 5 September at KMNBP by Bruce Dralle, Pierre Howard, and Helena Woods. Amazingly, the first fall male was relocated the next day (Giff Beaton), not seen on 7 September, and then last spotted on 8 September (Paul Raney). One was banded at Jekyll Is. during September (Doris Cohrs).
- COMMON YELLOWTHROAT - This species was conspicuous by its absence on the Monroe Co. NAMC on 19 September (Terry Johnson).
- WILSON'S WARBLER - This species was seen in above average numbers this fall. There were seven reports of, probably, five birds. Three reports came in September from the Atlanta area (two birds probably), one bird on two successive days in Athens (David Galewski, Marion Dobbs), one was banded near Darien in September (Doris Cohrs), and a window kill in Columbus in early October was reported by Terry Johnson.
- CANADA WARBLER - An early arrival was seen on 5 August at KMNBP (Kevin Danchisen), although this is not a record.
- SCARLET TANAGER - On 30 August, Jim Flynn had an excellent count in the Chattahoochee National Forest, where along one stretch of Forest Service

Road in Gordon and Whitfield counties he saw 19. Further evidence of this species' range extension southward was obtained on 3 October at the CRNRA, where an adult was seen feeding a juvenile (Aubrey Scott).

BACHMAN'S SPARROW - Three birds were still singing in Harris Co. on 16 August (Jim Flynn), and Brad Bergstrom reported two in Brooks Co. on 2 September.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - This species is a rare find, especially inland. On 2 October an adult was seen in Laurens Co. (Giff Beaton, Tommy Patterson, et al.).

LARK SPARROW - An adult was found on 11 October at Jekyll Is. by Paul Sykes, who was there looking for the Northern Wheatear.

SAVANNAH (IPSWICH) SPARROW - On 3 October on Jekyll Is. Dick Parks saw this rare subspecies. The only place they breed is on Sable Is., off Nova Scotia, and have been seen in Georgia only a few times.

HENSLow'S SPARROW - The first arrival at the now usual power line cut at Paulk's Pasture WMA, Glynn Co., was seen on 8 November (Brad Bergstrom, Kristi Avera). By 28 November 8-10 were flushed out (Jeff Sewell, et al.). A single was seen on 15 November in Miller Co. (Giff Beaton et al.).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW - It was an above average season for this elusive sparrow. Two were banded near Darien in October, and one in November (Doris Cohrs), and singles were reported from Greene Co. on 14 November (Paul Sykes), and from Laurens Co. on 24 November (Giff Beaton, Tommy Patterson).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - On 21 November, Jim Flynn found one adult and 17 immatures in northern Gordon Co., an excellent count. Only a few other reports were received.

PAINTED BUNTING - A late-departing female was seen in Augusta on 19 October (Anne Waters). There are a few winter records here (per Anne Waters).

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBIRD - An excellent count of 30 was tallied on a field trip at the CRNRA on 3 October (Jim Wilson et al.).

DICKCISSEL - The only report this fall was of one at a feeder, a female, in Thomaston on 19 September (Eric Beohm).

BOBOLINK - Early arriving migrants were seen in Greene Co. on 22 August, when four were seen (Paul Sykes) and at ELHLAF on 30 August (Brock Hutchins). The count there reached about 50 on 3 September (Carol Lambert).

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD - Notably absent on the Monroe Co. NAMC on 19 September was this species (*vide* Terry Johnson), said to be the most numerous species in North America by some accounts.

COMMON GRACKLE - This species was not seen on the above-mentioned NAMC. Very unusual.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD - An immature male spent three days at a feeder on St. Simons Is. beginning on 15 September (John Johnson, Lydia Thompson).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - This wintering species, which has been hard to find in recent years, was reported several times in November. One was seen on 1 November at the CRNRA (Jeff Sewell), nine were at the Wetlands Center, ELHLAF, on 2 November (Carol Lambert), 12 were in Gwinnett

Co. on 7 November (Jeff Sewell), and seven were at the Atlanta Motor Speedway, Henry Co., on 19 November (Giff Beaton).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - A stray was seen on 19 November at the Atlanta Motor Speedway, Henry Co., with the Rusty's mentioned above (Giff Beaton) and other blackbirds.

SHINY COWBIRD - Although it was seen just over the Savannah River in South Carolina, I want to mention the sighting of a female on 3 August by Paul Sykes. This continues a run of reports of this South American invader whose numbers seemed to have taken off in recent years.

ORCHARD ORIOLE - On 22 August Paul Sykes counted 22, all immatures, in and around a marsh in Greene Co.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE - Southbound migrants were reported in above average numbers this fall in the Atlanta area.

