

# THE ORIOLE

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



VOL. IV, NO. 3

SEPTEMBER, 1939

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## EASTER ON WASSAW ISLAND

By G. Edgar Folk, Jr.

On March 7 of this year, I began the routine of the day with a rapid walk by a row of tap-rooms and garages to Harvard Square, with the usual wait of several minutes until a halt in the line of speeding Boston-bound cars allowed a dash across Massachusetts Avenue. Forty-eight hours later I was boarding a small launch, hundreds of miles away, at Isle-of-Hope, Georgia. There were several other exuberant New Englanders on board, all of us trying hard to realize we were about to repeat the thrilling experience of a year ago. No air ever seemed as sweet and mild to these escaped city dwellers as that about them.

As the boat started on the fifteen-mile trip to Wassaw Island by way of Wilmington River, Wassaw Sound, and Romerly Marsh Creek, we were kept busy identifying the abundant bird life. Gulls and Terns fished near the boat; not far away Ducks, Mergansers, Loons, and Herons were so numerous that our New England waterways seemed barren indeed in comparison. The first sight of an Eagle passing high overhead caused additional excitement.

Near the center of Wassaw Sound a group of trees on the horizon became distinct enough to be definitely labeled "the island." Readers of The Oriole have, perhaps, had to read island histories all too often, but it may interest you to know that this group of trees marked an island that furnished timber for the "Constitution" and the frigate, "United States," in 1794, and so strategic was its position that it was garrisoned and shelled during the Civil War, and fortified in 1898. Such historic facts add greatly to the island's interest.

The joy of the first impressions of this wild and remote spot must be passed over, except to record the pleasure of being greeted by the owners who came from the big white house in the clearing to welcome the newcomers. Fortunate indeed is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Parsons. They have developed the resources and beauty of their seven-mile domain far more in the interests of their guests than for themselves. Work shops, cars, boats, canoes, and all kinds of equipment, plus the finest food ever prepared by a Negro hand, are constantly at the disposal of the visitor.

After a breathing spell in the spacious living room of the main house, we could not resist strolling down the main avenue to the sea, half a mile away. What we saw at the end of this avenue is as clear in my mind now as it was many months ago. The view is framed by trees hung with blowing Spanish moss. The expansive white beach is margined by palmettos on one side, and rolling white surf on the other, with a background of deep blue sky.

For the guest on the island who asks no more by way of entertainment than a pair of bird glasses, the opportunities the beach offers are never



exhausted. A Pelican flies up the line of breakers against a breeze, and we time its speed with a car, and a little later a Cormorant may consent to play the same game. We may leave the car to walk along the edge of the woods, and perhaps see an Eagle flap leisurely from a stump in the beach grass, or hear the thrilling "peep-lo" of a flock of Piping Plovers—and after a Cambridge winter it really is a thrilling call. We wander with the flock for miles, adding to our lists, occasionally reaching for a field guide in dungaree pocket. A shadow sweeps the beach, and we find we have not been conscious of four Herons flapping and soaring in a spiral into the blue sky.

At North End Point, the usual mixed flock of resting birds is present. Silvery, clearly marked Pelicans predominate, and clustered about them are Gulls, Terns, and restless Sandpipers. When the wind is strong, the Terns constantly keep up a cyclical flight movement, the rear rank replacing the front rank. Creeping up closer, we can distinguish Caspian, Royal, and Gull-billed Terns. Absorbed in the flock on the beach, we may not notice an Eagle soaring high above, a Red-shouldered Hawk approaching the beach, while inland, vultures and a pair of Broad-winged Hawks are hunting.

Another day we resist the lure of the beach and, camera in hand, we find another part of the island just as intriguing. Wandering down a road leading from the avenue we glimpse a flock of Wild Turkeys before they dash into the woods, knowing that they will not go far from the clearing and their evening ration of corn. We come face to face with one of the many deer which run wild and are occasionally hunted at the far ends of the island, yet appear nightly in the clearing to clean up the turkey's corn.

On both sides of the road are narrow paths leading to natural or prepared blinds. I shall never forget the first approach to one of these. Just beyond the palmetto screen were several birds! A flock of Gallinules and Coots nervously headed for the reeds; an American Egret ignored the half-hidden observer, and several male Hooded Mergansers were far too occupied in courting a large number of females to be conscious of a mere man. Some white-waistcoated Herons near by could be recognized as the Louisiana species.

