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NEST PLACEMENT OF THE EASTERN PHOEBE UNDER BRIDGES IN SOUTH-CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA

Douglas B. McNair

The Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*) is a fairly common to common resident in the Piedmont and mountains (mostly below 1200 m) of the Carolinas and Georgia. The phoebe is uncommon in the Sandhills and decidedly scarce elsewhere in the coastal plain of these and other Southeastern States (Burleigh 1958; Imhof 1976; Denton 1977; Potter *et al.* 1980; A.O.U. 1983). Eastern Phoebes breeding in the Sandhills of south-central North Carolina nest only under bridges (pers. obsv.). Bridge construction, bridge site, and nest placement characteristics have not been documented for either the Carolinas or Georgia. I evaluated variables associated with these characteristics in both the Piedmont and Sandhills of North Carolina and how they may be related to phoebe breeding biology. I hypothesized that the mean height above water or ground of bridges with phoebe nests would be greater than that of bridges without nests because flooding may destroy nests (Simpson 1969; Klaas 1970; Graber *et al.* 1974; Weeks 1979). In addition, I also expected that the mean height above water or ground of bridges in the Piedmont would be greater than that of bridges in the Coastal Plain because Piedmont streams are more prone to sudden heavy flooding.

METHODS

I examined bridges in mid- to late-summer of 1981 in Richmond, E Anson S Montgomery, W Moore, and W Scotland counties, North Carolina. Bridge and bridge-site characteristics that I recorded include: (1) type of road passing over bridge, *i.e.*, paved or dirt, (2) major structural materials of bridge, *i.e.*, wood, concrete, or steel, (3) general orientation of bridge, *i.e.*, E-W or N-S, (4) bridge width (m), (5) bridge span (m), (6) height at center of bridge above water or ground (m), and (7) height of end walls, from ground or water to floor of bridge (m).

Nest placement characteristics that I recorded include: (1) distance from the top of nest to floor (cm), (2) distance from bottom of nest to ground or water (m), (3) distance from nest to side of bridge at nearest point (m), and (4) distance from nest to nearest phoebe nest on the same bridge (m).

Other characteristics noted were: (1) physiographic region in which bridges were located, *i.e.*, Piedmont or Sandhills, (2) whether Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) nests under bridges were present or absent, and (3) whether phoebe nests were also built under box culverts or railroad trestles.

For preliminary analysis, I grouped the 143 bridges into three qualitative categories, large bridges (N = 15), small bridges without ledges (N = 62), and small bridges with ledges (N = 66). For each quantitative variable, student's t-tests (one or two-tailed where appropriate), at the 0.05 significance level, were used to compare bridges with and without phoebe nests for bridge and nest placement mensural characteristics. All tests employed also compared bridges in the Piedmont and Sandhills separately. The data approximated a normal distribution, were of approximately equal variances, and were independent.

RESULTS

No phoebe nests were found under large bridges, *i.e.*, bridges that exceeded 6 m height at their center above water or ground. Almost all of these bridges also had a span greater than 25 m. Only five nests were located under the 62 small bridges without ledges. Measurements of these bridge sites were very similar to those of small bridges with ledges. Of three concrete box culverts checked, one had two phoebe nests attached to Pipeorgan Wasp (*Trypoxylon politum*) nests. These phoebe nests were adherent, *i.e.*, cupped nests whose sides are attached by mud to a vertical surface. No railroad trestles (n = 5) or very small culverts (N = 15) had phoebe nests.

Small bridges with ledges contained most phoebe nests and more detailed analysis concerns only this group. Of these 66 bridges, 40 (61%) had phoebe nests. Seventeen of these bridges (42.5%) had more than one nest. A total of 72 nests was found. Most bridges (28 of 40) with phoebe nests were made of wood with steel I-beams, with or without concrete end walls, but this was also true of bridges without nests (Table 1).

Sixty-four of the 72 nests (89%) were placed on ledges of steel I-beams. One phoebe nest was on top of a steel I-beam, 20 cm from the concrete floor and touching the side of the bridge, and another nest was on top of a steel I-beam without side support. Six nests were built on top of Barn Swallow nests that were placed on ledges. All these phoebe nests were statant, *i.e.*, cupped nests with firm upright rims and supported from below.

The qualitative characteristics of bridges with phoebe nests were not significantly different from that of bridges without nests (Table 1; chi-square tests). I recorded other qualitative data on bridge characteristics though these data were not gathered systematically. I found no apparent differences in the compass direction phoebe nests faced, nor any significant difference to whether nests faced upstream or downstream, although downstream nests were more numerous. Only two phoebe nests were built over ground, both over dry stream beds. Nests were usually located over deep water, even if it

Table 1. – Qualitative characteristics of 66 small bridges with ledges examined while looking for Eastern Phoebe nests in south-central North Carolina.

Bridge characteristics	Number of bridges	
	With nests	Without nests
Road over bridge:		
paved	36	22
dirt	4	4
Major structural material:		
wood	28	21
concrete	9	3
steel	3	2
Orientation:		
E-W	24	11
N-S	16	15

was near a bridge supporting pillar. All nests (and bridges) were near woodlands. Presence or absence of utility wires had no apparent effect on phoebe choice of bridges used.

Width and spans of bridges with and without phoebe nests were not significantly different (Table 2). The height at the center and at the end walls of bridges with and without phoebe nests were significantly different (Table 2). Comparisons of height at center and end walls of bridges at Piedmont sites with (N = 25) and without (N = 16) phoebe nests were also significantly different (with nests, mean = 3.24 and 2.65, S.D. = 0.81 and 0.59; without nests, mean = 2.76 and 2.15, S.D. = 0.96 and 0.56; $t = 1.71$, $p < 0.05$; $t = 2.66$, $p < 0.005$, one-tail tests). Bridges in the Sandhills with nests had greater mean heights at center and end walls than those without nests, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Most comparisons of nest placement characteristics between Piedmont and Sandhills sites were not significantly different; data were therefore combined and are presented in Table 3. Comparison of differences of bottom of nest to ground or water were significant ($p < 0.05$) between Piedmont (mean = 2.62 m) and Sandhills (mean = 2.10 m) sites. Almost all nests were built 30 to 50 cm from the floor of the bridge, within 2 m (one to three steel I-beams) of the side of the bridge, and facing the bridge's edge.

