

# THE ORIOLE

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# THE ORIOLE

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## THE STATUS OF WATER-BIRDS AT MOUNT BERRY, GEORGIA

By HAROLD C. JONES

This report concludes the review begun earlier (1942, *Oriole* 7:1-5) of the water-birds observed at Mount Berry. The account already published described the birds of the taxonomic groups from the Loon through the Mergansers. The fifteen species included in the present account brings to a total of forty-seven species the number of water-birds so far recorded at Mount Berry.

Of these fifteen only three are resident through the year; one is an uncommon winter visitor; four have been seen only in spring; and the remaining seven species have been recorded in both spring and fall.

In addition to Victory Lake, which attracts the swimmers such as coots, gallinules and gulls, Mount Berry provides wet woods for woodcock, creeks and shores for sandpipers, wet meadows and swamps for snipe and rails, fields for killdeer and upland plover, and, during spring floods, temporary pools attractive to the yellow-legs. In summer few if any wet areas remain except the larger streams and ponds. The absence of marshes and swamps in summer accounts for the local lack of breeding species which require these habitats.

The following records cover the period from 1934 to 1944, and in addition, the years 1928 to 1931 during which Mr. Glenn Bell was teaching at the Mount Berry School for Boys.

King Rail. *Rallus elegans elegans*. A rare spring transient, one seen April 22, 1944, in an open willow swamp near Berry College.

Florida Gallinule. *Gallinula chloropus cachinnans*. A rare transient, usually accompanying coots. One individual was seen at Victory Lake December 4 (1938) and October 25 (1942).

American Coot. *Fulica a. americana*. A common transient. Recorded ten years. Earliest arrival in autumn, August 10 (1943) and October 8 (1934 and 1940); latest departure, December 26 (1934). Earliest spring record, March 11 (1940), latest departure in spring, May 3 (1942). Usually from one to five birds are seen at a time, but occasionally flocks as large as 150 and 190 occur, as during late March, 1942.

Killdeer. *Oxyechus vociferus vociferus*. Fairly common as a resident, but a scarce nester. It frequents both ploughed fields and meadows, and



rarely occurs at the ponds or streams of this area. The nesting records are Bell's: 1929 (2), 1930 (1), 1931 (1). Greatest numbers occur in spring (30, March 5, 1937), and from October to mid-December (23, December 13, 1936).

Woodcock. *Philohela minor*. An uncommon resident. Recorded five years. No more than five have been found at a time, and these consisted of one adult, and four young about one-third grown, flushed in a boggy water oak-partridgeberry woods north of Victory Lake, April 9, 1944. Four nearly mature birds were seen together along a stream flood-plain in oak-hickory woods May 2, 1942.

Wilson's Snipe. *Capella delicata*. A fairly common transient. Recorded nine years, in wet grassy fields, from February 28 (1937) to April 23 (1936), and from October 22 (1939) until November 29 (1935). No more than thirteen have been seen at a time here.

Upland Plover. *Bartramia longicauda*. A rare spring migrant. Recorded two years. March 10 (1937) to April 16 (1936). Two birds at a time.

Spotted Sandpiper. *Actitis macularia*. A fairly common transient. Recorded six years. There is only one autumn record (undated). In spring, the extreme dates are April 15 (1941) and May 21 (1939). The favorite habitat is along the rocky banks of Victory Lake's outlet.

Eastern Solitary Sandpiper. *Tringa solitaria solitaria*. A rare spring migrant. Three were seen along a wooded creek below the College May 11, 1936.

Greater Yellow-legs. *Totanus melanoleucus*. An uncommon transient. Recorded three years. A dozen were seen at a flooded field, April 12, 1936. The autumn records are for Victory Lake shallows, October 25, 1940 and October 30-31, 1935.

Lesser Yellow-legs. *Totanus flavipes*. An uncommon transient. Recorded four years, and only in spring, between April 8 (1936) and April 12 (1936). Temporary ponds in fields have been their habitat. Single birds occur as often as small flocks of twelve or fifteen.

Least Sandpiper. *Pisobia minutilla*. The only record for this species is that of Bell (1931).

Herring Gull. *Larus argentatus smithsonianus*. An uncommon winter visitor. Recorded three years, as single birds, immature and adult. Earliest fall record, November 7 (1935), in immature plumage. Latest spring record, March 2 (1940).

Ring-billed Gull. *Larus delawarensis*. A rare transient. Seen only in 1941, when two adults stopped at Victory Lake in the rain March 27, and two also October 26.

Bonaparte's Gull. *Larus philadelphia*. Recorded twice, in 1941, one in winter plumage, March 24, and another, November 5, at Victory Lake on both occasions, and in the company of "bluebills," redheads and shovellers.

Berry College, Mount Berry, Georgia.

## ECONOMIC VALUE OF BIRDS

By G. L. CARVER

(Reprinted from *The Macon Telegraph*)

Farmers are supposed to know and appreciate somewhat the help given them by the birds. Education along this line has been deplorably lacking. The Meadowlark is one of the most valuable of all birds, eating tons of insects, including boll weevils. Yet, "Farmers' contests," not having for their object even the marketing of birds, have destroyed thousands. A good example of this occurred in Georgia in 1911, when 11,231 Meadowlarks were killed for prizes, the excuse offered for this wanton act being that the birds are enemies of the corn.

Thirty-six or more species of birds combined eat from 65 to 85% of the coddling moth, a great apple pest of North Georgia. Yet the damage done by these insects to the apple crop in the United States is estimated between \$12,000,000 and \$15,000,000. At least 64 species of birds eat scale and aphid insects, both of which are very injurious to our Southern plant life. The San Jose Scale of the peach trees is an example.

Forty-five species of birds have been found to eat alfalfa beetles. The California Quail has been introduced into Utah to fight the alfalfa beetle. The result is a decided success. In California, during one season of abundant insect life, it was estimated that 13 species of birds ate 120,445 grasshoppers per square mile per day. Aughey, in his "Notes on the Nature of the Food of the Birds of Nebraska," records 202 species of birds feeding on locusts and their eggs. And so one could go on and on with records of insect eating birds.