Down another path we may see a flock of Night Herons flying from tree to tree, a Green Heron clinging to a bush, and another flock of mixed Herons feeding near the blind. If we watch these closely we see one distinctly shuffle its foot in the shallow water, and identify him as a young Snowy Heron, while his neighbor with the bluish-black tipped bill is a young Little Blue Heron. An adult Snowy Heron, legs and bill gleaming black, runs into deeper water with ridiculously high steps, spear bill poised to strike its prey. On another occasion we come breathlessly close to a small flock of smoothly tailored Blue-winged Teal, or watch a Vulture stand motionless on the pond's edge and spread his great wings to the morning sun.

Refraining with difficulty from further accounts of personal thrills, a few comparisons must be made. The distribution of water birds was quite different in 1939 from the year before, due to the unfortunate drying up of many of the ponds in January and February, 1939. The disturbance to the bird population, however, was probably not as great or as permanent as to that of the alligator. Many kinds of ducks were present up to March 20, 1938, but from then on none remained except Black Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, and an occasional Gadwall. From March 11 to March 31, 1938, a Brown Pelican was observed on only one occasion, but every day from March 9 to March 17, 1939, from four to six of this species were seen.

As for shore birds, no unusual observations were made, except to note

the complete absence both years, of Skimmers and Oyster Catchers on Wassaw and the surrounding waters.

In both 1938 and 1939 two pairs of Eagles and at least one pair of Broad-winged and one of Red-shouldered Hawks nested here. Warblers were present in abundance both years after March 9, and starting March 10, 1939, the extensive tract of myrtle bushes near the beach contained literally countless numbers of their namesakes in the Warbler family, and an occasional Yellow Throat. On March 11, 1939, a flock of Tree and probably Bank Swallows flew from north to south down the beach, a flock so extensive its beginning and end were out of sight, and although observed for fully fifteen minutes no lessening in numbers was noted.

No Quail or Ground-Doves are found on the island due to the presence of numerous large king, corn, and chicken snakes.

The writer will venture to record a sight-record of a male European Widgeon on March 12, 1938, and would be interested to hear if this has been confirmed by collection in that vicinity.

Wassaw Island in the month of March does not necessarily provide the student with a list which lengthens rapidly each day. The appeal of this paradise is more the proximity to its wild life. If the Georgian reader of The Oriole were transported for the first time to a spot in Central America, rich in new fauna, he might realize the emotions of a New England visitor to Wassaw Island.

The time finally comes when one must stand in a boat and see the last pines disappear from view. This sad moment is compensated for by the fact that one carries away a priceless treasure of ornithological experiences and calm contentment.

#### FOURTH OF JULY CENSUS IN GEORGIA, 1939

The Fourth of July Census, sponsored by The Oriole this year, brought in some interesting records.

Nine parties reported from different parts of the state. This may seem like a small representation, but for a beginning it is really very gratifying to the sponsors. The reports were compiled by Bill Griffin. In fact, the idea was his from the beginning. The report from St. Simons Island by Robert Norris was not within the time limits but contained valuable reference material and we think Bill showed good judgment in including it. Because of lack of space scientific names were omitted.—Ed.

**Atlanta** (in car and on foot to Silver Lake, East Lake, South River, and all areas in between)—July 1; 5 A.M.-8 P.M.; clear, wind light northwest, mean temp. 79. Observers in separate groups. George Sciple, Clemmie Willingham, Mrs. Hames, Mrs. Boyd, Bill Griffin.

**Culoden** (area within a 7-mile radius of the town, including parts of Monroe and Crawford Counties)—July 2; 11 A.M.-4 P.M.; clear, wind very light southeast, temp. 79-84. Observers on foot and in car. Bill Griffin.

**Fitzgerald** (area within 16-mile diameter, including Bowen's Mill and Lake Beatrice)—July 4; 4:45 A.M.-8 P.M.; foggy early, partly cloudy, very damp, wind light south, mean temp. 83; by car and by foot. Robert Norris.