I found Barn Swallow nests at 12 small bridges with ledges. Eight of these bridges also had phoebe nests. Of these eight Barn Swallow nest sites under bridges with phoebe nests, five sites included use of each others' old nests placed on ledges. This nest reciprocity (see Weeks 1977) included use of Barn Swallow nests by phoebes six times and use of a phoebe nest by Barn Swallow twice.

Table 2. – Dimensions of small bridges with ledges with and without Eastern Phoebe nests in south-central North Carolina.

	With nests (N = 40)		Without nests (N = 26)	
	Mean (m)	S.D.	Mean (m)	S.D.
Width	7.27	1.44	6.97	1.49
Span	16.14	13.28	16.80	12.75
Height at center	3.08	0.83	2.69	0.80
Height of end walls	2.47	0.67	2.09	0.54

DISCUSSION

Most Eastern Phoebe nests in this study were placed over water on steel I-beam ledges under bridges less than 5 m high at the center. Availability of ledges was the most critical variable that determined if phoebes nested under small bridges. Other qualitative characteristics I recorded were not significant (Table 1), and these variables may not have been important. Several variables I did not systematically record, *e.g.* depth of water beneath bridge, may have been far more important. Weeks (1979) and Faanes (1980) did not test the availability of suitable sites with preferred locations, but they did note a consistent preference for nest placement over the deepest water. Most nests they studied were placed within 2 m of the edge of the bridge and faced the edge, as I found in this study. Faanes (1980) and Coffey (1963) also reported that Eastern Phoebes preferred to nest over the deepest water, and both they and Weeks (1979) noted that most nests were placed on the upstream side of the bridge. Nests on the downstream side of the bridge were more numerous in this study, and this preference was related to the deepest water under the bridge. Stream bed characteristics are important in determining where the deepest water is located. Coffey (1963) suggested that building nests over the deepest water deters terrestrial predators.

Water levels of woodland streams may be critical in selection of bridge nest sites by phoebes. Bridges in the Piedmont and Sandhills containing phoebe nests have higher mean bridge heights at center and end walls than those bridges without phoebe nests. Furthermore, phoebes built nests under bridges

Table 3. – Spatial arrangements of 72 individual Eastern Phoebe nests under small bridges with ledges in south-central North Carolina.

Parameter	Mean	S.D.
Top of nest to floor of bridge	39.36 cm	9.92
Bottom of nest to ground or water	2.45 m	0.88
Nest to side of bridge (shortest distance)	1.71 m	1.38
Nest to nearest neighboring phoebe nest	3.36 m	2.97

with higher mean height at center and end walls in the Piedmont compared to the Sandhills. These facts suggest that phoebes may reduce nest loss during flooding by carefully choosing prospective nest sites, particularly in the Piedmont where streams are more prone to sudden flooding than in the Sandhills. Weeks (1979) found flooding caused 7% of nest failures in Indiana during the egg and nestling periods, and Simpson (1969), Klaas (1970), and Graber *et al.* (1974) also stated nests may be lost to flooding that may follow heavy rains in spring and summer.

Nest reciprocity was infrequent in this study, for Barn Swallows occupied only 18% of the small bridges with ledges. Weeks (1977) found nest reciprocity was more common in adherent than statant nests, and believed adherent nests afforded greater protection from predators.

Adherent nests are rare in south-central North Carolina but are frequent in Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Mississippi, and elsewhere (Klaas 1970; Graber *et al.* 1974; Coffey 1976; Jackson and Weeks 1976; Weeks 1979). The initial site of attachment of most adherent nests is on rough surfaces, such as mud dauber nests, which support many nests in Alabama, Indiana, and Mississippi. Such sites were virtually unused in south-central North Carolina despite their abundance. Other rough surfaces that potentially could serve for initial attachment sites for adherent nests were also virtually unused by phoebes. Hence, the scarcity of adherent phoebe nests was not due to lack of suitable nest-sites.

Phoebes in south-central North Carolina apparently prefer to build statant, as opposed to adherent nests under bridges, suggesting that the benefits of larger clutch size may outweigh the threat of predation and the energetic investment of new nest construction (Weeks 1979). The plasticity of phoebe nest-building behavior suggests that this trait is not genetically fixed. Furthermore, nest-site choice may be subject to the selective pressure posed by intermittent flooding. However, not all bridges with suitable nest-site characteristics have phoebe nests, implying that phoebes are not numerous enough to occupy all available sites, or that they prefer to nest elsewhere, such as under eaves of houses in the Piedmont.

SUMMARY

Eastern Phoebes nesting under bridges in south-central North Carolina usually place their nests on ledges of steel I-beams under bridges of less than 5 m height at center and directly over the deepest water. Almost all nests under bridges were statant despite an abundance of sites for placement of adherent nests. The mean height above water or ground of bridges with phoebe nests was significantly greater than that of bridges without nests. These bridges are apparently preferred nest sites in south-central North Carolina, and their use by phoebes is probably an adaptation to spring flooding. Barn Swallows rarely use bridges used by phoebes.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE THERMOREGULATORY BEHAVIOR OF A ROOF-NESTING COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*)

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and
J. Christopher Haney

Several typically ground-nesting bird species alternatively use flat, shell- or rock-surfaced rooftops as nest sites. The Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*), Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*), Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*), Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), and Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) are among the species known to use such sites (Weller 1958, Fisk 1978, Phillips and Alsop 1978). The thermal stress on incubating or brooding adult birds who must remain with the eggs or young all day can be very high because sites are often exposed to direct sunlight for 12 or more hours. Dark tar paper and gravel roofing absorbs and retains large amounts of heat, and roof surface temperatures can exceed 61°C (142°F) (Weller 1958).