Mercer University  
Macon, Georgia

## NOTES ON SOME BIRDS OF BIBB COUNTY, GEORGIA

By BROOKE C. MEANLEY

The following notes record my observations on some of the more unusual birds observed in the vicinity of Camp Wheeler and the neighboring section of the Ocmulgee River bottom during the winter and spring of 1943-1944.

Bonaparte's Gull, *Larus philadelphia*. While walking along the shores of a wooded artificial lake at Camp Wheeler, on November 10, 1943, a bluish-white bird of swift flight was observed coming into the lake and making a quick landing approximately 100 yards from the writer. The bird came in so rapidly and behind some tall trees allowing little chance for its "spot" identity. When the bird settled on the water there was no



doubt that it was a gull. The bird was in its winter plumage, its head was white and it bore the characteristics of this species at this season of the year. It moved very little and was easily approached. Three Pied-billed Grebes seemed curious at its sudden appearance and swam about it for a long while, swimming right up to the gull numerous times.

Red-breasted Nuthatch, *Sitta canadensis*. On December 19, 1943, ten individuals of this species, members of a large flock of winter birds including such species as the Blue-headed Vireo, Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Pine Warbler, Bluebird, Carolina Chickadee and Brown-headed Nuthatch, were noted in short-leaved and loblolly pines on a hillside bordering the Ocmulgee River bottom.

The Red-breasts preferred the short-leaved pines and spent most of their time in these trees at about 50 feet; however, they did make infrequent sallies into nearby loblolly pines where they seemed to be storing food gathered from the short-leaf. Brown-headed Nuthatches were not seen in the same trees with the Red-breasteds at any time, but remained at a greater distance from them than any other members of the flock mentioned.

What was probably the same flock of Red-breasted Nuthatches was seen again on December 26, 1943, and January 2, 1944, in about the same locality on Brown's Mountain as the species was first observed.

Black and White Warbler, *Mniotilta varia*. A Black and White Warbler was noted on December 17, 1943, along the Ocmulgee River bottom seven miles south-east of Macon. It was in a forest of loblolly pine, water oaks, and sweet gums, and was actually observed on a pine tree as close as ten feet.

It is especially interesting that the bird should be noted this far north during the coldest day of the winter when the lowest temperature in this section was at 19° F., and when the only snow of the year preceded this date by one day.

Orange-crowned Warbler, *Vermivora c. celata*. This individualist is a regular but uncommon winter visitant in Central Georgia. It was first noted on approximately the 15th of December, 1943, and throughout the winter two or three birds were noted on each trip in the field. An individual was sometimes seen among a flock of various winter birds or was seen alone in a water oak or along the edge of a field feeding among weed tops. The birds were usually observed in the same location from time to time and were recognized by their note which is similar to the *tick* of the Hooded Warbler, but of a higher pitch and not so loud and sharp. There is no other bird note similar in winter in this section. It has been observed chiefly along the Ocmulgee River bottom, by the writer.

Lincoln's Sparrow, *Melospiza l. lincolni*. The writer has two spring records of this species from the Ocmulgee River bottom during the spring

migration of 1944. The initial record was on March 27, and a second on April 21. Both individuals were observed in the same locale and their identity is unquestioned in as much as Lincoln's Sparrow is an obvious species when seen in its higher habitat in this bottomland country.

The birds were observed approximately 100 yards in from the border of the bottomland in a woodland clearing. The clearing, some 30 feet wide, had been cut through a mixed woods for the purpose of constructing a high tension line, presumably. The forest type exemplifies our upland woods in the Piedmont section of the Eastern States, with blooming dogwood and azalea at this season of the year; many tulip trees, water oaks, sweet gum and a scattering of loblolly pines.

The Lincoln's Sparrow observed on March 27, was feeding at the base of a brush pile with two White-throated Sparrows. When approached it flew to the top of the brush pile while the White-throats hopped off to a nearby briar patch. The Lincoln's remained motionless for some five minutes and then flew some 30 yards into a bushy growth of cane. The bird seemed slimmer and slightly smaller than the Swamp Sparrow, which frequents the lower areas of the bottomland; and its *chip* note was not dissimilar to that of the Swamp Sparrow's, excepting that it was finer, more prolonged and a bit squeakier.

Other birds in the vicinity were the White-eyed Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Towhee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Tufted Titmouse and Carolina Chickadee.

During the spring migration Lincoln's Sparrow seems to frequent the highest parts of the bottomland and be readily differentiated from other sparrows of the same habitat, the White-throated, Song, and White-crowned, by its conformation and habits.

Detachment, Medical Department  
Camp Wheeler, Georgia.

## BIRD STUDY AT WESLEYAN COLLEGE

By THELMA HOWELL AND SUZANNE DAVIS

A systematic study of the birds of the Wesleyan College campus was begun in November, 1943, by the junior writer, the usual methods of study being employed. General reference works were plentiful but difficulty was met in assembling the monographs previously published on Georgia birds. The following members of the Georgia Ornithological Society were very helpful in securing this material: Blanche Tait, Ralph Ramsey, Lucien Harris, and Ray Werner.

The campus is located in Rivoli, about seven miles northwest of Macon, Bibb County. It is at 83° longitude and 32.8° degrees latitude. It lies



on the Fall Line at the junction of the Coastal Plain and Piedmont regions of the state. Climatic conditions of the region are such that there are long, hot summers and relatively short, mild winters. The average annual rainfall, as established from the records for the years 1899-1940, is 44.26 inches. The average temperature for the same period is 64.4° F., the average maximum temperature 74° F., and the average minimum 54° F.

The campus is composed of 170 acres, the bulk of which might be described as mixed woods, with pine predominating. A few small brooks run through the campus, but damp woods, swamps and large bodies of water are lacking. There is a golf course on the campus and about it thickets and hedges.

Sixty-three species of birds have been identified. Nesting records have been obtained for the following: Flicker, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and Wood Thrush. Since these observations have been made from November 1943-June 1944, the majority being recorded during the spring months, the number of species is fairly good. All records have been transferred to the permanent file of Wesleyan College Biota.