PURPLE FINCH - Only three reports were received of four birds, the first being seen in Acworth on 2 November (Dianne Wilkie), two were seen in Heard Co. on 22 November (Jim Flynn), and one was sighted in Gwinnett Co. on 28 November (Todd Plummer). Surely there were more than that. Are all of you reporting them?

PINE SISKIN - This once fairly common winter finch was reported only once; one bird at KMNBP on 16 October (Helena Wood).

Jeff Sewell, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, Georgia 30084

[As Jeff Sewell announced in his introduction, this is his last issue of "From the Field" for *The Oriole*. Compiling the species' accounts from many birders across the state is a tremendous undertaking. Jeff has done an excellent, commendable job and we (the editorial committee and fellow birders) extend to him our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for his time and knowledge that he has shared with us (Georgann Schmalz, Chair, Editorial Committee).]

FROM THE FIELD

DECEMBER 1998-FEBRUARY 1999

The winter season certainly produced a number of exciting finds, and several of these birds were cooperated by sticking around for a considerable period of time, allowing many seasoned birders to record state firsts. Perhaps star billing goes to a beautiful male Eurasian Wigeon found on the Augusta CBC, the first in the state since 1975. This bird was seen by many during the following three-week period. Scores of birders also made special trips to see a Harris's Sparrow in Fulton Co., and the little town of Bellville in Evans Co. gained notoriety from a two-month visit by a Western Tanager. I was fortunate to see all three of these birds, but perhaps the most memorable sighting for me was witnessing a Shiny Cowbird being impaled by an *Accipiter* and the resulting chase of the hawk, with cowbird in tow, by a number of specimen-seeking birders.

Presumably, the mild weather was responsible for several species found out of season. Quite a few lingering birds were found on Christmas Bird Counts. Winter finches were hard to find this year, and following last year's invasion, Red-breasted Nuthatches were absent from most of the state.

It is quite an honor to be chosen to succeed Jeff Sewell as editor of "From The Field." Jeff will be a tough act to follow, and on behalf of all GOS members, I would like to thank him for a job well done. I would also like to thank Terry Moore for providing a summary of the many reports he receives as the Field Notes editor for the Atlanta Audubon Society. His work certainly makes my job more manageable. Also, of course, thanks to the many people who take the time to send in details of their notable sightings.

Abbreviations used include: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds; CBC - Christmas Bird Count; CNC - Chattahoochie Nature Center, Fulton Co.; ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton Co.; Kennesaw Mt. - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park; MBBP - Merry Bros. Brickyard Ponds in Augusta; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park, Douglas Co.; WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

RED-THROATED LOON - The high count was the 85 recorded on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December. The only inland reports were of one at Lake Juliette on both 6 December (Michael Beohm) and 21 December (*vide* Terry Johnson), and another single bird at West Point Dam on 14 December (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen).

COMMON LOON - Giff Beaton and Kevin Danchisen saw 73 at Walter F. George Lake on 10 December. The same two observers had 45 at West Point Dam on the same day.

HORNED GREBE - This species was well reported at West Point Lake, with 70+ on 24 January (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott), 50 on 6 February (Jim Flynn), and 65 on 9 February (Earl Horn). The Rum Creek WMA/Piedmont NWR CBC on 21 December had a count of 40.

EARED GREBE - Four were seen at Rum Creek WMA on 1 December (Terry Johnson). Nine was a good count at Lake Lanier on 5 December (Rusty Trump), with the only other reports being of single birds at Eufala NWR on 10 December (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen), and at Lake Juliette on 3 January (Michael Beohm).

STORM-PETREL - A pelagic trip from Savannah on 21 February produced one Storm-Petrel, probably a Leach's (Giff Beaton et al.).

NORTHERN GANNET - The St. Catherines CBC tallied 426 on 19 December.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - This species again wintered at the mouth of the St. Marys River, and 67 were seen from the Cumberland Is. ferry on 3 December (Giff Beaton, Brad Winn, Bob Zarembo). A much rarer sighting was the one spotted at Lake Walter F. George on 24 January (Michael Beohm). Another single bird was seen at Doboy Sound on 26 January (Jim Greenway *vide* Doris Cohrs).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT - This species now winters regularly in the Macon area in large numbers, as evidenced by the 329 seen on the Macon CBC on 19 December.

ANHINGA - The Macon CBC produced 23 on 19 December.

GREAT EGRET - Two birds were still at Blalock Lake in Clayton Co. on 28 December (Carol Lambert).

TRICOLORED HERON - The 456 counted on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December was an impressive number.

REDDISH EGRET - The two seen on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January are further evidence that this species now winters regularly in small numbers on the coast.

CATTLE EGRET - The Augusta CBC had 20 on 26 December, which is a good number for winter.