We studied the thermoregulatory behavior of an adult female Common Nighthawk during the late incubation and early brooding part of the nesting cycle between 7 July and 25 July 1983. The nest was located on a black tar paper, gray-gravel roof surface of the Environmental Protection Agency Research Laboratory in Athens, Clarke County, Georgia and located 0.5 m from a room on the roof surface that housed air conditioning units. The bird was monitored through 20 cm-wide vertical slits in the wall facing the nest site. Hourly and diurnal variations in light intensity and roof surface temperatures (RST) were measured for 4 days (8-11 July 1983) with a Watanabe Multicorder chart recorder and YSI Model 425F Telethermometer. The light probe was placed on the roof surface 0.5 m from the bird and the temperature probe placed 1 cm above the roof surface 0.25 m from the bird. On 9 and 10 July 1983 we observed the bird's thermoregulatory behavior for 15-min periods every 30 min from 0900 to 1600 EDT recording rate and duration of gular flutter and the bird's position in relation to the sun.

Previous investigations (Weller 1958) and this study demonstrate that Common Nighthawks thermoregulate (cool) principally through (1) panting (gular flutter) or evaporative heat loss, (2) clockwise positional rotation in order to continually minimize body surface area exposed to the sun, and (3) raising or fluffling the feathers of the nape and upper back possibly permitting convective heat loss.

Data from our study showed that the rate of frequency (pants/minute) and duration (% time) of panting increased with higher roof surface temperatures (Figure 1). Measuring the strength of this relationship with Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient (r) revealed that both panting frequency ($r = .959$, $df = 6$, $p < .001$) and duration ($r = .935$, $df = 6$, $p < .001$) were significantly correlated with roof surface temperatures but not with air ambient temperatures (AAT). Panting frequency varied from a low of 185 pants/min at 0900 to a high of 400 pants/min at 1400. Caprimulgids may occasionally pant at rates exceeding 500/min (Dawson and Bartholomew

1968). The duration of panting was less than 50% at 0900 but was continual (100%) between 1130 and 1400 hrs (Figure 1).

Between 1030 and 1405 the nighthawk underwent a clockwise rotation of 146° (ca. 40°/h) with the head directed away from the sun. The longitudinal axis of the bird's body was thus continually parallel to the sun's rays and a minimal amount of the bird's body surface area was exposed to solar heating. Although Weller (1958) thought sun orientation in the nighthawk may have resulted from the tendency of a nocturnal bird to avoid glaring light, we suspect that the function of sun orientation in this species is primarily thermoregulatory.

The sharp drop in RST and the concurrent decrease in panting frequency and duration at 1400 seen in Figure 1 is a result of shade passing and remaining over the nest site. The nighthawk also stopped sun orientation during shading. To predict the temperature at the nest site had shade been absent, we used the regression line of AAT on RST [Y = (2.65) X - 26.81]. Predicted roof surface temperatures were calculated as being 57.19 ± .83°C (95% C.L.) at 1500 hrs and 58.82 ± 1.26°C from 1600 hrs to 1800 hrs. During this period, however, the actual roof surface temperatures were 40°C or less and by 1700 hrs AAT and RST were roughly equivalent (Figure 1).

Welty (1982) states that a nighthawk loses over 16X as much water through evaporative cooling at 44°C as it does at 1.2°C. In other species, *i.e.*, Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), an environmental temperature difference of 10°C may result in considerable differences in evaporative water loss. Cardinals lose less than 4 mg H_2O/g/hr at 31°C versus 19 mg H_2O/g/hr at 41°C, a greater than 4X reduction (Welty 1982:149). The temperature differential at our site due to shading was as large as 15°C. Thus, the use of shaded nest sites by this species could result in potentially large reductions of evaporative water loss. At our site, this may have been accomplished both through an avoidance of higher temperatures late in the day and by a reduction in the total time exposed to those temperatures.

The use of shade by roof-nesting Common Nighthawks may be merely fortuitous. Weller (1958) and we found, however, that after the young hatched, the female moved the young around on the roof to use shade from pipes and other structures. It is conceivable that nighthawks chose such nest sites when they are available. This is readily testable by analyzing a large sample of roof nest sites for the presence and duration of shade.

The use of shaded nest sites may be advantageous to young birds as well. Common Nighthawk young are intermediate between precocial and altricial and are imperfectly endothermic (Howell 1959). During our observations, the female continually brooded the young during the part of the day receiving direct solar input. Only after the site was shaded did we see the young exposed.

We wish to thank Robert Taylor for the loan of equipment, Bill Osmore for his initial notice of the birds' presence, Haley D. Haley, administrative officer of the EPA Research Lab, for permission to conduct our work at the facility, and M. E. McGhee for her general assistance. This work was supported by funds provided the Department of Zoology. This is a contribution of the University of Georgia Museum of Natural History.