Wesleyan College  
Macon, Georgia

### WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT GEORGIA BIRDS?

(Continuing questions of interest to the beginner, compiled by Eugene P. Odum)

*What is the best way to distinguish between the two species of kinglets which are winter residents of Georgia?* As in a great many cases, it is often easier to distinguish the Ruby-crowned Kinglet from the Golden-crowned Kinglet by certain peculiarities of behavior and of voice than by coloration. Such non-plumage identification aids, of course, can not be learned from pictures, books, or museum specimens, but must be learned by studying the birds themselves. I can generally spot a Ruby-crown instantly by its habit of nervously flitting its wings as it moves along through the branches. Call notes and songs of the two species are quite different, so that once learned they can be easily separated by voice. The best field marks are the white stripe over the eye, and yellow or orange crown (this may not be seen if person is standing *under* the bird, which is the usual predicament) of the Golden-crown as contrasted with the plain gray head of the Ruby-crown. The white eye-ring of the Ruby-crown is a very poor field mark in winter birds, as is the "ruby-crown," which occurs only in males and is almost never visible. The habits and times of migration of the two species also differ (although they are often found together). Golden-crowns flock more closely, are more continually vocal, are more partial to conifers, and migrate north a month or so ahead of the Ruby-crowns (which may stick around into May). Incidentally, king-

lets are easily distinguished from warblers by proportionally short tails and very tiny size (next to hummingbirds), our smallest birds.

*How many varieties of Black Ducks occur in Georgia?* The 1931 A. O. U. Check-list recognizes two sub-species of Black Ducks, the "Red-legged" and the "Common" Black Duck, both of which have been recorded for the state. However, recent studies have indicated that these color variations are to be correlated with age and season, and are consequently not legitimate geographical races or sub-species. If this is the case, the next check-list will give only one kind of Black Duck. Whatever the outcome of this controversy, it is a good example of necessity of studying the life history of the species before determining the proper or most logical classification. In extreme cases, the male and female of the same species have been described as separate species, as was the case with the western Williamson Sapsucker.

*Do migratory birds return to same winter locality each year?* For a few species, at least, the answer seems to be yes. The late S. P. Baldwin, I believe, was the first to demonstrate at his banding station near Thomsville, Georgia, that individual Chipping Sparrows, White-throats, and other species return regularly each year to the same winter spot. Many banders have since reported similar results. Considering the high mortality of small species (which runs up to 30% of population per year) and consequent short life (probably averaging 2-3 years, with a few birds living to be 6-12 years old) the percentage of return of winter resident individuals has often been remarkable.

*How much does a sparrow weigh?* A simple question, but hard to answer briefly, since bird weight is a complicated subject. In the first place, it would depend on species, the sex, the time of day, the age, the time of year, and geographical locality. An average-sized sparrow, such as an English or White-throated Sparrow, weighs about an ounce (26-30 grams). A bird's weight fluctuates a great deal more than that of man. There is usually a pronounced daily rhythm (maybe 10% lighter in morning than in evening), a seasonal rhythm (heavier in winter), and in many species a sex difference (pronounced in hawks) or a geographical difference (northern individuals often heavier than southern ones).

*What is nesting population density of typical Georgia habitats?* Nobody knows exactly, since few good nesting censuses have been made. In general, the more diversified the habitat, the more nesting birds. Thus, estates, suburban areas, farms, or small sanctuaries have the most birds per acre, maybe running up to 10 or 15 pairs per acre. Marshes and river bottom floodplains seem to have good populations, as do "forest edges." Large stretches of grassland or forest run lower, generally not more than 2 or 3 pairs (or often less) to the acre, but nobody has censused Georgia's broom-sedge fields, pine, hardwood, or bottomland woods. Not only is habitat important in population density, but also generally productivity



of the land; worn-out, denuded land (of which we have too much) supports few birds as well as few people. Directions for making nesting or breeding censuses are given in *Audubon Magazine* or in Hickey's new book, *A Guide to Bird Watching*.

*Contributions from Mr. Hebard.*—Frederick V. Hebard of Philadelphia, well known to Georgia students through his studies in the Okefenokee region, sent in some very interesting information concerning questions and answers in the last issue of *The Oriole*. Mr. Hebard believes that in addition to the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, the Red-cockaded Woodpecker may damage trees since it may nest in living pines and "certainly loves the sap". This is an interesting problem, as I had always assumed that this species was entirely beneficial to our pine forests. Can anyone else furnish evidence pro or con? Mr. Hebard also points out, quite correctly, that the Yellowthroat should have been included in the list of winter warblers, and thinks that the Worm-eating and other warblers not mentioned, winter in South Georgia. Regarding the Wood Duck, Mr. Hebard reports that it is increasing by leaps and bounds in southeastern Georgia, which is very good news. It has become the most common duck on abandoned Great Satilla rice plantations, and enormous numbers winter in the vicinity of Coleraine as compared with a few years ago.

#### GENERAL NOTES

**PINE SISKINS AT SAVANNAH**—Some years ago Gilbert R. Rossignol told me that he had at times found a Pine Siskin (*Spinus p. pinus*) or so among the winter flocks of Eastern Goldfinches (*Spinus t. tristis*). Since then I have looked over many such flocks for siskins, but without success until this winter.

This portion of the city has many sweet gum trees (*Liquidamber*), often as many as twenty-eight to a city block on some streets. These trees are full of the seed balls in winter. Christmas morning (1943), in a dismal rain the tree in front of the house was filled with goldfinches feeding on the seeds. On January 2, 1944, one siskin was seen in a similar flock, and on January 9, at least 50% of such a flock was siskins. By January 23, the siskins had become so tolerant of humans that one could walk under the trees and watch them feed at a distance of eight to ten feet.

The last date the Pine Siskins were seen was February 20. They had left the city sweet gums by then, and were working the trees along the Casey Canal a mile away, searching sweet gum seed balls, and apparently taking the young buds of the elms.—IVAN R. TOMKINS, 1231 East 50th St., Savannah, Georgia.