**Folkston** (from town 11 miles to Old Canal by car, 8 miles into Okefenokee Swamp by boat and return)—July 3; 8:30 A.M.-3 P.M.; partly cloudy, light



wind, mean temp. 92; observers in one party. Swol Sawyer, Mrs. Sawyer, Mrs. Riley, Brantley Gay, Ruby Davis, Hugh H. Harris, Ethel Harris.

Milledgeville (area within a radius of 2 miles from State Hospital)—July 5; 6 A.M.-8 A.M.; foggy, cloudy, wind light northeast; temp. 72; one party on foot and in car. Mary Burns, Mrs. Sam Anderson.

Mt. Berry (area within a 1-mile radius of Girls School, also to Boys School and Lavender Mt. Mill Wheel)—July 3; 4:30 A.M.-2 P.M., 6 P.M.-7 P.M.; cloudy with late rain, wind light southeast, temp. 78; observers together on foot. Hoyt Cragg, Harold C. Jones.

Rutledge (area around Lake Rutledge)—July 4; dawn to darkness; clear, wind light south, temp. 85; observers together on foot. C. H. Driver, Glenn W. Bell.

Vinings (Bert Adams' Camp to Estes and along railroad to Vinings, Cobb County, and return)—July 1; 9 A.M.-12:30 P.M., 1:30 P.M.-8:30 P.M.; clear, wind very light northwest, temp. 73-84; observers together on foot. Ralph Ramsey, George A. Dorsey.

Vogel State Park (area including parts of Lumpkin, Union, and Towns Counties. Localities visited were Blood Mt. Gorge, Black, Blood, and Enotah Mountains; elevation ranging from 1900 to 4784)—July 3; 9 A.M.-7 P.M.; cloudy, rain intermittently in PM, with medium south wind, temp. 55-75; observers together by car and foot. Bill Griffin, George Sciple.

St. Simons Island (area within a 5-mile diameter)—June 10; 6 A.M.-5:30 P.M.; clear; wind medium, hot; observers on foot. Charles Norris, Bill Norris, Robert Norris.

	Atlanta July 1	Culloden July 2	Fitzgerald July 4	Folkston July 3	Milledgeville July 5	Mt. Berry July 3	Rutledge July 4	Vinings July 1	Vogel Park July 3	St. Simon Is. June 10
Total Species.....	74	49	52	40	43	55	61	55	61	38
Total Individuals.....	1,930	747	979	274	162	478	479	293	581	281
No. Observers.....	5	1	1	7	2	2	2	2	2	3
Brown Pelican.....										10
Cormorant.....			1							
Water-turkey.....		2								
Gr. Blue Her.....		1	7	1		2				
Amer. Egret.....		1	9			4				
Snowy Egret.....			6			5				
La. Heron.....			1							1
Little Blue Her.....	6		10	8		11				2
Green Heron.....	11	2	5	1		2				2
White Ibis.....				1						
Wood Duck.....			13							
Turkey Vulture.....	4	7	3	6	2	3	11	4	14	20
Black Vulture.....	71	12		6	4		3	3	1	6
Cooper's Hawk.....	1	1				2				
Red-tailed Hawk.....									2	
Red-sh'l'd Hawk.....	3	3		5		1				
Broad-winged Hawk.....	2							1	1	
Golden Eagle.....									1	
Osprey.....				1						