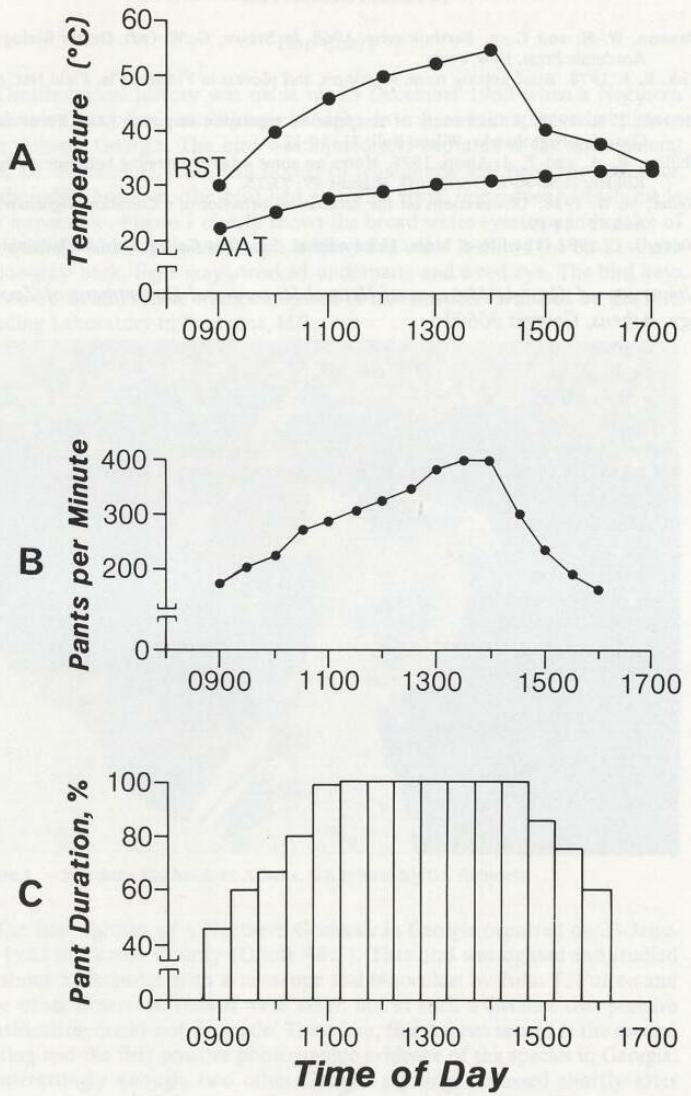

Figure 1. — A, Roof Surface Temperature (RST) in degrees centigrade plotted against time. Ambient Air Temperature (AAT) in degrees centigrade plotted against time. B, Panting frequency in Pants Per Minute (PPM) plotted against time. C, Duration of panting in percent of time spent panting plotted against time.

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A NORTHERN GOSHAWK AT ATHENS

Don Cohrs

Ornithological history was made on 23 December 1983 when a Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) was brought to a licensed raptor rehabilitator near Athens, Georgia. The bird was injured and captured in the same general area. Dr. Rehmel, D.V.M., had hoped to rehabilitate and hack the bird back to the wild; however, the bird had a serious visual impairment which made this impossible. Figure 1 clearly shows the broad white eyestripe indicative of the species. When the photograph is viewed in color it shows the bird to have a blue-gray back, light gray streaked underparts and a red eye. The bird keys out to be an adult male when compared to information furnished by the Bird Banding Laboratory in Patuxent, MD.

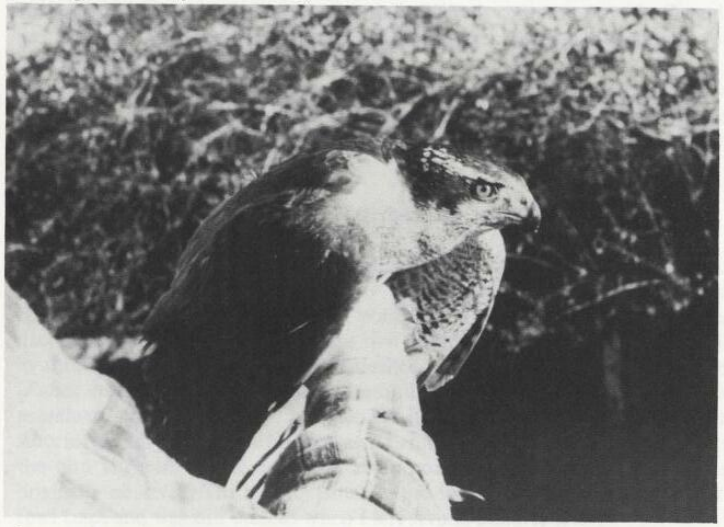

Figure 1. – Northern Goshawk at Athens, GA (photo by Dr. Rehmel).

The first sighting of a Northern Goshawk in Georgia occurred on 23 January 1983 in Fannin County (Oriole 48:5). That bird was sighted and studied for about 15 minutes with a telescope and binoculars by John T. Fulton and three other observers. Photos were taken but at such a distance that positive identification could not be made. Therefore, this Athens record is the second sighting and the first positive photographic evidence of the species in Georgia.

Interestingly enough two other Georgia sightings occurred shortly after this individual was found. The first sighting was a bird near Dacula on 29 December 1983 by Joel Volpi. This bird evidently made a pass at Volpi's captive Merlin. The second bird was seen several times in the Athens area by a number of observers from 12-26 January 1984 (American Birds 38:306).

A review of *American Birds* Vols. 31 - 37 revealed a number of reports of this northern hawk in the southeast. The following observations were noted: VA = 8, TN = 4, NC = 3, FL = 2, MD = 1, GA = 1, and AL = 1. From these observations it appears that the species is definitely becoming more common in the southeast. Observers are encouraged to report all occurrences of the Northern Goshawk in Georgia.

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GENERAL NOTES

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD AT DOUGLAS, GEORGIA – At 0900 on 20 June 1983 I noted a male Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) soaring over a shopping center parking lot in the southside of Douglas, Coffee County, Georgia. The bird was flying and soaring effortlessly about 48 m above ground level and remained in view for over 10 minutes. The sky was overcast and the ceiling about 2000 m A.S.L. No storms were on the Georgia coast and none were predicted.

The deep, deliberate wing beats and long glides of the species cause it to stand out from any similar species. I observed hundreds of the species from on board a U.S. Navy destroyer in the 1940's enroute from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to Panama. In 1970, I saw several at Cedar Key, Florida. A beginner might mistake the American Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) with an immature frigatebird. The Swallow-tailed Kite is common over the Ocmulgee River and its floodplain in this area but the great difference in the sizes of the two birds is readily apparent.

Less than a dozen instances of the occurrence of this species in Georgia have been reported and this observation appears to be only the third from the interior of the state (*Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS, Occ. Publ. No. 6, 1977).

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WHITE-WINGED SCOTER AT PLANT SCHERER ASH POND – At approximately 1445 on 1 February 1983 I sighted a single, male White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*) at the ash pond at Georgia Power's Plant Scherer near Forsyth, Georgia. The bird was first observed at a distance of about 70 m through 10X50 binoculars as it flushed with a flock of American Coots (*Fulica americana*). Upon flushing the bird flew in a broad circle displaying a prominent white speculum, pronounced nob at the base of the bill and a surprisingly distinct large white crescent behind the eye. After a few moments the bird alighted on the ash pond at approximately the same place where originally observed. The bird remained in this location as I checked my waterfowl traps and was still present when I left several minutes later.

The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (GOS, Occ. Publ. No. 6, 1977) notes that the White-winged Scoter is an uncommon winter resident along the Georgia coast. Inland sightings were noted at Augusta, Dalton and Columbus. Two additional sightings were recently noted by Brisse (*Oriole* 47:17) at Lake Lanier and Atlanta.