**ANOTHER SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER IN GEORGIA.**—Slightly west of Tifton, Georgia, on January 2, 1943, the senior writer noted a peculiar

bird which upon closer observation proved to be *Muscivora forficata*. The specimen proved evasive and could not be approached within gun range, and it disappeared in the late afternoon.

January 30, at about 11 A. M., the junior writer rediscovered the scissor-tail, finding the bird no less wary. He noted it again on February 2 and 3; the next day the senior writer returned from a trip and both, together with Charles Norris, observed the bird during a good part of the afternoon. It alighted both in pecan and cherry trees and frequently went to the ground, particularly to a terrace of earth in an open field. February 5 and 8, Gaulding found it first on telephone wires and watched it considerably each day before it became too suspicious and left the vicinity. On the 9th, he succeeded in collecting the bird as it rested in an oak at the edge of a woodland strip. The specimen, an immature female, was prepared and remains in Gaulding's collection.

Rossignol's skin from Quarantine, near Savannah, taken June 5, 1933, appears to be the only previous Georgia record (*Auk* 51:253, 1934).—ROBERT A. NORRIS, PHM2C, U. S. N. Hospital—Staff, Navy Yard, S. C., AND WILLARD GAULDING, JR., 1002 North College Avenue, Tifton, Georgia.

**SPECIMEN OF THE GRAY KINGBIRD FROM ST. SIMON'S ISLAND.**—Eyles (*Oriole* 6:1-5, 1941) in his report on the status of the Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus d. dominicensis*) in Georgia sums up the species as being a rare, perhaps casual, summer resident from April 29 to September 4, with nests known from Cockspur Island and apparently St. Simon Island. Yet this kingbird's place on the State Checklist rests basically on one skin secured on September 1, 1859, by John Krider.

While spending several days on St. Simon's southern extremity, in June 1942, the writer observed on the 9th a Gray Kingbird, and it seemed not undesirable that collection be made. The specimen (No. 299 in my possession) chanced to be an adult male, with enlarged testes measuring 12.5 mm. long; there was no sign of a mate. The tyrant was first seen chasing Grackles from a large live oak, and he later harassed a group of English Sparrows.—ROBERT A. NORRIS, PHM2C, U. S. N. Hospital—Staff, Navy Yard, S. C.

**GANNETS AT SEA OFF THE GEORGIA COAST**—On March 16, 1944, I had a chance to observe the Gannets (*Moris bassana*), a few miles to seaward of Tybee Light. A count of a portion of those seen gave a proportion of eight immatures to twenty adults, a widely different result than in the case of the Herring Gull in these waters, where immatures outnumber the adults greatly.

As we came into the ship channel between the jetties, one Gannet sat on the North Jetty, among the cormorants and pelicans. This bird appeared to have the breast oil-soaked. Though I have looked over these jetties many times at all seasons over the past twenty years, I have never







marks given in Peterson's *Field Guide* were all fully confirmed and all three in our party saw it, I believe, at least five or more times in flight. There was bright sun (at approximately 11:00 A. M.) with no trees to obscure our vision.

So far as I can determine there is only one other record for the Atlanta area (Greene, 1933, p. 44).—RAY C. WERNER, *Atlanta, Georgia*.

A SPECIMEN OF THE FLORIDA BARRED OWL FROM ATLANTA.—A Barred Owl was taken on December 23, 1943, near the Chattahoochee River in Fulton County. It was killed with a pistol by a State Guardsman who took a random shot at the bird in the semi-darkness of dawn. The bird was carried to Sgt. Frederick A. Ulmer of Ft. McPherson who prepared a study skin of it. The bird was obtained for the writer by Mr. George B. Hoyt of Atlanta.

According to Sgt. Ulmer's determination, the bird was a Florida Barred Owl (*Strix varia alleni*). Other data indicated on the label was as follows: female—non-breeding bird indicated, iris—brown, bill—greenish-yellow, wing spread—1141 mm, total length—504 mm, wing—339 mm, tail—236 mm, tarsus—55 mm. The stomach was empty.—RAY C. WERNER, *Atlanta, Georgia*.

A SPECIMEN OF THE GOLDEN EAGLE FROM MILLEDGEVILLE.—On January 7, 1944, Dr. Aubrey Jones, while hunting Wild Turkey along the Oconee River about five miles east of Milledgeville, killed a Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*). The bird was an adult male weighing eight pounds and having a wing spread of six and one half feet. It was mounted by Mr. D. C. Hembree of Roswell, Georgia and is now in the possession of Dr. Jones.—MABEL T. ROGERS, *Milledgeville, Georgia*.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH AND PRAIRIE HORNED LARK AT DALTON.—Two Red-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta canadensis*) were seen in a dense growth of young pines on November 27, 1943. At the time they were leading a flock of Juncos, Tufted Titmice, and Chickadees. This species was observed again two weeks later in the same vicinity. From then until the latter part of January the bird was observed regularly. This Nuthatch was last seen on February 6, 1944, in the same woods where it was first found.

Prairie Horned Larks (*Otocoris alpestris praticola*) were first seen on December 8, 1943, but their identity was not determined until February 6, 1944, when four flocks of from 50 to 75 individuals were carefully studied at close range on the golf course at the country club. The birds when flushed, after permitting an extremely close approach, flew in a wide circle near the ground and returned to practically the same position. Two individuals were last seen at the country club on February 27.—BILLY MITCHELL, WARREN SIMS AND WARREN HERRON, *Dalton, Georgia*.

ALBINO CROWS IN MONROE COUNTY.—On July 10, 1943, five pure albino Southern Crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos paulus*) were observed near Forsyth, Monroe County, Georgia. The birds were flying close together and along the border of an old cotton field. No other crows were seen or heard in the near vicinity.—BROOKE MEANLEY, *Camp Wheeler, Georgia*.

