

THE ORIOLE

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THE ORIOLE

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BIRD STUDY CAN BE FUN

BY LOUIS C. FINK

All of the great ornithologists, from Audubon to Sutton, seem to have started their study of birds in early youth. All of them took their first faltering bird walks with some experienced and inspiring adult, father, brother, or friend.

That tradition is being followed today. Young people are being introduced to birds by older and wiser heads. Many are trying the experience of leadership; not all are succeeding at it. Here are a few random notes gained from practical experience that may be helpful to the youth leader who finds his embryonic bird students not as interested as he'd like them to be.

It's axiomatic that young boys and girls need to be introduced to bird walks; not many try it for themselves. The introduction can be a stimulating experience for both adult and child, and it can be extremely successful if handled properly.

The biggest pitfall to avoid is starting with a large group. It's just too difficult to hold the attention of many in a new subject at first, so start with one or two; invite them on a quiet trip to the woods and bring up the subject of birds easily and naturally. Small boys—and girls—are innately curious, and soon others will want to know about these bird walks and will not be satisfied until they are permitted to join.

Later, when the hikes have developed into something as regular as the leader's time permits, start to plan the trips. Planning a bird walk means principally reconnoitering for good sites. Children want results, and these can be secured by making sure in advance that the birds are there. For the first walk, pick a spot that has them in abundance, perhaps a lake with some egrets to catch the children's eye, or a wood where they may discover a thrush's nest alongside the path, or even the favorite haunt of some unusual bird. Here in Augusta I've been amazed to learn how many boys have never seen a Painted Bunting. A Yankee, I looked for it early to make sure it was added to my life list. On the second bird walk with the youngsters I showed them pictures of the fantastically colored bunting and impressed them with their good fortune at seeing one at close range. They found the bird themselves (in the spot where I casually steered them) and they have been boasting of it ever since to their school friends.

There's only one "Don't" in this piece. Don't be afraid to make bird

hikes difficult. Keep within the limits of small children, of course, but don't be afraid of walking them a few miles. Their parents may complain, but it's adventurous to rise at five A. M. on a Saturday morning, and the children will be talking of the experience for weeks afterward. There's no reason to be afraid of wet feet either. Birds hide out in damp places, and if you tell the students to wear heavy, old shoes, there's no reason why they shouldn't slog through a swamp. Naturally you'll take precautions against snakes and mosquitoes, but let the kids think they're on an adventure. The old spirit of the pioneers is not dead, and children dislike bird study chiefly because it's too genteel.

A word about the actual business of instruction. The first time or two the bird is sighted, name the species for the children. If you can, tell them something interesting to make the name stick in their minds. My Boy Scouts may forget names, but they remember things like this:

"Oh, that's the one that sticks grasshoppers on a thorn — it's a snike, or something."

"That's the one you said didn't really sound like a cat — but it's called a Catbird just the same."

"I know you can't see the bill very plainly, but it's a Yellow-billed something. Cuckoo, that's it, but it doesn't sound like a cuckoo. They use the English ones in clocks."

After the first few times, have them tell YOU the name. If they forget, have them look it up. They'll need a field guide, even though it's only a pamphlet from the dime store. They should have the feeling of possession and owning their own guides is a step in the right direction. Later they may be able to buy one of the good ones.

Do the same with bird calls. Tell them in English what the bird's song sounds like, give them the name once or twice, and then have them remember the next time they hear it. Somebody in your group will know, and you'll have a guessing contest on your hands. Children love contests.

If a Mockingbird perches obligingly, let everybody have a good look. Tell them to watch for the wing-spots when it flies away. If a Grackle lands, point out the long tail. Show them the bill of a Goldfinch, the yellow spots on a Myrtle Warbler, any diagnostic markings which will serve to fix the bird in their minds. Above all, point out the relation between habits and food. Most children are surprised to learn how much of a bird's life is occupied with getting food. Children can understand that primeval urge.

You don't have to be in a hurry either. Along your way somebody will ask you about a peculiar tree. Tell them the name if you can; save a leaf for later identification if you can't. Let them pick up the turtle or salamander they find. In other words, never insist that they stick strictly to business. Children aren't built that way, and the hike will be longer and better if they have a little variation from the assigned objective.