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AN OSPREY CAPTURES A LARGE FROG – On 25 January 1984 while visiting the Myakka River State Park (Sarasota County), Florida I observed at least four adult Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*). At my point of observation, the river is approximately one mile wide, shallow, and clearly merits its Indian name which means "big lake." At that dry time of the year the maximum

depth is about six feet. The surface is decorated with large patches of water lilies and water hyacinths. On this day the weather was clear and temperatures were in the 70's.

Of two Ospreys flying parallel but well-separated northwest courses over the river, one hovered briefly over a patch of water hyacinths and then made an atypically shallow dive and lumbered away clutching a large *Rana gryllio* (Southern Bullfrog or Pig Frog) in its talons in a sideways fashion. *Rana gryllio* is quite abundant on this portion of the river, as are largemouth bass, pumpkinseeds and numerous other species of fish.

Ospreys are classically if not universally described as preying upon fish. Given the abundance of fish in these waters and a resident population of Ospreys, it seems unlikely that its capture was prompted by scarcity of normal prey. Rather, this would seem to be a more opportunistic kind of behavior and may represent another food source for certain populations of Ospreys.

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HUDSONIAN GODWIT AT ST. SIMONS ISLAND – On 15 October 1983 Hugh Garrett, Patrick Brisse, my wife Peggy and I were birding the area on St. Simons Island known as the East Beach. This is the area where Gould's Inlet separates St. Simons and Sea Islands. We were there to look for a Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*) reported from that area a few days earlier by Al Kleckner (*Oriole* 48:77).

We easily found the Reddish Egret and enjoyed its feeding antics for about 30 minutes. We also observed up to 6 Marbled Godwits (*Limosa fedoa*) feeding on the extensive mudflats of this area. While I was scanning the flats with my binoculars I noticed a flying Marbled Godwit being followed by a somewhat smaller bird. Both were flying at us so no field marks were readily apparent.

As the birds came toward us across the mudflats they turned to their right. At this point I could see that the smaller bird also had an upturned, godwit-shaped bill. I called to the others to get on the bird and we watched as both birds flew up Gould's Inlet and landed on a mudflat about 400 m away. While the bird was flying past us at a distance of about 100 m we observed several field marks. First of all the bird was smaller and grayer than the Marbled Godwit. Its underwings were almost black with the exception of the base of the primaries and secondaries which seemed to form a whitish line which separated the winglinings from the outside part of the flight feathers. As the bird turned up the inlet and flew directly away from us we could see a noticeable wingstripe, a small white rump and black tail.

When the bird landed we observed it through a Questar telescope at 80X. Although we could see that the bird had a godwit-shaped bill and was smaller and grayer than a nearby Marbled Godwit, the distance was so great that little else could be discerned. Since we had not brought a field guide we decided to call back to the house where we were staying on Jekyll Island to find out whether the bird was a Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) or Hudsonian

(*Limosa haemastica*). We left the bird, made the call and found out that it was an Hudsonian as it had the dark underwings. Unfortunately, when we returned to the area about 10 minutes later, we could not relocate the bird.

There have evidently been three previous Georgia records of godwits which were not Marbled Godwits. The first two are noted in the *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (GOS, Occ. Publ. No. g, 1977). One was seen on 14 Oct. 1966 on Little St. Simons Island and the second was seen on Sapelo Island on 30 Dec. 1972. The species was placed on the state's hypothetical list because these observations were not clearly differentiated from the similar Black-tailed Godwit. The first positive Hudsonian Godwit observation appears to be that of Manns and Greenberg on 15 April 1980 near Atlanta (*Oriole* 45: 36-37).

Terry S. Moore, 3086 River Oaks Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30339.

A SECOND CLIFF SWALLOW COLONY IN GEORGIA – For several years the only recognized regular nesting location for Cliff Swallows (*Hirundo pyrrhonota*) in Georgia was on Hartwell Dam. Sometime in 1982, however, I was told of the existence of another colony by Stacy Caudell and Rod Smith. According to Caudell and Smith a colony existed under Prather Bridge which spans a portion of Lake Hartwell in Stephens County about 32 miles from Hartwell Dam. They told of having visited the site several times during 1981 and 1982.

On 4 June 1983 Jack Carusos and I decided to drive to Stephens County to look for the swallows. I would estimate there were 30-50 Cliff Swallows flying about the bridge and I observed at least 9 nests from the bank on the Georgia side. I am sure many more could have been found from a boat.

A single Cliff Swallow was observed by me the same day flying about Ramsey Jarrett Bridge (U.S. 123 and GA 13). This bridge is some 4 miles from Prather Bridge but also on the South Carolina line. I could not however find a vantage point to observe the underside of the bridge.

During 1981 I observed Cliff Swallows at Pendergrass, Jackson County, Georgia on 21 May and again on 5 July. This is of course no proof of a nearby nesting but certainly it is circumstantial evidence.

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FROM THE FIELD

Oct. – Dec. 1983

All observers in Georgia are encouraged to send their field notes directly to the From the Field compiler. Reporting periods are January-March, April-June, July-September and October-December. In order for us to catch up on The *Oriole*'s publication schedule, we need your field notes by the 15th of the month following the reporting period. For example, your field notes for the period January-March 1985 would be due by 15 April 1985. Only in this way can we hope to have an up-to-date From the Field column. Also, we would like to encourage members to send in photographs of interesting sightings for inclusion in the column. The photos will be reproduced in black and while so need to have good contrast showing any pertinent field marks. Remember to include details on any unusual observation.

Red-throated Loon – Harriett DiGioia reported a lone bird on 27 Oct. on Lake Conasauga in the Cohuttas. In the last few years the species has become a rare but regular transient inland in the fall.

Common Loon – Two were late near Dublin on 23 Dec. as mentioned by Tom Patterson.

Horned Grebe – This species arrived as early as 1 Nov. at Sweetwater Creek State Park (SCSP) near Atlanta (Patrick Brisse, Billy Pulliam and Paul Raney). Rare inland during the winter season were 3 birds seen during the Peachtree City Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on 17 Dec. and 5 near Dublin on 22-23 Dec. (Tom Patterson). Outstanding were the 100+ noted during the winter by Terry Johnson on Lake Juliette near Forsyth.

Red-necked Grebe – The only report was one at Sapelo Island on 4 Dec. (Billy Pulliam). Unfortunately the bird did not stay long enough to be seen by others.