AN EARLY NEST OF THE FLORIDA NUTHATCH.—On March 13, 1932, an unusually early nest of the Florida Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis atkinsi*) was located in the pine woods about two miles west of Homerville, Georgia. The nest, which was in an old Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Dryobates borealis*) hole, contained young fully ten days old at this time. This nest was on the average two or three weeks earlier than the many nests of this species which I have found in Florida.—S. A. GRIMES, 825 *Southshore Rd., Jacksonville, Florida*.

CRESTED FLYCATCHERS NESTING IN GOURDS.—During the past five years I have had gourds set up for Purple Martins. The first year, to my great disappointment, nothing nested in them. However, one morning the following spring I looked out of the window and saw some odd bird entering first one gourd, then another. I was excited, so I went out to investigate and found that it was a Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*). Soon I saw it and its mate carrying straw into one of the gourds. They were successful in their nesting, since the young birds were seen later on the lawn. For four successive years now they have nested in these gourds. Next spring I will be looking forward to their nesting in my gourds again.—WILLARD GAULDING, JR., 1002 *College Ave., Tifton, Georgia*.

UNUSUAL NUMBER OF CAPE MAY WARBLERS AT TIFTON.—On April 28, 1944, while birding in the vicinity of the Experiment Station pond I noted an unusual warbler in a black gum tree. Upon closer observation I found it to be a Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*). The next afternoon I visited the same locality and collected a male of this species and observed four females. On several subsequent visits to the same vicinity up until May 3, this warbler was encountered. Although Cape May Warblers have been observed at Tifton during the spring, this is the first time I have found them present in such numbers.—WILLARD GAULDING, JR., *Tifton, Georgia*.

(Apparently the flight of Cape May Warblers was unusually heavy throughout the state. The writer found them numerous at Augusta, and Pfc. Brooke Meanley writing from Camp Wheeler near Macon on May 12 says, "I have never seen so many Cape May Warblers as those that passed through here several weeks ago." Ed.)

CAROLINA WREN ROOSTING IN MAIL BOX.—During the past summer a Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) has roosted in the mail box



on our porch. Every night I would hear him scolding before he entered the box. He would enter at the top, dropping head first into it. The wren roosted in the mail box every night until December, and then I guess he found a better place to spend the night, because he has not been back since. I still see two wrens around the house and I think now they are roosting in our neighbor's garage.—WILLARD GAULDING, JR., 1002 College Ave., Tifton, Ga.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH AT CLOUDLAND, GEORGIA.—A Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*) was observed on April 4, 1944, on Lookout Mountain about two miles north of Cloudland, Georgia. The bird was in company with Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Chickadees, and Black and White, Yellow-throated, Black-throated Green, and Pine Warblers.—MRS. R. E. HAMILTON, Dalton, Georgia.

SPRING NOTES FROM ATLANTA, 1944.—Spring really began here in early March. Conditions were rather wet, and cold spells were experienced several times. Despite the weather, many members of the Atlanta Bird Club were able to gather several interesting records.

New migration extremes are as follows; American Bittern, January 21 (second regional winter record—Russell Adams, Johnston); Lesser Yellow-legs, March 4 (Johnston); White-crowned Sparrow, March 18 (separate note); Chimney Swift, March 22 (Robert Adams); Red-breasted Nuthatch and Black-throated Green Warbler, March 26 (Johnston, *et al*); Wood Thrush, March 27 (Mrs. Tufts); Green-winged Teal, March 30 (separate note); Spotted Sandpiper, March 30 (Major, Adamson); Cape May Warbler, April 12 (Johnston); Yellow-breasted Chat, April 14 (Outler); Chuck-will's-widow, April 14 (Mrs. Harris); Cerulean Warbler, April 15 (Russell Adams); Worm-eating Warbler, April 15 (members of A. B. C.); Black-crowned Night Heron and Grasshopper Sparrow, April 16; Black-poll Warbler, April 18 (Johnston); Hermit Thrush, April 30 (Davis); and Blue-winged Teal, May 16 (Outler, Johnston). DAVID JOHNSTON, 1037 St. Charles Ave., Atlanta, Georgia.

SPRING NOTES FROM DALTON AND WHITFIELD COUNTY, 1944.—The season has been somewhat milder than normal, with few cold spells. Much field work has been done, resulting in some interesting records.

There were several first records for the area: Black-crowned Night Heron, 4 seen March 31, 2 seen April 1, 1 seen April 16 (Hamilton, Herron, Mitchell, Sims); Bufflehead, 1, March 15 (Herron, Mitchell, Sims); Ruddy Duck, 1, February 26, (Mitchell, Sims); Sora, a bird believed to be this species was flushed three times in a wet meadow on April 18 and 22; observed as small rail with yellow, chicken-like bill (Herron, Mitchell, Hamilton, Sims); Herring Gull, 3 seen flying over Longley Lake on March 5 (Hamilton, Mitchell, Sims); Black Tern, one in breeding plumage observed for an hour at Longley Lake on May 18, 1943, and

another seen September 5, 1943, in pied plumage (A. Hamilton, R. E. Hamilton); Prairie Horned Lark (separate note); Pine Siskins, small flock of about 15 seen with Goldfinches in pine woods on April 9, for next three weeks seen almost daily among flocks of Goldfinches and Purple Finches (all observers); Parula Warbler, 1 seen August 29, 1943, after several years' diligent search, by an observer from Screven county who is quite familiar with the bird (A. Hamilton, T. Collum, E. Collum); Grasshopper Sparrow, several seen in uncut meadow in August 1943 (A. Hamilton, R. E. Hamilton).

Early spring arrivals are as follows: American Bittern, March 4; Greater Yellow-legs, March 16; Rough-winged Swallow, March 20; Bachman's Sparrow, March 24; Louisiana Water-Thrush, March 25; Purple Martin, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Black and White Warbler, March 26; Chimney Swift and Tree Swallow, March 30; White-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Yellow-throated Warbler, April 1; Broad-winged Hawk, April 2; Wood thrush, April 3; Osprey, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Prairie Warbler, April 7; Green Heron, Red-eyed Vireo, Hooded Warbler, and Pine Siskin, April 8; Summer Tanager, April 10; Yellow Warbler and Kentucky Warbler, April 13; Cape May Warbler and Orchard Oriole, April 14; King Rail, Olive-backed Thrush, Blackburnian Warbler, Oven-bird, Yellow-breasted Chat and Indigo Bunting, April 16; Barn Swallow, April 17; Bank Swallow and Black-poll Warbler, April 18; Nighthawk, April 19; Chuck-will's-widow, April 20; Scarlet Tanager, April 21; and Long-billed Marsh Wren, April 22.