	Atlanta July 1	Culloden July 2	Fitzgerald July 4	Folkston July 3	Milledgeville July 5	Mt. Berry July 3	Rutledge July 4	Vinings July 1	Vogel Park July 3	St. Simon Is. June 10
Sparrow Hawk.....	6	6	4			2		2		
Bob-white.....	16	12	6	3	5	8	5	4	2	
Florida Crane.....				5						
King Rail.....	1									
Clapper Rail.....										2
Wilson's Plover.....										3
Killdeer.....						1	3			
Woodcock.....							3			
Solitary Sandpiper.....							1			
Willet.....										16
Ring-billed Gull.....										30
Forster's Tern.....										32
Least Tern.....										55
Caspian Tern.....										21
Black Tern.....										2
Black Skimmer.....										4
Mourning Dove.....	5	8	16		4	16	40		6	2
Ground Dove.....		2	1							
Yellow-billed Cuckoo.....	2	3				2	3			
Black-billed Cuckoo.....							2			
Screech Owl.....		1								
Chuck-will's-widow.....						2	1	2		
Nighthawk.....			6			1				
Chimney Swift.....	21	11	4	25	4	11	15	11	15	1
Ruby-th'd Hum'bird.....	7	2				3	3	2	7	
Belted Kingfisher.....	6		1				5			
Flicker.....	15	5		5	4	2	3	2	3	
Pileated Woodpecker.....	1						1		1	
Red-bellied Woodp.....	6	4	4	9	4		7	1		2
Red-headed Woodp.....	5		5	4	2	2				
Hairy Woodpecker.....	2								4	
Downy Woodpecker.....	9	8	1	4		2	8	3	3	2
Red-cockaded Woodp.....		2	2		1					
Kingbird.....	10	5	14	12	6	2	15	1	8	
Crested Flycatcher.....	7		1	5	3	2	11	5	3	4
Phoebe.....	1					4			46	
Acadian Flycatcher.....	12		2				2	4	7	
Wood Pewee.....	8	3	4		2	11	7	2	21	
Rough-w'g'd Swallow.....						3	12	5	17	
Purple Martin.....	87	450	618				10	44	18	3
Blue Jay.....	67	6	8	10	6	10	10	15	2	3
Crow.....	19	1	2			3	31	10	8	
Fish Crow.....				15						11
Car. Chickadee.....	13	4		5		9	8	8	12	2
Tufted Titmouse.....	13	2	5	2	5	12	6	8	2	
White-br. Nuthatch.....	9					2		2		
Brown-h'd Nuthatch.....	5	6	7	18		7	7			
Bewick's Wren.....									2	
Carolina Wren.....	32	5	8	3	9	6	8	4	22	1
Mockingbird.....	72	8	41	15	6	6	3	8		6



	Atlanta July 1	Culloden July 2	Fitzgerald July 4	Folkston July 3	Milledgeville July 5	Mt. Berry July 3	Rutledge July 4	Vinings July 1	Vogel Park July 3	St. Simon Is. June 10
Catbird	38	12	3		5	6	7	8	33	
Brown Thrasher	41	8	5	2	4	4	5	7	15	2
Robin	99					6			3	
Wood Thrush	36	2	1		3	15	5	5	17	
Veery									2	
Bluebird	36	11	13		5	2	15		24	2
Blue-gr. Gnatcatcher	12	7	1		2	6	6	5	7	
Loggerhead Shrike	9		8	8	3					
Starling	152		4		6	117				
White-eyed Vireo	12	2	2	1	2	5	11	3		2
Yellow-th'd Vireo	3							1	2	
Mountain Vireo									17	
Red-eyed Vireo	18	1		1	2	12	7	10	4	
Bl'k & Wh. Warbler	3				2	1		6	14	
Prothonotary Warb.			3	8	3		2			
Golden-winged Warb.									4	
Blue-winged Warb.	9									
Parula Warbler	4		1					3	3	1
Yellow Warbler	6									
Cairn's Warbler									10	
Cerulean Warbler									1	
Yellow-th'd Warb.	3			1		2			4	2
Chestnut-sided Warb.									16	
Pine Warbler	7	1	3		2	5	12	1		4
Prairie Warbler	2					14	3	1		
Oven-bird	2							3	17	
La. Water-thrush	5							1	3	
Kentucky Warbler	25					3	3	4	7	
Yellow-throat	21	9	3	5	3	2	12	3	8	
Yellow-br. Chat	27	7			6	13	15	9	9	
Hooded Warbler	12	1			1		1	6	5	
Redstart	3									
English Sparrow	192	17	30	15	3	8		9	11	
Meadowlark	22	2	11	3		4	3	2	3	
Red-wing	117	19	5	7	1	1	1	3		8
Orchard Oriole	11		9		6	7	12	3		6
Grackle	107	28	50		2					1
Scarlet Tanager									3	
Summer Tanager	5		5			7	20	3	1	3
Cardinal	92	8	18	13	14	14	20	7	13	5
Rose-br. Grosbeak									2	
Blue Grosbeak	15	1					4	2		
Indigo Bunting	50	7	2		2	4	15	7	23	
Painted Bunting										2
Goldfinch	19	2					10	3	12	
Towhee	93	8	5	12	5	5	8	5	37	
Bachman's Sparrow	4		2	7	1		5	1		
Car. Junco									33	
Chipping Sparrow	31	2			5	13	15	5	32	
Field Sparrow	27	3			3	8	15	13	19	
Song Sparrow									7	

## EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

MABEL T. ROGERS  
G. S. C. W., Milledgeville

Editors

HARRIET RAINWATER  
Allen Couch School, Atlanta

Your editor has had a most interesting and inspiring vacation, and she feels she should try to share some of it with you, since it has made her realize more than ever the value of teaching the subjects of the out-of-doors. In any profession, one is apt to note during his travels the development along his particular lines. To the engineer, the bridge may focus the attention, while the nature study teacher is very apt to note the methods other regions are using to promote the growth and interest in his subject. From Maine to Florida it is evident that the country is awakening more and more to the value of nature study in the life of the child.

With Cornell blazing the way, New York State became the pioneer in preparing and helping the teachers along nature lines. Now there are more colleges which give training in nature education. Pennsylvania has gone a step beyond some of the others giving not only courses in Nature Study and Ornithology but giving to those students who desire, the chance to take this work under the most favorable circumstances, in connection with a nature camp under the direction of very able naturalists.

Of course when visiting New York City this summer, one thinks mainly of the Fair, and the exhibits are very worth while, whether for instruction, beauty or amusement. Those who had a few extra hours in the city, however, were well repaid if they spent some time in the Museum of Natural History. In the last few years there has been a great advance made in the helpful exhibits for teachers of nature. One of the latest additions is a nature study room which was established as a memorial to a beloved grade teacher who died before she had perfected a plan to get underprivileged children to camps in the country. In this room they have on exhibit living plants and animals kept in aquaria, terraria and cages. Here teachers come for helpful suggestions, and students have a chance to observe the living rather than the stuffed or dried specimen.

Members of the G. O. S. can look with satisfaction at the rapid growth of interest in the field of Ornithology, for it is proportionately large when observed in relation to the whole subject of Nature Study. Perhaps the most important way in which this growth is accomplished is by the opening of new bird centers through the spreading out of members of bird clubs either within the state, or in some cases, to distant states forming nuclei of people interested in birds. Perhaps you, too, have been encouraged by hearing of our present or past G. O. S. members who are helping in this way. Another sign that the subject is appealing to more people, is evidenced by the fact that the public is demanding more training along these lines. For example, a whole new wing of the New York Museum is given over to the field of Ornithology.

The limit to this spread of influence of your nature study work, and the chances of whom it will reach cannot be measured. Among the staff of workers of the National Audubon Association is a young man who is an expert in bird identification as well as in bird photography. He is one of the livest wires in the Audubon Camp in Maine. Back in New York City, you find at the head of the biology department of a high school a quiet, unassuming white-haired man who was the one who took this boy on his first bird walks and helped him determine his career. You may not have an Allan Cruickshank in your classroom. If he is there, however, you should be ready to help him develop his talent for this fascinating subject.



## NOTES AND NEWS

### THE FALL MEETING AT VOGEL PARK

Vogel State Park in the heart of the mountains of North Georgia was chosen as the place for the sixth semi-annual meeting of the G. O. S. October 14 and 15. This is a convenient location with reference to wild life conservation areas and recreational projects. Members will be lodged in comfortable cabins with everything furnished.

The theme of the program is "An educational program in Ornithology for Georgia." This was listed as one of the objectives of the Club and it is hoped that one by one each of these objectives can be surveyed and plans made for their consummation. Another aim of the Club is to encourage by means of exhibits at each meeting bird photography and the painting of pictures of birds. Ivan Tomkins has agreed to prepare some of his best in bird photography for this meeting and we expect to have material from others. Clemmie Willingham and Martha Persons are to have charge of this exhibit. You may write them at Allen Couch School, Atlanta, Ga.

Miss Rainwater is to be congratulated upon the following program:

#### Saturday, October 14, 1939

Registration upon arrival at Superintendent's Cabin. Registration fee \$3.00 (includes 3 meals and lodging for night). Leave photographs for exhibit with registrar.

#### Afternoon

- 5:30 P. M. Business Meeting—Cabin No. 5.  
6:30 P. M. Informal Dinner—Walasiyi Inn, Neel's Gap. Presiding, Earle R. Greene, president; Greetings, Chas. N. Elliott, Wild Life Division.