GREEN HERON - A rare find was the one recorded on the Marietta CBC on 20 December (*vide* Bill Blakeslee).

WHITE IBIS - High counts were 438 on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December, and 353 on the Albany CBC on 26 December. The two seen on the Augusta CBC on 26 December were unusual for that area.

GLOSSY IBIS - Winter sightings of this species are becoming more numerous. Three were seen in the Savannah area on 1 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn), one was reported on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December, six were at the Savannah Airport on 21 January (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn), and four were seen in McIntosh Co. on 26 February (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell).

ROSEATE SPOONBILL - A rare winter sighting was a lingering bird at Skidaway Is. on 28 December (Paulette Cliff).

WOOD STORK - One was recorded on the Albany CBC on 26 December.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - There were several reports from Eufala NWR throughout the winter, with 23 being the high count on 26

February (Chris Loudermilk). One also wintered in Laurens Co. (many observers). Four were reported on 26 December on the Albany CBC. The bird that showed up at the ELHLAF on 18 February provided a rare sighting for the Atlanta area (Brock Hutchins, Carol Lambert).

SNOW GOOSE - After the major influx of this species in November, it is not surprising that there were many reports from around the state, including a high count of 28 at Eufala NWR on 26 December (Michael Beohm).

ROSS'S GOOSE - One bird was seen at Eufala NWR on 26 December (Michael Beohm) and again on 30 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) for just the fifth Georgia record. Two more were seen in Madison Co. on 17 February (Earl Horn) and stayed through the period. Like the Snow Goose, the abnormally high numbers of this species in the state may have been more weather-related than due to its increasing population. In November, many birds were displaced eastwards during migration by a major storm in the heart of the country.

TUNDRA SWAN - This species rarely makes it as far south as Georgia, so the one that visited Gwinnett Co. was a first for many Atlanta area birders. It was first reported on a lake at Briscoe Park on 13 January (Bill Cherapy), but it was later learned that it had been visiting another lake on a nearby golf course since around the first of the year. The bird, which was an immature, was last reported on 14 February (Chris Loudermilk).

GADWALL - The best counts were 25 at the Blanton Creek WMA in Harris Co. on 6 February (Jim Flynn), and 25+ at the CNC on 14 February (Michael Bell).

EURASIAN WIGEON - A truly great discovery was the male found by Vernon Waters at the MBBP during the Augusta CBC on 26 December. It associated with a flock of American Wigeon and was seen by many birders through 16 January. This is only the seventh record for Georgia and the first since 1975.

AMERICAN WIGEON - Those looking for the aforementioned Eurasian Wigeon had to search through the 200+ of this species that wintered at the MBBP (many observers). The Rum Creek WMA/Piedmont NWR CBC had a count of 145 on 21 December.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - This species is becoming harder to find than in years past, especially inland, so the 13 at the Blanton Creek WMA in Harris Co. on 6 February (Jim Flynn) and two seen in Union Co. on 18 January (Dot Freeman) are noteworthy.

MOTTLED DUCK - Five were seen at Onslow Is. on 21 January (Giff Beaton, Les Davenport, Jim Flynn), two were found in McIntosh Co. on 13 February (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell), and eight were located in Richmond Hill in Bryan Co. on 20 February (Giff Beaton et al.).

NORTHERN PINTAIL - Five were seen at the Rum Creek WMA on 20 December (Earl Horn). The Glynn Co. CBC had an excellent count of 53 on 2 January. Eric Beohm counted ten at Eufala NWR on 11 January. Two were at the ELHLAF on 19 January (Earl Horn), and possibly two different birds were seen there from 14 February (Chris Loudermilk) through 23 February (Carol Lambert). Also, 12 were seen in Richmond Hill in Bryan Co. on 20 February (Giff Beaton et al.).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - A large flock wintered at Onslow Is., with 400 being the count on 21 January (Giff Beaton, Les Davenport, Jim Flynn) and

300 tallied on 20 February (Giff Beaton et al.).

CANVASBACK - An excellent count, especially for an inland location, was the 153 seen at Lake Seminole on 29 December (Giff Beaton, Earl Horn, Jim Flynn). Eight were found on the Macon CBC on 19 December, and the ELHLAF also hosted this species, with one being found on 4 January (Carol Lambert), four on 7 January (Carol Lambert), and four again on 10 January (Michael Bell).

REDHEAD - The high count for the period was 39 at West Point Dam on 14 December (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen). On 28 February, Michael Bell found 18 on the ponds at the ELHLAF and another 15 nearby at Lake Shamrock.