Late spring departure dates are: Ruddy Duck, February 26; Pintail, March 5; Mallard, March 8; Bufflehead, March 15; American Merganser, March 18; Blue-headed Vireo, March 19; Baldpate, March 24; Rusty Blackbird, April 1; Brown Creeper and Winter Wren, April 7; Marsh Hawk, Hermit Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Vesper Sparrow, April 9; Shoveller, April 13; Junco, April 15; Ring-necked Duck, April 18; Purple Finch, April 21; Pied-billed Grebe and Coot, April 22; Lesser Scaup, April 23; Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Swamp Sparrow, May 1; Cowbird and Pine Siskin, May 7; Myrtle Warbler, May 8; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and White-throated Sparrow, May 13; and Cedar Waxwing, May 18.—MR. AND MRS. R. E. HAMILTON, BILLY MITCHELL, WARREN HERRON, AND WARREN SIMS, Dalton, Georgia.

SPRING NOTES FROM MACON.—The spring arrival dates in the Ocmulgee bottomland are given for a number of species in the order in which they appeared in 1944. Several of the birds recorded are unquestionably winter residents, but since they were not seen at all, or only occasionally in the winter by this observer, dates of arrival are listed when the birds were first noted or began to increase in numbers. Observed in March were: American Bittern, March 9; White-eyed Vireo and Yellow-throated



Warbler, March 12; Louisiana Water-Thrush, March 13; Bachman's Sparrow, March 16; Purple Martin, March 17; Black and White Warbler, March 15; Chimney Swift and Hooded Warbler, March 25; Yellow-throated Vireo, Lincoln's Sparrow, Kentucky Warbler, Bank Swallow, and Ruby-throated Hummingbird, March 27; Kingbird and Prothonotary Warbler, March 28; and Swainson's Warbler, March 31. Species arriving in April were: Wood Thrush, Prairie Warbler, and Parula Warbler, April 1; Crested Flycatcher, April 8; Nighthawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Green Heron, and Grasshopper Sparrow, April 10; Red-eyed Vireo, Solitary Sandpiper, and Summer Tanager, April 9; Yellow Warbler, April 11; Worm-eating Warbler, Orchard Oriole, and Wood Pewee, April 12; Ovenbird, April 13; Chestnut-sided Warbler, April 15; Barn Swallow, Redstart, Little Blue Heron, Blue Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting, April 16; Chuck-will's-widow and Spotted Sandpiper, April 17; Veery, April 19; Scarlet Tanager and Black-throated Blue Warbler, April 25; and Cape May Warbler, April 24.—PFC. BROOKE MEANLEY, *Detachment, Medical Department, Camp Wheeler, Georgia.*

THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT IN GEORGIA, 1943.—Since all of the Christmas counts which were submitted to *The Oriole* have already been published in the January-February, 1944, *Audubon Magazine*, Section 111, pp. 27-29, they are not reprinted in this journal. However, a brief summary pointing out some of the more interesting details is presented.

Fifty-three persons participated in the eight counts that were made in Georgia. Together they counted 27,804 birds representing some 104 species and subspecies. Both the number of species and individuals were fewer than on most of the counts of recent years. Possibly this can be explained on the basis of restrictions in the coastal areas, since the birds missing from the list are mostly ducks, sea, and shore birds usually observed in those areas.

Atlanta, with 25 persons participating in the count, reported both the largest number of species, 70, and the largest number of individuals, 14,677.

Among the rarer birds reported on the various censuses were the following: Gadwall (Augusta), Redhead (Mt. Berry), Ruddy Duck (Round Oak), Duck Hawk (Atlanta), Red-breasted Nuthatch (Macon), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (Augusta), Pine Siskin (Atlanta), and Henslow's Sparrow (Macon)—EDITOR.

A SUMMER BIRD COUNT FROM LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN.—Lookout Mountain from Cloudland, Ga., to Mentone, Ala., via Lake Head and the De Soto River; altitude, 1500-1800 feet. June 10, 1943; all day (9 hours, 10 minutes, three hours of which were spent on Georgia side of state line). Clear to partly cloudy; light northwest wind; 62°-82°. Species ob-

served: Turkey Vulture, 3; Cooper's Hawk, 2; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Broad-winged Hawk, 3; Bob-white, 5; Mourning Dove, 13; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 5; Whip-poor-will, 1\*†; Chimney Swift, 3; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 6; Belted Kingfisher, 1\*; Flicker, 10; Pileated Woodpecker, 2\*; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 4; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 2\*; Downy Woodpecker, 7; Crested Flycatcher, 9; Phoebe, 6‡; Acadian Flycatcher, 7; Wood Pewee, 16; Rough-winged Swallow, 2\*; Purple Martin, 4; Blue Jay, 12; Crow, 6; Carolina Chickadee, 19; Tufted Titmouse, 18; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Bewick's Wren, 1\*; Carolina Wren, 14; Catbird, 7; Brown Thrasher, 18; Robin, 15; Wood Thrush, 50; Bluebird, 4; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 14; Starling, 1; White-eyed Vireo, 18; Yellow-throated Vireo, 12; Red-eyed Vireo, 32; Black and White Warbler, 14; Blue-winged Warbler, 4; Parula Warbler, 4; Black-throated Green Warbler, 5; Yellow-throated Warbler, 15; Pine Warbler, 10; Prairie Warbler, 10; Ovenbird, 25; Louisiana Water-Thrush, 2\*; Kentucky Warbler, 7; Yellow-breasted Chat, 13; Hooded Warbler, 21; English Sparrow, 2\*; Orchard Oriole, 1\*; Scarlet Tanager, 10; Summer Tanager, 10; Cardinal, 19; Indigo Bunting, 34; Goldfinch, 1; Towhee, 18; Chipping Sparrow, 42; Field Sparrow, 9. Totals, 62 species; 683 individuals. Special notes: † also one young in "nest"; ‡ also three young in nest; \* seen only in Alabama.—HENRY STEVENSON, *Department of Biology, University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi.*