#### Evening

- 8:00 P. M. Speaker, Dr. Edwin P. Creaser, 20 minutes, "The Georgia Ornithological Society's Part in Wild Life Study and Conservation."  
Forum, 30 minutes. Subject, "An Educational Program to Promote Interest in and Appreciation of the Value of Birds."  
Leader, Lucien Harris, Jr., Atlanta. Co-ordinators, to be selected from teachers over the state who have had experience with bird study in the class room.  
10 minutes. Slides and Movies of Vogel and other State Parks.

#### Sunday, October 15

- 7:00 A. M. Breakfast, Walasiyi Inn.  
8:00 A. M. Field Trip, led by Chas. Elliott.  
12:00 Noon Lunch, Walasiyi Inn.

### IVAN TOMKINS HONORED

"August 30, 1939.

"Mrs. Hugh H. Harris,  
"Georgia Ornithological Society,  
"Emory University, Georgia.  
"Dear Mrs. Harris:

"Your letter of August 27 received. I am glad to report that Ivan Tomkins was elected a member of the American Ornithologists' Union at the

recent meeting in Berkeley, California. He was one of seven selected for this honor on the basis of his contribution to ornithology and attainment of professional stature in that field.

"He has been an Associate since 1928 and during the last ten years, as you know, had recorded many notes on Georgia birds which indicated careful observations and field work of high quality.

"Sincerely yours,

"LAWRENCE E. HICKS, Secretary,  
"American Ornithologists' Union."

Fellow members of the G. O. S. are especially proud of this honor to one of their number and feel it justly deserved. We have read Ivan's article on "The Black Skimmer" in NATURE, October 1937 and "Eastern Willet" January 1938, also "Status of Macgillivray's Seaside Sparrow" in the AUK April 1937. These articles are interesting reading as well as scientific contributions. Mr. Tomkins has written for the WILSON BULLETIN and other periodicals. We hope to procure a more complete bibliography of his writings.

### W. O. C. MEMBERS IN GEORGIA

The eleven members of the Wilson Ornithological Club residing in Georgia are as follows:

Samuel N. Evins, 38 East 14th St., Atlanta, Ga.  
Raymond Judy Fleetwood, Piedmont Wildlife Refuge, Rond Oak, Ga.  
Earle Rosenbury Greene, Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge, Fargo, Ga.  
William J. Howard, 1013 Glenn Bldg., Atlanta, Ga.  
Harold Charles Jones, Berry College, Mount Berry, Ga.  
Dr. Eugene Edmund Murphey, 432 Telfair St., Augusta, Ga.  
Marvin C. Quillian, Wesleyan College, Macon, Ga.  
Herbert Lee Stoddard, Route 5, Sherwood Plantation, Thomasville, Ga.  
Richard Tift, Madison Terrace Apts., Albany, Ga.  
Ivan Rexford Tomkins, U. S. Dredge Morgan, Savannah, Ga.  
Mrs. Hugh H. Harris, Emory University, Ga.

I hope it will be possible for us to obtain new members from your state.—Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., Secretary, Carlton College, Northfield, Minnesota.

The above communication will be of interest to all G. O. S. members. The Wilson Bulletin has been recently added to our list of exchanges.

**Camp-out in Florida**—Notice has come to the editors of The Oriole of the Second Annual Camp-out of the Florida Audubon Society to be held at Homosassa Springs, Florida. This is a fine project and one that may be taken up with profit by our own Society.

**Seasonal Notes From Atlanta**—Conditions throughout most of the summer were average—the weather hot and the rainfall none too heavy. The usual unusualities, however, were encountered. A singing male Scarlet Tanager and a Worm-eating Warbler were noted on June 4 near Vinings. Both may possibly breed in the outlying hills north of Atlanta. Purple Martins roosted in great numbers this summer at Marietta. Ray Werner reported an inestimable number, over 10,000, on July 16, and on July 22 I estimated 20,000. On July 23 a Snowy Egret was seen at South River in company with other herons. This is the farthest north in the state that this bird has yet been reported. Heavy rains and subsequent mud flats produced



a Greater Yellow-legs on August 18, the first occurrence of this bird here in the fall. On the 19th, in company with Norman Giles, two Dourthers were seen among Pectoral and other sandpipers.