Black-capped Petrel – Chris Haney's on-going seabird studies produced 14 on 5 Oct., 6 on 10 Oct. and 6 on 3 Dec. All were seen between 85 and 100 miles from shore. The last report is probably the first winter record for the state.

Cory's Shearwater – Chris Haney reported 7 on 5 Oct. and 3 on 6 Oct. from about 90 miles east of Cumberland. His latest date is 10 Oct. when he saw 65 about 85 miles east of Savannah.

Manx Shearwater – The third and fourth Georgia records occurred on 21 Nov. and 3 Dec. when Chris Haney found single birds east of St. Catherine's and Sapelo Islands.

Aububon's Shearwater – Chris, our seabird expert, reported 1 on 5 Oct., 7 on 10 Oct., 117 on 21 Nov., 55 on 1-3 Dec. and 17 on 8 Dec. Worth noting are the 117 on the late date of 21 Nov. which is probably one of the highest state counts. The December records are one of the few winter sightings of the species in Georgia.

Northern Gannet – Four seen by Robert Manns about 5 miles off Ossabaw Island on 24 Oct. provided the earliest fall date ever for the state.

American White Pelican – Chris Taylor reported one bird on 13 Oct. flying between the Alabama and Georgia sides of Eufaula NWR.

Great Cormorant – Gregory and Carmen Valpey-Toussignant reported an immature on 13 Nov. from a small lake near Albany. The bird was seen later during the winter by many observers. This is only the fourth state record.

Double-crested Cormorant – This species continues its increase inland with reports from Atlanta on 25 Oct. (Patrick Brisse, Dennie and Pam McClure), Peachtree City Lake on 29-30 Oct. (Patrick Brisse, Paul Raney), a high of 19 there on 12 Nov. (Joe Greenberg, *et al.*). Twenty-six were at Dublin on 6 Nov. (Tom Patterson) and 2 more were at Carter's Lake on 13 Nov. (Cherokee Audubon Society). It was also reported in Augusta on 26 Nov. (Anne Waters) and at Lake Juliette in Dec. (Terry Johnson).

Anhinga – Worth mentioning was a female 10 miles south of Statesboro on 5 Nov. as noted by Sam and Nan Pate.

Tricolored Heron – Rare but regular in Augusta was one on 15 Oct. (Augusta Audubon Society). A little more unusual was one 12 miles southwest of Dublin on 16 Oct. (Sam Pate).

Reddish Egret – An immature was discovered by Al Kleckner on 12 Oct. on the mudflats between St. Simons and Sea Islands. Many observers saw the bird on 14-15 Oct. It is interesting to note that although adjacent to Florida, the state has only half a dozen or so records.

Tundra Swan – Two were unusual at Eufaula NWR on 11 Dec. (Jim Godwin, Tom King, Lorne Malo). Also for the first time in many years 4 immatures were seen in Augusta on 24 Dec. (Anne Waters, *et al.*).

Snow Goose – Joe Greenberg and his class reported some from Eufaula NWR on 19-20 Nov. In addition 3 Snows and 9 Blues were a rare sight in north Atlanta on 25 Nov. as noted by Peggy and Terry Moore. Seven more were reported on 3-4 Dec. from Sapelo Island during an Atlanta Audubon Society field trip.

Wood Duck – A very high count of 2000 birds was noted by Charles Erwin during the Albany CBC on 31 Dec.

Green-winged Teal – More birds than usual were reported in Atlanta between 23 Oct. - 16 Nov. (many observers) and two were even seen during the Atlanta CBC on 18 Dec. for a rare winter sighting.

Northern Pintail – Patrick Brisse *et al.* noted one during the Peachtree City CBC on 17 Dec.

Blue-winged Teal – A late bird for the Piedmont area was at Peachtree City Lake on 30 Oct. (Patrick Brisse).

American Wigeon – Also rather rare in the winter in the Piedmont, 2 birds were seen at SCSP on 29 Dec. (Dennie and Pam McClure).

Canvasback – Increasing in the Atlanta area in the last few winters, the species was reported from 29 Oct. (Patrick Brisse) through the end of the season. The high count was 8 on 29 Dec. at SCSP as reported by Dennie and Pam McClure.

Redhead – The first fall birds for the Atlanta area were noted on 23 Oct. at Peachtree City Lake by Terry Moore *et al.* and were seen through Dec. The high count was 6 on 30 Oct. also at the lake.

Black Scoter – Very early was a female plumaged bird seen on 15 Oct. on Jekyll Island by Hugh Garrett, Peggy and Terry Moore. Worth mentioning was a good count of 500+ off Sapelo Island on 2-3 Dec. during an Atlanta Audubon Society fieldtrip.

Surf Scoter – About 10 individuals were seen off Sapelo Island during the same field trip mentioned above on 2-3 Dec. More unusual was a single bird reported inland near Dublin by Tom Patterson on 23 Dec.

White-winged Scoter – As usual, a few were seen off Jekyll Island, with 5 on 20 Nov. by Patrick Brisse. Along with the Surf Scoter and as rare inland were 2 individuals near Dublin on 23 Dec. (Tom Patterson).

Red-breasted Merganser – The highest count ever for Atlanta was 51 on 27 Nov. at Peachtree City Lake seen by many observers during an Atlanta Audubon Society field trip.

Ruddy Duck – Terry and Peggy Moore and others reported an early female plumaged bird on Jekyll Island on 10 Oct.

Osprey – Terry Moore and others, while spending the week of 8-16 Oct. banding at Jekyll Island, observed 250+ migrating south. Rather late was a bird on 10 Dec. in Augusta as mentioned by Anne Waters.

Mississippi Kite – Late for the state was a bird reported by Anne Waters in Augusta on 1 Oct.

Bald Eagle – Of note for the piedmont and mountain areas were an immature at SCSP near Atlanta on 30 Oct. (Dennie and Pam McClure), one at Carter's Lake on 16 Dec. (Danny Hensley), an adult at Lake Juliette near Macon on 20 Dec. (Terry Johnson) and another adult at Lake Chatuge on 26 Dec. (Arthur Green and Robert Loftin).