Last week we were stumbling through the swamp in search of a Red-

eyed Vireo. The boys had heard the call several times and knew it well, but they still hadn't seen the bird, so we decided to follow this one. Suddenly, from nowhere, a Red-Shouldered Hawk burst through the trees, wheeled, and dropped something in a thicket. Of course we had to find out what he was carrying, and it was a race to scour the brush. One of the lads came up with a nondescript bird, badly torn but still breathing, and it died in his hands — two ugly gashes were the marks of the hawk's talons. Here was visible proof that hawks really do eat blackbirds. The children had read of it, but this was the first time they had seen evidence of it. The lesson was worth a thousand lectures, and two birds were fastened indelibly in their minds. They got a quiet lesson in ecology in the process, but their teacher didn't let them hear that big word.

Later we found a magnificent specimen of a Yellow-crowned Night Heron, something new for the whole group. There it was in perfect plumage, lying where a hunter had shot it. The boys found it in their books and identified it better than they could have in the air. The incident impressed itself, and now they can always tell a Night Heron at a distance, for they took to looking up the field marks. Learning about the dead bird, they picked up information on the other herons, too.

When the field work is well along, but not until then, it's time to visit the museums. Small children don't care much for the average museums; the birds are too stiff. "It's no fun." They want the game of finding them in the fields. However, they may be interested in a better view of the bird they have seen only casually. After wrestling with Song and Savannah Sparrows, they may be willing to note their differences in a museum case.

GOOD bird lectures and GOOD movies will interest them. But these, too, should come after they've had field work, so they can say, "Oh, we saw those egrets along the river." I've tried discussion clubs with children, but they haven't worked until the children were over fifteen. Younger than that, they don't want to talk about birds; they want to hunt for them.

If you have shop facilities, your pupils will enjoy building bird-houses. But be prepared with the answers. WHY must a wren house be so small? WHY does a martin house have so many holes? WHY not build a house for a robin instead of that open platform? They'll enjoy carpentering if you tell them the answers, and they'll turn out some surprisingly good work under proper direction. Even the younger children like to make things.

That's the whole answer. Children like to be active. Their bird study must be a vital affair, full of exploration of strange places, with a chance to compete with their fellows. Best part is that with the proper start, they'll carry on by themselves and develop into good naturalists. All we have to do is give them a helping, and intelligent hand.

*Oliver General Hospital
Augusta, Georgia*

RECENT NEW OR INTERESTING WINTER RECORDS FROM
INTERIOR SOUTHEASTERN GEORGIA

BY FREDERICK V. HEBARD

The following notes, presented as a supplement to my "Winter Birds of the Okefinokee and Coleraine," together with a previous note in the *Oriole*, bring up to date the data accumulated on the winter birds of southeastern Georgia.

Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax auritus* subsp.—Single birds were observed along the Okefinokee Canal on November 30, 1941, and February 22, 1945.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron, *Nyctanassa violacea*.—Three were seen along the Okefinokee Canal on January 3, 1943, and five on February 22, 1945.

Canada Goose, *Branta c. canadensis*.—The fall flights over Coleraine seem to increase year by year. Flocks of 6 to 9 spent a large part of the past winter along the St. Mary's River and one was killed in front of the house at Coleraine on Christmas, 1944.

Godwail, *Chauelasmus streperus*.—One present at the Mill Creek Dam, western Camden County, on February 26, 1945.

Greater Scaup Duck, *Nyroca marila nearctica*.—One was killed at Silco on December 29, 1941.

American Rough-legged Hawk, *Buteo lagopus s. johannis*.—One spent the winter of 1942-43 near the junction of Georgia Highway 40 with the old Folkston-Kingsland Highway where I saw it from a very short distance on January 3, 1943. A large *Buteo* with a stop-go flight reminiscent of an *Accipiter* but commencing with a flapping ascent to the top of its glide seen in eastern Charlton County, February 15, 1945, was probably this species.

Golden Eagle, *Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*.—One was seen in eastern Charlton County on December 3, 1943.