GREATER SCAUP - This species was reported from seven inland locations. One was recorded on the Macon CBC on 19 December, one was seen at the ELHLAF on 2 January (Giff Beaton), two were in the Garden Lakes area near Rome on 10 January (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell), three were at Clark Hill on 21 January (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn), one was at SCSP on 22 January (Chris Loudermilk), two were at the DeKalb Reservoir on 6 February (Jeff Sewell), three were at Eufala NWR on 11 February (Eric Beohm), and one was seen again at SCSP on 12 February (Michael Bell). On the coast, Darrell Lee had good counts of 50 at Andrews Is. on 7 February and 70+ at Jekyll Is. on the same day.

KING EIDER - A female was reported off the north end of Jekyll Is. on 11 December (Lydia Thompson). This is the second year in a row that this species has been sighted along the Georgia coast.

SURF SCOTER - The large flock of scoters wintering off Jekyll Is. contained a number of this species. On 1 December, Giff Beaton and Jim Flynn counted 18, and at least five were still there on 14 February (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell). More unusual was the one found inland near Columbus. This unlucky bird was shot on 10 January (*vide* Ted Roever).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - A smaller number of this species also wintered at Jekyll Is., with five being the high count on 1 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn).

BLACK SCOTER - The high count at Jekyll Is. was 1000+ on 1 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn). A female was found at the ELHLAF among a flock of Redheads on 28 February for a rare inland sighting (Michael Bell).

OLDSQUAW - Steve Wagner found a male and a female at MBBP on 9 January. They remained in the area at least through 13 February (Ann Waters). The one at Jekyll Is. on 13 December may have been one of the two birds reported there in November (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen, Bruce Hallett).

COMMON GOLDENEYE - This species was well reported, with four at the ELHLAF on 14 December (Brock Hutchins), one at Lake Shamrock from 15-21 December (Carol Lambert), two at Lake Lanier on 16 December (Earl Horn), eight at SCSP on 25 December (Chris Loudermilk), five at Garden Lakes in Rome on 26 December (Marion Dobbs), one at Eufala NWR on 26 December (Michael Beohm), three at Lake Peachtree on 30 December (David Cree), and one in Douglas Co. on 10 January (Chris Loudermilk).

HOODED MERGANSER - The Rum Creek WMA/Piedmont NWR CBC on 21 December had a count of 190. Another good count was 125 at Lake

- Allatoona on 16 January (Chris Loudermilk).
- COMMON MERGANSER - This rare winter visitor was reported as a flyover at Eufala NWR on 26 December (Michael Beohm).
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - The only inland reports received were from SCSF. Chris Loudermilk had a good count of 22 on 25 December, and five were still there on 2 January (Michael Bell).
- OSPREY - The one seen at Lake Blalock on 15 December was probably a late migrant (Carol Lambert). One was seen at West Point Lake on 24 January (Michael Bell), further evidence that this species is continuing to become more widespread as a winter resident south of the fall line.
- BALD EAGLE - The six seen on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December was the high count among the many reports received from across the state.
- RED-TAILED HAWK - A Western dark-morph adult was seen in Crawford Co. on 3 February (Giff Beaton). Western Red-tails are rarely seen in the East, with dark-morph birds constituting only a small percentage of the total population, so this was an exceptionally rare sighting.
- GOLDEN EAGLE - This species continues to be found in the vicinity of the old hack site on Pigeon Mt. An adult was seen there on 9 December (Giff Beaton). An immature was seen at Lake Juliette on 1 and 3 January (Michael Beohm), and another immature was reported from the Okefenokee Swamp on 7 January (*vide* Sheila Willis).
- MERLIN - Ty Ivey reported one at the Macon Brickyards on 5 December.
- PEREGRINE FALCON - One was found at Onslow Is. on 19 and 20 February (Earl Horn, Jeff Sewell).
- KING RAIL - Good counts were six at Eufala NWR on 11 February (Eric Beohm), and 12 at Onslow Is. on 20 February (Giff Beaton et al.).
- VIRGINIA RAIL - Three were found at a marsh in Floyd Co. on 11 February (Marion Dobbs).
- SORA - Giff Beaton et al. had a good count of 25 at Richmond Hill (Bryan Co.) on 20 February.
- SANDHILL CRANE - Flocks were sighted headed south throughout the entire month of December by many observers. Possibly the last of the southbound birds were 120 seen over Atlanta on 3 January (Trina Jackson) and about 100 seen on the Callaway Gardens CBC on the same day. The 28 seen near Lake Walter F. George on 14 January may have been wintering birds (Eric Beohm). On 28 January a flock of 43 were seen in Peach Co. at 13:30 (Larry Ross), and at 17:00 on the same day 40-50, possibly the same flock headed north, were reported in Floyd Co. (Stephen Stewart). Other northbound flocks were sighted throughout the entire month of February.
- WILSON'S PLOVER - Although listed in the ACOGB as accidental in winter, it has now been reported every winter for the last seven or eight years. This year 12 were seen on Jekyll Is. on 13 December (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen, Bruce Hallett), 11 were tallied on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December (Ray Chandler, Brad Bergstrom), nine were seen on Cumberland Is. on 28 December (Becky Beaton, Giff Beaton, Earl Horn), 14 were counted on Ossabaw Is. on 22 January (Mary Elfner, Jim Flynn), a single bird was seen on Jekyll Is. on 29 January (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott) and, again on Jekyll Is., two were seen on 14 February (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell).