An Orchard Oriole was seen on August 12, a new late date. New early fall dates include: Little Blue Heron, July 1; Lesser Yellow-legs, July 23; Pectoral Sandpiper, July 23; Semipalmated Sandpiper, August 12; Golden-winged Warbler, August 18; Chestnut-sided Warbler, August 18; and Canada Warbler, August 17.

Among the more unusual nests for the region which were found this year were those of the Green Heron (Bell), Cooper's Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk (Ramsey, Hill), King Rail (Griffin, Bell), Blue-winged Warbler and Oven Bird.

**Gray Kingbird On St. Simons Island.**—This tyrant flycatcher (*Tyrannus dominicensis dominicensis*), was observed upon three occasions during the month of June, 1939, which I spent on the fruitful island. I find that the only other published records, of this species, for the state are given by Don Eyles (Oriole, 3:24-25, 1938). It is definite that at least two individuals were present on the island, for the first one seen, on June 4, had an injured leg; while both of the other birds, observed on the Retreat Plantation Golf Course (16th) and on the Cloister Hotel grounds (20th) were in perfect condition. These Gray Kingbirds habitually sought conspicuous perches, and they appeared tamer than any other flycatcher that I had seen.—**Robt. Norris, Fitzgerald, Ga.**

**Some Recent Winter Records From Atlanta.**—During the last four winters several unusual winter records have been made near Atlanta which have somehow escaped publication.

**Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus platypterus*).**—Mrs. Hugh H. Harris observed a bird of this species on December 24, 1938. This is one of the very few winter occurrences of this bird in the state.

**Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*).**—On December 20, 1936, a single bird was observed by the writer along Peachtree Creek. Two days later it was again seen by George Sciple and him. Earle R. Greene records a bird on St. Simons Island on December 31, 1930 (Auk, 1930, page 418).

**House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon (domesticus) subsp.*).**—One bird was observed by the writer and George Sciple on February 12, 14, and 18, 1938. There is at least one previous winter record from Atlanta and several from Athens.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea caerulea*).**—George A. Dorsey saw one in his back yard at College Park, Georgia, on November 20, 1935. This is the first winter record for the Atlanta region.

**Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica subsp.*).**—On December 29, 1936, George Sciple and the writer saw and heard one of these birds in Collier Woods, Atlanta. This is the first mid-winter record for this species in the area.—**Bill Griffin, Emory University.**

**Eastern Nighthawks From the Savannah Area.**—Two nighthawks collected April 23, 1939, on Elba Island, five miles east of Savannah, proved to be the Eastern Nighthawk (*Chordeiles m. minor*). The local breeding form is the Florida Nighthawk (*C. m. chapmani*). The first bird of the spring was noticed April 17, and in spite of careful watching, not more than three were seen any day until April 28. After that, they became more com-

mon. The male collected had testes about 5 mm. long, and the largest ovum in the female was not over 2 mm. in diameter. Several interesting conclusions may be drawn, though not proven of course. First, the northern subspecies arrives first. Second, both sexes appear nearly at the same time. Third, the birds arrive in sexually dormant condition. Certainly in this case, migration could not have been activated by gonadal increase.—**Ivan R. Tomkins, U. S. Dredge Morgan, Savannah, Ga.**

**Wilson's Petrel Near Brunswick.**—While deep sea fishing 20 miles out from St. Simons Island the writer noted on June 16, 1939, a Wilson's Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) circling the anchored boat and touching the tops of the waves with its feet. As far as the writer knows, this is the first record for the Brunswick area. In The Oriole for December, 1938, Mr. Don Eyles records a bird from the Savannah River entrance and lists several other records from that area.—**George W. Sciple, Jr., Emory University.**

**Golden Eagle in Georgia in Summer.**—On July 3, 1939, while taking a summer census of northeast Georgia a Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*) was observed along the edge of U. S. Highway No. 19 in the extreme northern part of Lumpkin County. The bird, an adult, was perched about 100 feet from the highway in a tall dead tree and was being annoyed by two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (*Poliophtila caerulea caerulea*). So closely did the writers approach that the gloss on the hind neck could be distinctly seen as well as the black tail with its contrasting white inner band. Observed both in flight and perched through 8x glasses there was absolutely no question in the writers' minds as to its identity. Seeking to follow up this observation with a definite breeding record, the writers visited Currahee Mountain in Stephens County on July 9. Reports indicated that eagles had nested there, but with an elevation of 1900 this was not to be expected. Only vultures were seen. Nevertheless, the writers confidently believe that further investigation in the high mountains will add a new breeding bird to Georgia's list.—**George W. Sciple, Jr., and Bill Griffin, Emory University.**