Limpkin, *Aramus p. pictus*.—My recently published records of this species seem to be the only ones from Georgia since Francis Harper recorded it from the Okefinokee over 30 years ago (*Auk* 30: 493). After the dam on Mill Creek in western Camden County went into full operation Limpkins disappeared from that vicinity until the spring of 1943. By that time their favorite fresh-water snails (*Pomacea Ampullaria*) had returned, as Lucien Harris, Jr., and I discovered on May 17, 1943. Earlier that day we thought we flushed a Limpkin several times further down Mill Creek but were not sure. On July 18, 1943, about 3:30 P. M. (EWT) I was at the Mill Creek Dam when a Limpkin flew out to the edge of the flooded gum and cypress trees near the northwest corner of the pond. I had a perfect view of it through 7X Zeiss binoculars for over half an hour as it first lit on a bush about six feet above the water and then flew to the branch of a tree about 15 feet above the ground. John W. Burch, Lewis Higginbotham, and John P. Archbold were with me at the time. Burch reported that it remained around the pond until the early part of February, 1944. We had hoped for a breeding record but have not been able to find it since.

King Rail, *Rallus e. elegans*.—This species has been abundant during the past winter (1944-45) at Coleraine because of the flooded condition of the flats.

Yellow Rail, *Coturnicops n. noveboracensis*.—Two were accidentally killed when the Big Field in western Charlton County was burned on February 1, 1945.

Black Rail, *Laterallus jamaicensis stoddardi*.—The unmistakable call of this bird was heard at the Rice Pond on February 26, 1945.

American Woodcock, *Philohela minor*.—A nest with two young just hatched and

two piped eggs were found February 26, 1942. The mother bird carried one young out of the nest when flushed but dropped it within two feet. My impression was that the young was carried out by accident rather than by design.

Wilson's Snipe, *Capella delicata*.—Snipe were common along Georgia Highway 40 during the past winter (1944-45). Enough birds were present at Nahunta Station, Brantley County, on March 1, 1945, to give a good shoot.

Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus smithsonianus*.—About 200 gulls and terns, but mostly this species, spent some time near the house at Coleraine after the hurricane on October 19, 1944.

Florida Screech Owl, *Otus asio floridanus*.—This bird has been scarce or absent from Coleraine for the past four years so that one seen along Georgia Highway 40 in eastern Charlton County on February 12, 1945, is worthy of record.

Snowy Owl, *Nyctea scandiaca*.—An owl "white as a lock of cotton and as big or bigger than a Horned Owl," seen by John W. Burch on November 30, 1942, and again on January 1, 1943, in eastern Charlton County must have been this species which has been recorded twice in Georgia (see *Birds of Georgia*, p. 46).

Chuck-will's-widow, *Caprimulgus carolinensis*.—One was heard at Mill Creek Dam, eastern Charlton County, on February 28, 1945.

Purple Martin, *Progne s. subis*.—Martins arrived over Coleraine on February 20, 1945, our second earliest record.

Red-breasted Nuthatch, *Sitta canadensis*.—Two were seen in a bird wave on February 24, 1943.

Bachman's Warbler, *Vermivora bachmanii*.—I have seen and heard a tiny warbler which I identified as this species, although it has never been collected in Georgia in winter. It was observed at the following times and places: a male singing at Floyd's Island cabin, December 31, 1929; two males, a female and young on Floyd's Island, December 1, 1932; numbers high in trees at dusk on Floyd's Island, December 17, 1933; two flying south singing at Vickery Branch, eastern Charlton County, November 21, 1941; one singing at the Rice Pond, eastern Charlton County, December 31, 1941; one singing near Mill Creek, western Camden County, February 20, 1945.

This note is published with the hope that someone will be more fortunate than I and collect this species in Georgia in winter.

Parula Warbler, *Compothlypis americana*.—One heard singing on February 28, 1945 at Refuge Plantation in central Camden County.