- PIPING PLOVER - Encouraging was a count of 30 in the Altamaha Estuary on 2 December (Giff Beaton, Brad Winn, Bob Zaremba). The St. Catherines CBC had 16 on 19 December and on the same day the Cumberland Island CBC had 11.
- AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER - Good counts were 169 in the Altamaha Estuary on 2 December (Giff Beaton, Brad Winn, Bob Zaremba), 91 on the Cumberland Island CBC on 19 December, and 67 at Jekyll Is. on 5 February (Lorraine Dusenbury, Lydia Thompson).
- AMERICAN AVOCET - This species was also reported in good numbers. Again, at the Altamaha Estuary on 2 December, 29 were seen (Giff Beaton, Brad Winn, Bob Zaremba), and 51 were counted on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January. On Jekyll Is. there were counts of 50 on 5 February (Lorraine Dusenbury and Lydia Thompson) and 38 on 16 February (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell).
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS - A few wintered at the Augusta water treatment plant this year, with the high count being 15 on 9 January (Steve Wagner). At the MBBP Anne Waters found 19 on 13 February.
- LESSER YELLOWLEGS - One in the Rome area on 10 January was unusual for the time of year (Bruce Dralle, Jeff Sewell).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER - One was seen at Blalock Lake on 11 January for a very rare winter sighting in the Atlanta area (Patrick Brisse). Other inland reports were of one on the Rum Creek WMA/Piedmont NWR CBC on 21 December, one in Thomas Co. on 7 Feb. (Jerry Amerson, Marie Amerson), and the Ocmulgee Audubon Society reported another single bird at the Macon Brickyard Ponds on 13 February.
- WHIMBREL - This species is rare in winter, so noteworthy were three on the Cumberland Island CBC on 19 December and seven on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January. The 11 seen on Cumberland Is. on 20 February may have been early migrants (Shiela Willis).
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW - Any sightings of this species are noteworthy. Five were found on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December, and three were seen on Ossabaw Is. on 22 January (Mary Elfner, Jim Flynn).
- MARbled GODWIT - The St. Catherines CBC had a good count of 98 on 19 February.
- SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER - One reported along the Jekyll Is. Causeway on 6 December was extremely late (Darrell Lee).
- LEAST SANDPIPER - One may have wintered at the ELHLAF, as one was seen on 28-29 December (Carol Lambert) and a single bird was seen there again on 3 January (Michael Bell).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER - One on the Cumberland Island CBC on 19 December was very late.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER - This species again wintered at the usual spot on Tybee Is., and ten were seen on 1 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn). Again at Tybee Is., Earl Horn and Jeff Sewell had 12 on 20 February. They are rarely seen elsewhere, so the one on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January was a good find.
- DUNLIN - One was at the ELHLAF from 1-11 December (Carol Lambert). One was also seen there on 2 January (Giff Beaton et al.) and on 3 January (Michael Bell).
- STILT SANDPIPER - This species has been found wintering in recent years at the