**Ring-billed Gulls at St. Simons Island During June.**—This species (*Larus delawarensis*), was the most abundant representative of *Larinae* at St. Simons throughout the month of June, 1939, the only other form being the Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*), which was apparently uncommon. I understand that the southernmost point of the former species' breeding range in eastern United States is northern New York. Therefore the following question has come to mind: Are the Ringbills regular, non-breeding summer residents or straggling transients? As I was unable to remain upon the island later than the last of June, and as I found there no local bird-students with whom I may have communicated later concerning the summer status of *delawarensis*, the solution to this question will probably be delayed until at least next summer. About 80% of the Ring-billed Gulls seen and recorded were immature; for this reason the species was easily identified. On June 30, the vulture-torn remains of a young specimen were found on the beach. Strangely this individual had the bill of an adult, a dark, subterminal ring being equally evident on each mandible. The dusky band across the terminal portion of the rectrices contrasted sharply with the rest of the tail. Measurements taken are as follows: length, 16.5 in.; culmen (upper mandible from forehead feathers to tip in straight line), 1.5 in. Occasionally immense flocks of Terns (*Sternae* sp.) and Skimmers (*Limnophops nigra nigra*) assembled on various beaches that were more or less uninhabited, and almost without exception in each flock there was a relatively ample representation of Ring-bills. The Laughing Gull, which should breed in the vicinity of the island, appeared very casual in such shore bird congregations.—**Robert Norris, Fitzgerald, Georgia.**



# THE ORIOLE

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As this number of The Oriole goes to press all members of the Georgia Ornithological Society are making plans to attend the fall meeting to be held at Vogel State Park in those glorious mountains of northern Georgia. It is confidently believed that this meeting will be fully attended and of outstanding importance to our Society, as certain problems, natural to the growth of any such organization, will come up for discussion, new officers will be elected, and plans made for the next twelve months.

Our Society is in no sense political, its chief objectives being the study and protection of wild life, especially of birds, in the state, and the dissemination of knowledge acquired to the citizens of the state. These objectives should always be kept in mind so that differences of methods may be discussed and ironed out, possibly some tried out, and those known or found to be impractical or antiquated discarded.

To go forward, not stand still, we must increase our membership throughout every corner of the state, keep the interest of all present members, and definitely interest those who are lukewarm or have not taken the matter seriously. Along with this thought is the vital one of how the study of birds can really be made a part of the regular curriculum in the schools and colleges of Georgia. Some way must be found to do this and the Georgia Ornithological Society should be the leading spirit in finding such a way and in assisting in carrying it out. This problem is not an easy one to solve and should be approached and discussed from every angle.

The Oriole has always been, and still is, our greatest medium of exchange of information, cooperation and ideas. Without a publication of this nature the Society would soon collapse. Therefore it is up to every member to back The Oriole morally and financially and support those who have done much and sacrificed time and money to keep it going. It is definitely a scientific publication but it must continue to secure and keep the interest of that vast majority of bird students who comprise the bulk of the membership and who cannot as yet be classed as scientific ornithologists.

EARLE R. GREENE, President.

**Blue-winged Warbler Nesting in Atlanta.**—On June 14, 1939, a nest of the Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*) was located in Collier Woods, Atlanta. The nest, placed on the ground and constructed of leaves, rootlets, and grasses, contained on that date three well fledged young birds. Young of this species were observed by D. C. Peacock on May 26, 1916 at Atlanta, and this fact was recorded by W. H. LaPrade in the *Wilson Bulletin*, volume 24, 1922, page 81. Also in the summers of 1936, 1937, and 1938 young barely out of the nest have been seen by the writer. The nest found this year is, nevertheless, the first actual nest for the area. Dr. Arthur H. Howell has informed me that this bird has also been found breeding at Young Harris and Margret, Georgia, by Thomas D. Burleigh.—Bill Griffin, Emory University.