Oven-bird, *Seiurus aurocapillus*.—This is an abundant spring migrant at Coleraine and one of those scarce winter residents of northern Florida which one would expect to find in Georgia occasionally in winter. The recent collection of a winter specimen near Fitzgerald should validate prior Georgia winter sight records. I have one such record for Coleraine in eastern Charlton County on January 5, 1943, when two birds were observed in a swamp. Questioning John W. Burch, who I know is familiar with the species, he said he had seen more individuals of this species than usual this past winter, the last two on February 16, 1945, in a swamp. I heard one February 27, 1945, singing *teacher-teacher-teacher-teacher* in eastern Charlton County.

Water-thrush, *Seiurus* sp.—One was seen at Mill Creek ford, western Camden County on February 26, 1945.

Tree Sparrow, *Spizella arborea*.—I have no doubt this species reaches southeast Georgia and northeast Florida in winter but my attempts to collect a specimen have been thwarted by lack of suitable shells.

Mr. H. E. Tuttle, who long since gave me written permission to publish this record, observed this species on Floyd's Island, January 5, 1930.

The places and dates on which I have recorded this species are: Coleraine, near house in western Camden County, February 10, 1941; Coleraine in eastern Charlton County, February 3, 1942; Coleraine, near house in western Camden County, November 29, 1942; Coleraine in eastern Charlton County, February 26, 1945.

Had I shot from the wagon on the last occasion I would have been successful in collecting a specimen. They perch on the highest corn stalk in a field and fly to a pine if disturbed, or they remain in the bushes with other sparrows and emerge to sit in the sun on top of the bushes.

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RECENT MIGRATION EXTREMES AT ATLANTA

BY DAVID W. JOHNSTON

Many of the migration extremes in the Atlanta region reported by Griffin (*Oriole*, 6:17-23) have been exceeded. The writer feels that a compilation of these new extremes would be of value to many ornithologists. The new extremes have been made mostly by Atlanta ornithologists, and many of them have been published in previous issues of the *Oriole*. Most of the records reported by Griffin still stand, but below I have listed the new ones.

The first dates following the bird's name represent the latest extremes. The previously reported extremes follow in parentheses.

- Pied-billed Grebe. *Podilymbus podiceps*—June 18, '42-May 22, '32 (July 8, '40-May 22, '32).
- Little Blue Heron. *Florida caerulea*—*June 24, '44-Oct. 2, '43 (July 1, '39-Oct. 1, '38).
- Green Heron. *Butorides virescens*—Mar. 23, '06-Oct. 24, '42 (Mar. 23, '06-Oct. 20, '32).
- American Bittern. *Botaurus lentiginosus*—Other records: Feb. 21, '43; Jan. 21, '44; Aug. 22, '42 (Mar. 20, '32-May 15, '32).
- Least Bittern. *Ixobrychus exilis*—June 24, '44-July 22, '44 (June 10, '28-Aug. 29, '32).
- Baldpate. *Mareca americana*—A bird was observed off and on from Oct. 14, '43-May 18, '44 (Feb. 25, '32-Apr. 8, '38; Fall: Nov. 2, '35).
- Pintail. *Anus acuta tzitzihoa*—Oct. 31, '42-Apr. 8, '34 (Nov. 23, '38-Apr. 8, '34).
- Green-winged Teal. *Anus carolinensis*—Mar. 30, '44—(*Oriole*, 9; 11) Nov. 22-28, '36; Dec. 20, '38; Dec. 26, '41).
- Blue-winged Teal. *Anus discors*—A bird was observed off and on from Oct. 16, '43-May 6, '44 (Spr. Mar. 18, '39-May 3, '31; Fall Aug. 27, '38-Oct. 15, '30).
- Redhead. *Nyroca americana*—Spring record: Apr. 10-29, '43 (Nov. 13, '27-Jan. 18, '33).
- Golden-eye. *Glaucionetta clangula americana*—Nov. 23, '43-Mar. 26, '39 (Nov. 26, '31-Mar. 26, '39).
- Bufflehead. *Charionetta albeola*—Dec. 12, '31-Apr. 6, '42 (Dec. 12, '31-Mar. 22, '40).
- Marsh Hawk. *Circus cyaneus hudsonius*—July 22, '43-May 15, '32 (Aug. 24, '30-May 15, '32).