Sharp-shinned Hawk – A very good count was 1000+ reported by the banding group from Jekyll Island during the week of 8-16 Oct.

Northern Goshawk – The second state record was a bird shot near Athens in Morgan County and brought to a raptor rehabilitator on 23 Dec. The third state record

was a bird observed attacking Joel Volpi's trained Merlin on 30 Dec. near Winder in Barrow County.

Merlin – Terry Moore *et al.* reported 20+ during 8-16 Oct. from Jekyll Island. Other reports included one near Dublin on 12 Nov. (Tom Patterson) and another one near Lake Tobesofkee on 7-11 Dec. (Ken and Arlene Clark).

Peregrine Falcon – Very encouraging were the 50+ reported from Jekyll Island from 8-16 Oct. by the banding group. Not a bad showing of that species for the Georgia coast. Other reports came from Atlanta on 8 Oct. (Paul Raney), Dublin on 16 Oct. (Peggy and Terry Moore), south of Atlanta on 23 Nov. (Francis Michael, Price Webb) and from Sapelo Island on 31 Dec. (Anne and Vernon Waters).

Ruffed Grouse – A bird flew into a brick wall and died in Roswell on 26 Oct. The specimen is now, fide Nanette Hutchinson, part of the University of Georgia collection. Although a few records exist for the Athens area, this represents the first record for the Atlanta area.

King Rail – Rarely reported in the piedmont area, one was found by Jack Carusos and John Paget in Banks County on 19 Nov. and another one on 3 Dec. at Commerce Lake.

Virginia Rail – Also rare inland in the winter time was a bird found during the Dublin CBC on 18 Dec. (fide Tom Patterson).

Sandhill Crane – The main group arrived late this year and went through the state mainly in late Nov. - early Dec. The earliest were a group of 200+ in Atlanta on 5 Nov. (Dave and Phyl Reynolds). The species lingered all over the state into late Dec. and even into early Jan. (2 stayed along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta until 7 Jan according to Joel Volpi). The Atlanta, Dalton, Chattahoochee National Forest and Columbus CBC's all reported the species around 17-18 Dec. Six individuals were out of range on the Albany CBC on 31 Dec. (Carmen and Gregory Valpey-Toussignant).

Lesser Yellowlegs – Late birds were one in Atlanta on 30 Oct. (Patrick Brisse) and another in Augusta on 23-24 Dec. (Anne Waters).

Solitary Sandpiper – Rather late for the state was one observed by John Paget in Forsyth County on 23 Oct.

Long-billed Curlew – Liz and Hugh Garrett reported up to 3 individuals on Little St. Simons Island on 28-29 Oct. This is the most reliable place in the state to find the species mainly in the fall.

Hudsonian Godwit – Patrick Brisse, Hugh Garrett, Peggy and Terry Moore reported one bird at the East Beach between St. Simons and Sea Islands on 15 Oct. The bird was observed and compared with Marbled Godwits while flying and resting. It was also differentiated from the similar Black-tailed Godwit. This is only the second definite record for Georgia.

Marbled Godwit – One of the highest counts for the state was the 60+ seen by Liz and Hugh Garrett on 30 Oct. on Little St. Simons Island.

Least Sandpiper – For the first time one bird wintered at the Clayton County Water Treatment Plant in south Atlanta. A few birds were there until early Dec. but only one spent the winter.

Baird's Sandpiper – Following on the heels of the first record for Atlanta in the spring, one bird was found on 8 Oct. by Patrick Brisse and Hugh Garrett. It was also seen the next day by Paul Raney.

Purple Sandpiper – Up to 6 were at their usual spot on Tybee Island on 19 Nov. (Patrick Brisse). This appears to be the only place where the species can be reliably found.

Dunlin – Always noteworthy inland were single individuals on 9 Oct. in south Atlanta (Patrick Brisse, Paul Raney) and on 19 Nov. near Dublin (Tom Patterson).

Stilt Sandpiper – With the discovery of better shorebird habitat, this species has been found to be a rare but regular transient in the Atlanta area. The last fall sighting was a bird seen by many observers on 2 Oct.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper – John Paget reported a very late bird at the Gainesville Airport from 5-13 Oct.

Long-billed Dowitcher – A bird reported by Robert Manns on 21 Oct. was the first for

Atlanta. It was seen by many observers through 23 Oct. and was positively identified as a Long-billed by call.

Red-necked Phalarope – All reports came from Chris Haney's offshore trips: 4 on 6 Oct., 35 on 21 Nov., 16 on 2 Dec. and 10 on 8 Dec. Is it possible that this species winters in Georgia waters?

Red Phalorope – Chris is again the only one to report this species: 3 were seen on 21 Nov. and a few more during his 1-3 Dec. and 8 Dec. trips in Georgia waters.

Pomarine Jaeger – Two on 21 Nov. and single birds on 3 and 8 Dec. were reported by Chris Haney during his offshore trips.

Parasitic Jaeger – In addition to the Pomarines mentioned above, Chris also saw 2 Parasitics on 2 Dec. and a single bird on 8 Dec. Another record was of 5 individuals seen from Sapelo Island on 3 Dec. by Hugh and Liz Garrett, Peggy and Terry Moore.

Laughing Gull – Two birds at Peachtree City Lake on 23 Oct. provided the fifth record for the Atlanta area and the second one in just over a year (Terry Moore *et al.*).

Bonaparte's Gull – This gull was relatively common inland in mid-Dec. as reported from the Atlanta, Macon and Columbus CBC's. Robert Loftin reported up to 15 birds on Lake Chatuge during Dec.

Lesser Black-backed Gull – Two or three birds were seen by many observers from 8-16 Oct. on the south beach of Jekyll Island. This species is now a regular fall migrant in that area.

Great Black-backed Gull – Interestingly only one first winter bird was seen during the same week (8-16 Oct.) at the same spot as the Lesser Black-backed by Terry Moore and others.

Black-legged Kittwake – Chris Haney reported some during his 1-3 Dec. and 8 Dec. trips. Although the species was only reported once before Nov. 1982, it is probably an uncommon but regular winter visitor offshore based on records since then.

Sandwich Tern – A late bird was reported from Jekyll Island on 8 and 9 Oct. during the fall GOS meeting.