- Savannah Spoil Site in South Carolina, and on 21 January Giff Beaton, Les Davenport and Jim Flynn found 39 at Onslow Is. Earl Horn and Jeff Sewell had six there on 19 February and five the next day.
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** - A rare inland winter sighting was the seven on the Macon CBC on 19 December (Giff Beaton et al.).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** - One was reported on the Cumberland Island CBC on 19 December, four were seen and heard on Ossabaw Is. on 22 January (Mary Elfner, Jim Flynn), and two were at Onslow Is. on 19 and 20 February (Earl Horn and Jeff Sewell).
- POMARINE JAEGER** - One bird was reported from Jekyll Is. on 22 January (Steve Holzman, Paul Sykes).
- PARASITIC JAEGER** - One was seen at Tybee Is. on 1 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn), and four was an excellent count on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December.
- LITTLE GULL** - Very rare was the one seen at the Altamaha Estuary on 2 December (Giff Beaton, Brad Winn, Bob Zaremba).
- BONAPARTE'S GULL** - A good number wintered at Lake Lanier. Chris Loudermilk had 75 on 19 December, and Frank McCamey reported 50 on 11 February.
- RING-BILLED GULL** - A good count of 1500 was made at Dekalb Reservoir on 6 February (Jeff Sewell).
- THAYER'S GULL** - A first-winter bird was reported from among a large flock of gulls at South Beach on Jekyll Is. on 22 January (Steve Holzman, Paul Sykes). A different first-winter bird, according to the description given, was reported from the same location on 28 January (Giff Beaton), and finally Michael Bell and Aubrey Scott reported what they felt was a possible second-winter bird in the same flock on 29 January. Hopefully, all sightings will be written up and submitted to the Checklist and Records Committee for review.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** - The high count was six seen at Ossabaw Is. on 22 January (Giff Beaton, E.J. Williams). The species was seen in small numbers all along the coast, but the most unusual sighting was the one seen at West Point Dam on 30 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- GLAUCOUS GULL** - There were two reports from West Point Lake. Doug Robinson saw one on 16 January and Jim Flynn saw one by the dam on 6 February. More usual, but still a good find was the one seen at Cumberland Is. on 19 December (Shiela Willis).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** - High counts were nine in the Altamaha Estuary on 2 December (Giff Beaton, Brad Winn, Bob Zaremba), and 11 on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January.
- CASPIAN TERN** - A rare sighting, especially for the time of year, was the one seen at Lake Walter F. George on 24 January (Michael Beohm).
- SANDWICH TERN** - Seven were seen on Tybee Is. on 1 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn), two were at Jekyll Is. on 6 December (Darrell Lee), and one was found on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December. Shiela Willis reported one on Cumberland Is. on both 13 and 19 December. No reports were received for later in the winter, so perhaps these were lingering birds rather than true winter residents.
- FORSTER'S TERN** - Twelve were found at West Point Dam on 6 February (Jim

- Flynn).
- EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** - This species is now well established in Glynn Co., as evidenced by the 213 counted on the CBC there on 2 January.
- WHITE-WINGED DOVE** - Don Ulaszewski found one on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December for a fourth record for the island! The next day two were seen (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell), and they remained on the island until at least 22 December (Becky Beaton, Giff Beaton, Pierre Howard).
- SHORT-EARED OWL** - Four were seen at their usual wintering grounds in Sumter Co. on 6 February (Earl Horn, Rusty Trump).
- RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** - The immature male near Monticello (Jasper Co.) on 27 December was a rare find in winter (Terry Johnson, Buddy Rowe).
- ARCHILOCHUS HUMMINGBIRD** - A female of this genus was seen on 28 January at the home of Susan Richards in Cumming (Jim Flynn).
- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** - There were at least five in the Atlanta area in early January, including three at one residence in Alpharetta. One of the Alpharetta birds was banded at the same feeder the previous winter. Other reports include a female in Newton Co. on 27 December (Terry Johnson, Buddy Rowe), an adult female in the Colquitt area on 20 February (Terry Johnson), and one all winter in Tallapoosa in Haralson Co. (Michael Bell). A *Selasphorus* hummingbird was in Rabun Co. on 15 December (Giff Beaton), and another one of this genus spent much of the winter in Hahira (Betty Scruggs *vide* Barbara Passmore).
- VERMILION FLYCATCHER** - A male was found along the Cedar Hammock trail in the Okefenokee Swamp on 12 February (Brian Bookhahn). Another male, or possibly the same one, was seen four or five miles away at the entrance to the Suwanee Creek Recreation Area on 18 February (Gail Salama) and again on 23 February (Mike DiAmico).
- WESTERN KINGBIRD** - The only one reported was a bird at Fort Pulaski on 1 December (Michael Beohm).
- EASTERN KINGBIRD** - Very unusual were not one, but two on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December. One was also recorded on the Rum Creek WMA/Piedmont CBC on 21 December.
- WHITE-EYED VIREO** - Two were a good find, that far north, on the Peachtree City CBC on 20 December (*vide* Brock Hutchins).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** - Even more unusual were two of this species found on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January. Winter sightings of this species should be documented.
- FISH CROW** - This species now appears to winter in the piedmont in small numbers, and two were reported at DeKalb Reservoir on 12 December (Jeff Sewell).
- HORNED LARK** - The Atlanta International Speedway is still a reliable spot for this species and at least 20 were found there on 3 January (Michael Bell), and two were seen on 3 February (Paul Raney). On 2 February, 14 were present at the ELHLAF (Carol Lambert).
- PURPLE MARTIN** - An early arrival was spotted in Eastman on 23 January (Donny Screws).
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** - Giff Beaton found three in Rabun Co. on 15 December in an area where they have been located in the summer, so they may be part of a resident population. The only other reports were of