- Duck Hawk. *Falco peregrinus anatum*—Aug. 8, '40-Mar. 27, '43 (Aug. 8, '40-Mar. 5, '30).
- Florida Gallinule. *Gallinula chloropus cachinnans*—Apr. 26, '43-May 10, '29 (Apr. 27, '05-May 10, '29).
- Coot. *Fulica americana*—One was observed all summer ('44) at Piedmont (Oct. 13, '32-June 4, '31; Sept. 18, '43-June 4, '31).
- Spotted Sandpiper. *Actitis macularia*—†Mar. 30, '44-May 30, '41 (Mar. 31, '38-May 30, '41).
- Lesser Yellow-legs. *Totanus flavipes*—†Mar. 4, '44-May 18, '32 (Mar. 15, '31-May 18, '32).
- Herring Gull. *Larus argentatus smithsonianus*—*Oct. 27, '43-Nov. 20, '30 (Nov. 10, '35-Nov. 20, '30).
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo. *Coccyzus americanus*—Apr. 20, '41-Oct. 10, '43 (Apr. 20, '41-Oct. 3, '40).
- Short-eared Owl. *Asio f. flammeus*—Dec. 19, '43 (*Oriole*, 9:11-12) No previous record.
- Chuck-will's-widow. *Caprimulgus carolinensis*—Apr. 14, '44? (Apr. 15, '22-?).
- Nighthawk. *Chordeiles minor*—Apr. 17, '38-Oct. 10, '43 (Apr. 17, '38-Oct. 9, '30).
- Chimney Swift. *Chaetura pelagica*—Mar. 22, '44-Oct. 21, '29 (Mar. 23, '37-Oct. 21, '29).
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker. *Dryobates borealis*—Sept. 12, '44 (Mar. 6, '06; Feb. 26, '28).
- Wood Pewee. *Myiochanes virens*—Apr. 3, '00-Oct. 23, '43 (Apr. 3, '00-Oct. 22, '33).
- Red-breasted Nuthatch. *Sitta canadensis*—Sept. 24, '03-Mar. 26, '44 (Sept. 24, '03-Feb. 5, '42).
- House Wren. *Troglodytes aedon*—Sept. 24, '44-May 5, '40 (Oct. 7, '22-May 5, '40).
- Wood Thrush. *Hylocichla mustelina*—Mar. 27, '44-Oct. 23, '39 (Mar. 30, '39-Oct. 23, '39).
- Hermit Thrush. *Hylocichla guttata faxoni*—Oct. 12, '40-Apr. 30, '44 (Oct. 12, '40-Apr. 25, '37).
- Red-eyed Vireo. *Vireo olivaceus*—Mar. 31, '93-Oct. 16, '43 (Mar. 31, '93-Oct. 12, '30).
- Black and White Warbler. *Mniotilta varia*—Mar. 19, '21-Oct. 10, '43 (Mar. 19, '21-Oct. 9, '24).
- Worm-eating Warbler. *Helminthos vermivorus*—Apr. 15, '44-Sept. 21, '43 (Apr. 17, '37-Sept. 20, '39).
- Golden-winged Warbler. *Vermivora chrysoptera*—*Aug. 16, '41-Oct. 9, '43 (Aug. 18, '39-Oct. 1, '33).
- Blue-winged Warbler. *Vermivora pinus*—Mar. 26, '36-Sept. 24, '43 (Mar. 26, '36-Sept. 7, '37).
- Cape May Warbler. *Dendroica tigrina*—†Apr. 12, '44-May 8, '37 (Apr. 14, '23-May 8, '37).
- Cerulean Warbler. *Dendroica cerulea*—†Apr. 15, '44-May 5, '40 (Apr. 17, '38-May 5, '40).
- Black-poll Warbler. *Dendroica striata*—†Apr. 18, '44-May 29, '07 (Apr. 20, '31-May 29, '07).