CORRECTION:—In my recent note entitled "A Probable Record of the Sage Thrasher in Georgia," (*Oriole* 8:22-23) the statement was made that hybridization between the Mockingbird and Brown Thrasher was not known to occur. Since the publication of that note, Mr. E. B. Chamberlain of the Charleston Museum has kindly called my attention to an account of the nesting of a Mockingbird-Thrasher combination contained in Wayne's *Birds of South Carolina*, p. 180. In the light of this information, the question now arises as to whether the bird observed was really a Mockingbird-Thrasher hybrid or some exotic species.—J. FRED DENTON, *Augusta, Georgia.*

#### NEWS AND COMMENTS

The spring meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society was held in Atlanta on April 29 and 30, 1944. The convention opened at 12:30 P. M. Saturday with a luncheon and business session in the Lanier Room of Davison-Paxon's Department Store, with 33 members in attendance.

With Dr. Eugene P. Odum, President, presiding, a favorable financial report was rendered by Mr. Ray Werner, Treasurer. Mr. Werner also read the names of 18 new members of the Society. In closing his report



Mr. Werner moved that members in arrears more than a year with their dues, who did not pay them on receipt of proper written notice, be dropped from membership. After considerable discussion the motion was passed.

Dr. J. Fred Denton, editor of *The Oriole*, reported on the state of this publication. A plea was made for more cooperation of the members in submitting material for publication. Dr. Denton emphasized that there were no disadvantages in publishing special studies such as life histories in *The Oriole*, since the journal was being sent to the editor of the *Auk* for abstraction by title in the "Current Literature" section, and to the editor of the section on "Aves" of *Biological Abstracts* for abstraction there.

In the absence of Miss Mary Burns, Miss Rena Junkins of G. S. C. W. read an interesting report from the Milledgeville district. Mr. Thomas Davis, Vice-president of the Atlanta district, reported on the numerous activities of the Atlanta Bird Club. Mrs. R. E. Hamilton, Vice-president of the Rome-Dalton district, gave a detailed report of activities in her region and reported five new members for the G. O. S.

Dr. Odum opened discussion of an amendment proposed at a previous meeting regarding a change of membership dues. He recommended that new members be granted membership at \$1.00 per year and that as soon as they became permanent members with privilege of voting and holding office, the membership would be increased to \$2.00 per year. Mr. Werner suggested that we add "associate membership" to the other classes of membership. Mr. Stoddard recommended that we substitute "associate" for "student" membership. The previous amendment to lower all dues to \$1.00 was voted out. Mrs. Harris offered an amendment to keep the membership "as is," and interpret it to mean that "associate membership" does not carry the privilege of voting and holding office. Motion was made that we substitute the word "associate" for the word "student" in membership dues and interpret that type of membership as we choose. This motion was voted upon and passed. The amendment in regard to restricting the semi-annual meetings to one business meeting per year and one meeting and field trip in the spring was tabled for the duration. It had been previously decided that the Society have a yearly meeting during the war period.

Mr. Herbert L. Stoddard reported that the forthcoming *Checklist of Georgia Birds* would be ready for publication as soon as a report was received from Dr. Alexander Wetmore of the U. S. National Museum, who is checking the validity of certain subspecies included. In answer to an inquiry, Mr. Stoddard pointed out that the checklist would not include migration dates; that it would be up to each club to collect its dates and prepare summaries which could be published in *The Oriole* if they

desired. Dr. Odum emphasized that one of the duties of individual groups is to keep a file of migration dates for its area. At the suggestion of Dr. Odum a vote of appreciation from the Society to Mr. Stoddard for underwriting the checklist was expressed.

It was suggested that an up-to-date folder and membership blank giving the aims of the Society by prepared for sending out to prospective members. The President and Treasurer were authorized by vote to acquire the necessary forms.

At the conclusion of the business meeting, the Society moved to the High Museum of Art to see the exhibit of original bird prints belonging to the personal collection of Mr. Walter C. Barnwell.

The group met at 6:30 P. M. Saturday at the Woman's Club for an informal dinner at which 90 members and guests were present. Following the dinner, Mr. Thomas Davis, President of the Atlanta Bird Club, welcomed the members and guests, and Dr. Odum responded for the Society. Mr. Joe Stearns, editor of *Outdoor Georgia*, spoke briefly on "How the G. O. S. could cooperate with the State Game and Fish Commission." Short talks were then heard from Mr. Earle Greene, Mr. Herbert Stoddard, Ensign George Petrides of the U. S. Navy Pre-flight School at Athens, and Sgt. Wannamaker of Ft. McPherson. Mrs. George Allen introduced the remaining out-of-town members and guests. The gratitude of the Society was expressed to Mrs. J. C. Oliver, Chairman of the local committee responsible for the success of the occasion. The program for the evening was concluded with the showing of a beautiful colored movie depicting birds in the Florida-Louisiana sanctuary area, by Mr. Alexander Sprunt, Jr., Southern Representative of the National Audubon Society.

A field trip and breakfast at Fernbank Forest on Sunday morning, with approximately 35 persons in attendance, concluded the meeting. A total of 68 species was observed on the field trip. Mr. Glenn Bell reported finding nests of the Field and Bachman's Sparrows.

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On Wednesday evening, May 3, Mr. Alexander Sprunt, Jr., Southern Representative of the National Audubon Society, lectured to the patients of Oliver General Hospital at Augusta. His talk, entitled "Wonders of the Southern Wilderness," was accompanied by colored motion picture films. The lecture, which was open to the public, was attended by many of the bird students of Augusta. The next day Mr. Sprunt addressed members of the Augusta Exchange Club.