- single birds, with one on the Chattahoochie National Forest CBC on 20 December, and one on the Callaway Gardens CBC on 3 January.
- SEDGE WREN - Good counts were made at Eufala NWR, with six on 10 December (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen) and nine on 11 February (Eric Beohm). At the Macon brickyards, Ty Ivey had 8-12 on 12 December.
- MARSH WREN - Eric Beohm had the only inland report, with one at Eufala NWR on 11 February.
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCHER - One was found on the Athens CBC on 19 December, and on the same day the Macon CBC had five. The Augusta CBC reported two on 26 December.
- GRAY CATBIRD - Three was a good count on the Peachtree City CBC on 10 December (*fide* Brock Hutchins).
- AMERICAN PIPIT - The 200 seen in a plowed field in the Macon area on 12 December was a good count (Arlene Clark, Ken Clark).
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - One on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January was very unusual and certainly worth documenting.
- PRAIRIE WARBLER - Also rare were the one on the Macon CBC on 19 December, and one on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - Not quite as unexpected, but still a good count, were three on the Macon CBC on 19 December.
- OVENBIRD - One in Grady Co. in early January was a good find (Gail Menk).
- SUMMER TANAGER - The ACOGB lists only one sighting of this species in winter, so one in Warner Robins on 8 February (Betty Perry) was very rare.
- WESTERN TANAGER - A female was found in Bellville in Evans Co. on 2 December by Maria-Jose Blocker. News of the bird got out in early January, and it was subsequently seen by many observers until its last sighting on 2 February (Maria-Jose Blocker).
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - An individual was found on Cumberland Is. on 13 December (Sheila Willis).
- VESPER SPARROW - This species is rarely reported from the piedmont, so two found in Carroll Co. on 3 February (Chris Loudermilk) are noteworthy.
- HENSLOW'S SPARROW - Five were counted on the St. Catherines CBC on 19 December, and six were found at Paulk's Pasture WMA on 7 February (Earl Horn, Rusty Trump).
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW - An amazing count of 15 at the Bradley Unit in Eufala NWR on 18 December must be a record high count for Georgia (Giff Beaton, Michael Bell, Bruce Hallett, Pierre Howard, Aubrey Scott). The species was recorded at the same location, though in smaller numbers, through the remainder of the period.
- FOX SPARROW - Nine was an excellent count for one location in Douglas Co. (Chris Loudermilk).
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW - It is hard to find one of these elusive sparrows, but Jerry and Marie Amerson managed to locate two in Colquitt Co. on 7 February. One was also reported on the Glynn Co. CBC on 2 January.
- HARRIS'S SPARROW - A report was made of one at the CNC on 20 December by a visiting British birder, and again one was reported on 6 February, this time by a visiting birder from Arizona. The bird could not be relocated during follow-up searches on both occasions. However, Mike Winkler found a first-winter bird, presumably the same one, on 6

- February and it was seen coming to the CNC feeders through the end of the month (many observers). This is the twelfth record for Georgia, and the first since 1977.
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - The only reports were two on the Chattahoochie National Forest CBC on 19 December (*fide* Aubrey Scott), five on the Albany CBC on 26 December, one in Bulloch/Candler Cos. on 2 February (Brian Ahern), two in south Georgia on 3 February (Giff Beaton), and one near Carter's Lake in Murray Co. on 13 February (Jim Flynn).
- BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK - A well-documented report of this rare visitor was turned in by Andy Kinsey. The bird was seen briefly in Bulloch Co. on 22 February. This sighting has been accepted by the Records Committee.
- INDIGO BUNTING - One in McIntosh Co. on 25 February was probably a wintering bird (Jermal LeCounte *fide* Doris Cohrs).
- RUSTY BLACKBIRD - A flock of 55 was found near West Point Dam on 13 December (Michael Bell). Good counts were 166 on the Macon CBC on 19 December, and 63 on the Augusta CBC on 26 December.
- BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - One was found on the Macon CBC on 19 December, and 13 were counted on the Peachtree City CBC the next day. Other reports were three seen in Baker Co. on 29 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), and six in Tallapoosa in Haralson Co. on 8 February (Michael Bell).
- SHINY COWBIRD - A male was discovered by Gene Kerferl coming to his feeder in Glynn Co. on 24 January. It was last seen on 29 January being eradicated by an *Accipiter* as five birders looked on in disbelief.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE - As many as five were reported by birders looking for the Western Tanager in Bellville during the month of January. One was also seen on the Callaway Gardens CBC on 3 January.
- PURPLE FINCH - Winter finches were hard to find this year, and there were only a few reports of this species. One did make it as far south as Valdosta, however, during the last week of February (*fide* Barbara Passmore).
- RED CROSSBILL - Three were found in the Cohuttas on the Chattahoochie National Forest CBC on 19 December (*fide* Pierre Howard).
- PINE SISKIN - One was seen by Andy Kinsey coming to a feeder at his residence in Bulloch Co. from 30 December-5 January. The only other report was of one on the Callaway Gardens CBC on 3 January.
- EVENING GROSBEAK - A single bird was found in Walton Co. on 11 December (Bobby Cox). The only other report was of 11 on the Dalton CBC on 19 December.