- Oven-bird. *Seiurus aurocapillus*—Apr. 5, '30-Oct. 18, '42 (Apr. 5, '30-Oct. 12, '40).
- Water-thrush. *Seiurus noveboracensis**—Aug. 26, '44-Oct. 20, '23 (Aug. 30, '98-Oct. 20, '23).
- Yellow-breasted Chat. *Icteria virens*—Apr. 14, '44-Sept. 18, '36 (Apr. 16, '94-Sept. 18, '36).
- Hooded Warbler. *Wilsonia citrina*—Mar. 17, '43-Oct. 28, '23 (Mar. 22, '39-Oct. 28, '23).
- Wilson's Warbler. *Wilsonia pusilla*—May 26, '43; Sept. 18, '43 (Sept. 20, '30; Apr. 26, '40).
- Canada Warbler. *Wilsonia canadensis**—Aug. 17, '39-Sept. 27, '42 (Aug. 17, '39-Sept. 24, '30).
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak. *Hedymeles ludovicianus**—Sept. 16, '38-Oct. 30, '43 (Sept. 16, '38-Oct. 20, '35).
- Blue Grosbeak. *Guiraca caerulea*—Apr. 20, '39-Sept. 28, '43 (Apr. 20, '39-Sept. 16, '39).
- Pine Siskin. *Spinus pinus*—Nov. 22, '43-May 1, '37 (Jan. 11, '37-May 1, '37).
- Henslow's Sparrow. *Passerherbulus henslowii*—Mar. 13, '43 (*Oriole*, 8:10) No previous record.
- Bachman's Sparrow. *Aimophila aestivalis*—Mar. 12, '06-Aug. 23, '42 (Mar. 12, '06-Aug. 21, '38).
- Junco. *Junco hyemalis*—Oct. 17, '42-Apr. 15, '37 (Nov. 2, '30-Apr. 15, '37).
- White-crowned Sparrow. *Zonotrichia leucophrys*—Mar. 18, '44 (*Oriole* 9:11) (Apr. 11, '36).
- White-throated Sparrow. *Zonotrichia albicollis*—Oct. 5, '43-May 21, '32 (Oct. 12, '30-May 21, '32).
- Swamp Sparrow. *Melospiza georgiana*—Oct. 9, '43-May 13, '39 (Oct. 15, '03-May 13, '39).

*—Extreme involves only the fall record.

†—Extreme involves only the spring record.

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GENERAL NOTES

ANOTHER WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW AT TIFTON.—On October 28, 1944, I observed a sparrow in a rose thicket at the edge of a field about one mile from town. Before I collected the bird, it turned and faced me, at once establishing its identity as a White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia l. leucophrys*). The specimen, sex undetermined, remains in my collection. This is the second record of a White-crowned Sparrow being taken in Tift County, the other having been a specimen taken by Robert Norris. (*Oriole* 9:3, 1944). WILLARD CAULDING, JR., 1002 N. College Ave., Tifton, Georgia.

THE YELLOW RAIL IN WHITFIELD COUNTY.—A Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops n. noveboracensis*) was taken in Whitfield County, October 6, 1944.

The rail was captured by Albert and Alfred Griffin, 18-year-old boys, while mowing a field near Tunnel Hill, Georgia. They easily captured the bird by throwing a hat over it.

The rail died during the night and was carried to Mrs. R. E. Hamilton who tentatively identified the specimen as a Yellow Rail. However, since this species is so rare in Georgia, she sent the skin to Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, Curator of Ornithology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, for examination. Dr. Oberholser wrote:

"The bird that you sent was, as you supposed, a yellow rail, *Coturnicops noveboracensis*. Relatively little is known about the habits and distribution of this rail, since it is rare in most regions and is very elusive even where it occurs."—R. E. HAMILTON, Dalton, Georgia.

FIRST WINTER SPECIMEN OF OVEN-BIRD FROM GEORGIA.—While observing winter bird life in a cypress swamp bordering the Ocmulgee River at Fitzgerald, Georgia, on February 11, 1945, an Oven-bird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) was noted and procured.

The little bird was walking and feeding casually along the ground in a saw palmetto thicket when I walked up on it. In the manner of all Oven-birds it was quite easily approached and readily identified. During the fifteen minutes that I observed it, it did not sing.