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A column, entitled "Birds" and conducted by Mrs. G. E. Charles, appears in the Sunday issue of *The State* of Columbia, South Carolina. On



February 13, 1944, Mrs. Charles devoted her column to a discussion of the Georgia Ornithological Society. A brief history of its organization, the manner in which it functions, its aims, and its publications was given. Mrs. Charles hopes to bring about the organization of an ornithological society in South Carolina, and we of the G. O. S. wish her an early success.

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Miss Mary Burns of the Milledgeville Club reports that four of their members are now serving in the armed forces of our country. They are Billy Hargrove, who is taking flight training with the Army Air Corps in Miami Beach, Florida; Thomas Bivins, who is in Officers' Candidate School (Field Artillery, U. S. Army) at Fort Sill, Oklahoma (Thomas has had extensive work in Ornithology with Doctor Allen at Cornell); Corporal Bonner Jones, U. S. Army (Infantry), overseas—England; Albert Martin, Ph.M. 1/c Submarine Base, U. S. Navy, New London, Connecticut.

The Atlanta Bird Club reports that two of their members, Mrs. Frances Hames and Miss Betty Floding, have recently joined the Women's Army Corps.

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Mrs. Roy N. Dickie, who moved from southeastern New York to the "Victory Homes" development in Marietta in October, 1942, has been very active in observing the birds in that vicinity. She writes that up to May 15, 1944, she has observed 96 species in that area.

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Members of the G. O. S. who have not paid their dues for the year 1944, are urged to do so immediately. This will save our treasurer work and the possible unpleasant task of notifying you that you have been dropped from membership in the Society (see report of meeting). Also, in order that you may receive your copy of *The Oriole* without delay, please inform the treasurer of any change of address.

#### WHAT DO THEY CALL IT IN GEORGIA?

Mr. W. L. McAtee, Technical Adviser of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is compiling data for a "Dictionary of Vernacular Names of North American Birds." He extends to members of the G. O. S. a request for contributions of local or otherwise unusual vernacular names of birds. These names can be sent directly to Mr. McAtee, or to your editor who will relay them to him. This is an opportunity to contribute to American Ornithology of which members of the G. O. S. should avail themselves.—EDITOR.

#### NEW LITERATURE

Among the dozens of bird books which are published each year there appears, every once in a while, one that is a "must" for the beginning bird student. Peterson's *Field Guide* is such a book; no bird student would think of being without one. I believe that Joseph J. Hickey's new book *A Guide to Bird Watching* (Oxford Press, 114 Fifth Avenue, New York City, \$3.50) is also a book which every beginner should have. This book begins where most books leave off; that is, it is principally a guide to the study of birds *after* one has learned to recognize accurately the common species in ones locality. Written in a very readable, entirely non-technical style, and liberally interspersed with amusing anecdotes about famous bird watchers, the book covers such fascinating topics as: The lure of migration watching, bird counting, explorations in bird distribution, bird banding, the relation of birds to vegetative succession, and the various aspects of life history study. Specific data from original studies, many of them made by amateur students, are used to illustrate each section, and the book is well illustrated with simplified and very suggestive tables, maps, and graphs, as well as by Francis L. Jacques' attractive drawings. Above all, the author, himself a business man who has made bird study a fascinating avocation, tells the beginner exactly how and where to study birds and what kinds of studies are most needed. A useful appendix contains a key to shore bird tracks, a suggestive outline for a life history study, an annotated list of useful references, a summary of breeding censuses, and a list of bird clubs of the United States (to enable the beginner to find kindred bird people in any part of the country).

If I were asked to recommend a library for anyone wishing to study birds, I would say that the library should include at least the following four volumes: Peterson's *Field Guide*, one of the excellent books with colored plates (Pearson's *Birds of America*, or Forbush and May, *Natural History of the Birds, etc.*), the best available local or state list (the forthcoming Georgia check-list will fill the bill here), and Hickey's *A Guide to Bird Watching*.—EUGENE P. ODUM, Athens, Georgia.

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Through considerable effort on the part of Dr. E. P. Odum, our list of exchanges has been greatly extended to include fifteen journals, which are deposited in the G. O. S. Library at the University of Georgia, and are available to members of the Society on request to Dr. Odum. The exchanges are as follows:

*Bird-Banding*, Jas. S. Peters, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

*The Chat*, John Grey, Jr., State College Station, Raleigh, N. C. (North Carolina Bird Club)



- Feathers*, Mrs. Nelle G. Van Vorst, 8 Swan Street, Schenectady, N. Y.  
(Schenectady Bird Club)
- The Flicker*, Albert B. Erickson, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis,  
Minn (Minnesota Ornithologists Union)
- The Florida Naturalist*, R. J. Longstreet, Daytona Beach, Fla. (Florida  
Audubon Society)
- The Gull*, Mrs. T. Eric Reynolds, 140 Estates Dr., Piedmont 11, Calif.  
(Audubon Association of the Pacific)
- Iowa Bird Life*, Fred J. Pierce, Winthrop, Iowa. (Iowa Ornithologists  
Union)
- The Jack-Pine Warbler*, Dr. Lawrence Walkinshaw, 1416 W. Michigan  
Ave., Battle Creek, Mich. (Michigan Audubon Society)
- The Migrant*, A. F. Ganier, 2112 Woodlawn Dr., Nashville, Tenn.  
(Tennessee Ornithological Society)
- Wilson Bulletin*, Dr. J. Van Tyne, Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Mich.  
(Wilson Ornithological Club)
- The Passenger Pigeon*, W. E. Scott, Conservation Dept., State Office Bldg.,  
Madison, Wis. (Wisconsin Society of Ornithology)
- Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society*, C. Russell Mason, 155  
Newbury St., Boston, Mass. (Massachusetts Audubon Society)
- The Chicago Naturalist*, Chicago Academy of Sciences, Lincoln Park,  
Chicago, Ill.
- Wildlife Review*, Fish and Wildlife Service, Merchandise Mart, Chicago  
54, Ill.
- The Raven*, Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Va. (Virginia Society of  
Ornithology)