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FROM THE LITERATURE

"From the Literature" provides brief reviews of recent ornithological studies conducted in the state of Georgia. The reviews are designed for a general reader and are meant to make ornithological research in Georgia available to a wider audience. — The Editors.

Effects of Southern Flying Squirrels on nest success of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. L. R. Mitchell, L. D. Carlile, and C. R. Chandler. 1999. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 68(3):371–373. — Loss of appropriate habitat has resulted in the Red-cockaded Woodpecker becoming endangered. However, there is some evidence that competition for nest cavities with Southern Flying Squirrels may now be a serious additional threat to some populations. Some managers have even implemented extensive control programs designed to remove flying squirrels from Red-cockaded Woodpecker nesting areas. The authors of this study, conducted on Fort Stewart in south Georgia in 1996 and 1997, designed an experiment to see whether such removal of flying squirrels is justified. The study monitored 30 Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity clusters from which flying squirrels were removed (and euthanized), 30 from which flying squirrels were excluded with aluminum flashing above and below the cavities, and 30 with no flying squirrel control measures. There was no difference among the three treatments in the median date of nest initiation, number of eggs laid, or number of young fledged. Over 1000 person-hours devoted to control of flying squirrels did not increase the percentage of clusters that fledged young or the number of young that fledged. Routine control of flying squirrels is probably not needed in healthy populations of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers such as the one on Fort Stewart.

Stereotyped foraging behavior of the Swainson's Warbler. G. R. Graves. 1998. *Journal of Field Ornithology* 69(1):121–127. — The scientific study of the Swainson's Warbler has a long association with the state of Georgia. The earliest specimen of the Swainson's Warbler was collected in Georgia and Brooke Meanley's pioneering study of this secretive species was based, in part, on field work conducted along the Ocmulgee River near Macon. This paper reports careful observations of the foraging behavior of 399 individual Swainson's Warblers, including 27 individuals from nine Georgia counties. These observations represent a tremendous effort considering the secretive nature and challenging habitat of this species. Confirming the brief description of Meanley, the author documents that the Swainson's Warbler is a terrestrial dead-leaf specialist with a limited repertoire of foraging maneuvers. Most individuals forage by meandering across the forest floor and repeatedly lifting dead leaves to search for insects underneath. Occasionally, curled leaves are opened as the bird inserts its bill and spreads the mandibles. As described by the author, Swainson's Warbler foraging is characterized by long series of "lift-look-drop" motions as birds search dead leaves in a fixed or obligate foraging syndrome peculiar to this species. Graves also reports pattering or vibrating of the feet in Swainson's Warblers, apparently functioning to flush insects from leaf litter. The highly stereotyped foraging of Swainson's Warblers may explain why an extensive carpet of leaf litter over moist soil is a documented feature of all known breeding localities.

THE ORIOLE

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Instructions to Authors

The Oriole publishes original articles that advance the study of birds in the state of Georgia and adjoining regions. *The Oriole* welcomes submission of articles describing the occurrence, distribution, behavior, or identification of birds in Georgia, as well as scientific studies from all fields of ornithology. All manuscripts should be submitted in triplicate to the editors.

COPY – Manuscripts should be *typed, double-spaced* throughout, on quality paper. Underline scientific names only. Use the same font size and style throughout the manuscript. Manuscripts should include a title page (including names and addresses of all authors), text (beginning on page 2), literature cited, tables, figure legends (on a separate page), and figures. Number all pages through the tables in the upper right-hand corner. Avoid footnotes.

STYLE – For questions of style consult the CBE Style Manual, 5th edition. It is available from the Council of Biology Editors, Inc., Bethesda, Maryland 20814.

LITERATURE CITED – List all reference cited in the text alphabetically by the first author's last name in a Literature Cited section. If there are three or fewer citations, they should be incorporated parenthetically in the text). Citations should conform to the style of a recent issue of *The Oriole*.

NOMENCLATURE – Common names of bird species should be capitalized. Provide the scientific name (underlined) at the first mention of each species. Nomenclature should follow the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (7th edition), 1998.

TABLES – Tables should be formatted with the size of *The Oriole* in mind and should be interpretable without reference to the text.

FIGURES – Figures should be appropriate for photoreproduction without retouching.

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