Dr. J. Fred Denton wrote concerning the occurrence of this species at Fitzgerald, Georgia, as follows: "So far as I can determine there have been no previous winter specimens from Georgia." The bird is reported by Howell (1932. *Florida Bird Life*) as fairly common in winter in Central and South Florida.—BROOKE MEANLEY, Camp Wheeler, Georgia.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER AT FITZGERALD IN WINTER.—A female Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica d. dominica*) was procured by the writer in the Ocmulgee River bottom at Fitzgerald, Georgia, on January 21, 1945. This bird was "picked up" by its incessant *tchip-ing* as it flew from one bunch of Spanish moss to another, some 40 feet from the ground. It was working through the moss-draped water oaks, cypresses, and loblolly pines with a large flock of birds, among which were the Blue Jay, Blue-headed Vireo, Tufted Titmouse, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Pine Warbler, Hermit Thrush, Myrtle Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Bluebird and Flicker.

Upon encountering this bird when accompanied by other winter resident warblers in this area, namely the Myrtle and Pine Warblers, it is differentiated by its *tchip-ing* notes, as related above, which are finer, higher pitched, and incessant.

A second specimen was noted in the same area in a group of loblolly pines on February 11, 1945. This individual was quite eccentric, being very quick in its movements and sticking to the very tops of the pines which were some 40-50 feet in height.

When the area was next visited on March 4th Yellow-throated Warblers were very common and in full song, singing throughout the day.—BROOKE MEANLEY, *Camp Wheeler, Georgia*.

BOBOLINK IN CENTRAL GEORGIA IN WINTER.—At 3:00 P. M. (EWT) on December 25, 1944, while taking a Christmas Bird Count along the Ocmulgee River bottom, a Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) was flushed from an open field bordering the river. It was immediately recognized by its conformation, plumage, and familiar pink-ing notes; such notes as are uttered only by this species in late fall and early winter in Southeastern United States.

The bird is not a stranger to the writer since it was studied on its breeding grounds in 1933 and 1938, in the meadows of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, near Montrose; at Montreal, Canada, in the summer of 1934; and in the windy meadows bordering Lake Champlain at Plattsburg, New York, during the summer of 1940. For fifteen years in Maryland, flock after flock has been observed in the alfalfa and clover fields during the month of May; and by the thousands on the Patuxent River Marshes in September as they fed on the wild rice.—BROOKE MEANLEY, *Camp Wheeler, Georgia*.

PRAIRIE HORNED LARK AT MACON IN WINTER.—The Prairie Horned Lark (*Otocoris alpestris praticola*) is a frequent visitor at Camp Wheeler, near Macon, Georgia. These birds can be seen at almost any time during the winter on the large drill fields at the Camp.

This species is easily confused with the American Pipit which frequents these same open fields, flies about in a similar manner, and utters notes that slightly resemble those of the Horned Larks. Among the distinguishing characteristics differentiating this species from the Pipit in this area are as follows: (1) they usually fly about in smaller flocks, of 3 to 12 individuals; (2) present a plumper appearance; (3) often remain motionless for a few seconds after alighting, prior to feeding; (4) more casual in feeding habits; (5) and the notes, if they are known by the observer, will readily identify this species, whether the birds are in sight or not.

Several of the dates on which I have seen Prairie Horned Larks in this area are: January 17, 1943; December 28, 1943; December 25, 1944; and January 26, 1945.—BROOKE MEANLEY, *Camp Wheeler, Georgia*.

PARTIAL ALBINISM IN A WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.—While "looking over" a large flock of sparrows in the river bottom near Augusta on January 27, 1945, I noticed one with the whole top of the head white except for a dark spot in the center of the crown. A distinct white throat and normal back immediately identified it as a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) showing partial albinism about the head.

The pigmentless pattern was typically bilateral and involved only the two wide black stripes bordering the central white one. The dark spot, about the size of the central spot on the breast of a Song Sparrow, was

situated in the normally white central stripe.—J. FRED DENTON 1314 Meigs St., Augusta, Ga.

BEWICK'S WREN AT BOWEN'S MILL, BEN HILL COUNTY, GEORGIA.—While observing birds along a farm road near Bowen's Mill at 8 A. M. (EWT), March 4, 1945, the writer was attracted by the loud clear notes of a Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes b. bewickii*). When first heard the bird was singing from atop a fence post some 300 yards away. When approached it discontinued singing and flew into a clump of pine slashings. While it was easily approached, it was very difficult to see, especially since it didn't move about in the jerking manner of the Winter and Carolina Wrens, and had the knack of keeping a limb or clump of leaves between itself and my gun sight. The bird was eventually collected and is now in my possession.—BROOKE MEANLEY, *Camp Wheeler, Georgia*.