Forster's Tern – Inland records came from Laurens County with 4 on 4-5 Nov. and 2 on 23 Dec. (Tom Patterson) and from SCSP near Atlanta with individuals on 20-23 Oct. and 6 Dec. (Dennie and Pam McClure).

Bridled Tern – Chris Haney reported 12 on 6 Oct., 2 on 21 Nov. and a very late one on 8 Dec. The last record is probably the latest date for the state and may be one of the latest for the entire country.

Mourning Dove – Worth noting were 2 birds still nesting as late as 2 Oct. as observed by Alan Ashley in Albany. Two eggs were found in the nest.

Chimney Swift – The last one was reported by Jim Sirah on 26 Oct. near Columbus.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird – A very late bird was found at a feeder in Gainesville by John Paget on 23 Nov. and was last seen 24 Dec.

Western Kingbird – The only seasonal report was a single bird seen by Terry Moore and party on 9 Oct. on Jekyll Island.

Tree Swallow – Very late migrants for an inland location were 7 on 11 Nov. and one on 15 Nov. at SCSP as noted by Dennie and Pam McClure.

Barn Swallow – Late inland sightings were a few at SCSP on 22 Oct. (Patrick Brisse) and at Pendergrass on 29 Oct. (John Paget).

Red-breasted Nuthatch – This was definitely not an invasion year as we know of only 3 reports: Dalton on 11 Nov. (Harriett DiGioia) Augusta on 23 Nov. (Clarence Belger) and during the Atlanta CBC on 18 Dec.

Bewick's Wren – An individual was spotted by John Paget on 24 Nov. near Pendergrass. It remained through the end of the period and was seen by many observers. Another report came from Whitfield County where Julius and Katherine Sapp found one on 17 Dec.

Sedge Wren – The only piedmont area migrant was found along the Chattahoochee River in Atlanta on 8 Oct. by Patrick Brisse and Hugh Garrett.

Marsh Wren – Of note was a bird seen during the Dublin CBC on 18 Dec. fide Tom Patterson.

Hermit Thrush – A good inland count was 65+ on 17 Dec. during the Peachtree City

CBC.

Water Pipit – Very early for the state was a lone bird found by Patrick Brisse on 1 Oct. at the Clayton County Water Treatment Plant in south Atlanta.

Loggerhead Shrike – Notable were 2 found during the Whitfield County CBC on 17 Dec. and 4 during the Chattahoochee National Forest CBC the next day (fide Harriett DiGioia).

White-eyed Vireo – Francis Michael reported a late bird on 5 Nov. near Conyers. Mid-winter records came from Peachtree City on 17 Dec. (Dennie and Pam McClure) and from Augusta on 24 Dec. (Anne and Vernon Waters).

Warbling Vireo – One bird, seen and compared with a Tennessee Warbler, was found by Patrick Brisse on 6 Oct. in Atlanta.

Nashville Warbler – This species is being reported more often than usual. It was seen in Atlanta on 2 Oct. (Dennie and Pam McClure), 6 Oct. (Patrick Brisse), 14 Oct. (Richard Parks) and as late as 9 Nov. (Paul Raney). John Paget saw 2 in the Gainesville area on 24 Oct. and 6 Nov. Arthur Green saw another one in Hiawassee on 1 Oct. The most unusual sighting was one in Augusta on 24 Dec. as noted by Anne and Vernon Waters. This represents the first winter record for the state.

Magnolia Warbler – A relatively late bird was noted by John Paget in Jackson County on 3 Nov.

Black-throated Blue Warbler – A fairly late bird was seen along the Chattahoochee River near Atlanta on 29 Oct. by Peggy and Terry Moore.

Palm Warbler – The warm weather before Christmas could explain the 6 birds found during the Peachtree City CBC on 17 Dec. and the additional one the next day on the Atlanta CBC.

Black-and-white Warbler – John Paget found a very late migrant near Gainesville during the period from 23-30 Nov. A winter sighting was noted on 23 Dec. in Augusta by Anne and Vernon Waters.

Connecticut Warbler – Rare in the fall anywhere in the state were two closely observed by Eileen Hutcheson and Jay Stolar on 16 Oct. along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta.

Wilson's Warbler – Tom Patterson observed a bird on 22 Oct. in Laurens County for a rare coastal plain record.

Dickcissel – Dan Forster reported the only seasonal sighting from Jekyll Island on 8 Oct.

Henslow's Sparrow – A few birds were found during the fall. Single birds were seen in Atlanta on 26 Oct. (Patrick Brisse) and on 30 Oct. - 2 Nov. (Atlanta Audubon Society).

Lincoln's Sparrow – John Paget reported one from Gainesville on 17 Oct. for the only report of the period.

White-crowned Sparrow – Rare along the coast was one banded by Terry Moore and others on 14 Oct. at Jekyll Island. More common in the piedmont were one in Atlanta on 26 Oct. (Patrick Brisse), near Conyers on 14 Nov. (Francis Michael) and 2 near Pendergrass on 13 Nov. (Terry Moore *et al.*).

Lapland Longspur – At least 5 birds were found by John Paget at the Gainesville Airport on 16 Nov. They were seen by many observers until 2 Dec.

Western Meadowlark – During the Albany CBC, Gregory and Carmen Valpey-Toussignant recorded a Western Meadowlark on 31 Dec. If the tape is verified by the Checklist Committee this will be the third state record.

Yellow-headed Blackbird – The species was reported twice: Sidney Gauthreaux saw one on the Jekyll Island Causeway on 7 Oct. and Billy Pulliam saw the second near Desser in southwest Georgia on 13 Nov.

Red Crossbill – The mountains were the only area to report the species where it seems to be becoming more regular. Harriett DiGioia had 20 birds in the Cohuttas on 28 Oct. and 29 Nov. and Johnny Parks reported some from the Chattahoochee National Forest on 18 Dec.

Pine Siskin – The 40+ near Cumming on 29 Oct. was the first seasonal report (Joe Greenberg, Carole Anderson). Small numbers were also sighted afterward.

Evening Grosbeak – The only reports were 6 on 5 Nov. in Banks County by Jack Carusos and John Paget and a couple at Maibelle Hodgins' feeder in Atlanta on 20 Nov.

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