WEIGHTS OF RING-NECKED AND OTHER DUCKS.—Phillips and Lincoln (1930. *American Waterfowl*, p. 298) stated that Ring-necked Duck (*Nyroca collaris*) males ranged in weight between 1 lb. 8 oz. and 1 lb. 12.5 oz., whereas females ranged from between 1 lb. 6 oz. to 1 lb. 9 oz. Kortright (1943. *Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America*, p. 385) gives the weights of 23 males and 23 females of this species as being: males 1 lb. 5 oz. to 1 lb. 15 oz.; females 1 lb. 3 oz. to 1 lb. 13 oz. The records of Phillips and Lincoln were based on ducks killed in the Mississippi Valley on their way south in the fall (Phillips to me by word of mouth—Scotland, August 15, 1938). Kortright's records were secured from various museums and individual ornithologists in the United States and Canada.

Okefinokee Ring-necks weighed by us ranged for drakes between 1 lb. 9 oz. and 2 lbs. 3 oz., and for ducks 1 lb. 6.5 oz. and 1 lb. 14 oz. (Hebard: 1491:28). These ducks until 1934 were heavily fed with corn which may account for the heavier weights. Later experience with unbaited ducks in and around Coleraine has given a range for drakes between 1 lb. 2 oz. and 1 lb. 14 oz. and for ducks between 1 lb. 1 oz. and 1 lb. 9 oz. Both the extremely light drake and hen were killed November 27, 1941, and were in rather poor condition, indicating they had just finished the southern migration. Both the extremely heavy drake and hen were killed January 2, 1943, the latest date for which I have recent weights.

Believe it or not, I killed a Widgeon (*Mareca americana*) hen at Coleraine weighing only 14 oz. which was in very poor condition. A Lesser Scaup (*Nyroca affinis*) drake killed December 11, 1941, at Silco, weighed 1 lb. and was too poor for the poorest resident to eat.

It seems that ducks are lowest in weight at the end of their southern migration and gradually increase in weight during the winter. If artificially fed their weight increases seem to be greater. This is not an argument for baiting but a plea for more duck weights in order to prove this hypothesis.—FREDERICK V. HEBARD, 1500 Walnut Street Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa.

WINTER AND EARLY SPRING RECORDS FROM AUGUSTA.—Wintering specimens of the Grasshopper Sparrow were collected on October 29 and December 3, 1944 (one of two birds). Bachman's Sparrow, scarce in winter, was observed on December 20, 1944 when a bird was collected in grass in a cornfield, and on February 3, 1945. A male Old-squaw was present on the river opposite the business district on December 29, 30, and 31, 1944. A Ground Dove, rare at any time, was collected by Harris Clay at the clay pits on December 30, 1944. Orange-crowned Warblers were collected on January 13 and February 11, 1945. Fish Crow, rare or absent during the winter, first noted this year on February 16; late in the afternoon of March 7 and 10 a flock of over 100 of these birds passed over my home flying due south to their roost in the river swamp. Two adult Ring-billed Gulls were present at clay pits on February 16, 1945. A Cat-bird observed by Thomas and Belger on February 24, 1945, was probably a wintering bird.

The first migrants arrived much earlier than usual this spring (1945). The arrival dates for those which have already appeared are as follows: Greater Yellow-legs, February 25; Yellow-throated Warbler (numerous and in full song) March 2; Green Heron and Chimney Swift (Dr. Murphey) March 4; Lesser Yellow-legs, March 9; White-eyed Vireo and Parula Warbler (both common) March 11.—J. FRED DENTON, 1314 Meigs St., Augusta, Ga.

WHISTLING SWAN IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, GEORGIA.—An immature male Whistling Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) was killed on the Savannah River near Furey's Ferry on January 1, 1945. This specimen came into the writer's possession and is now preserved in his collection.—E. E. MURPHEY, 432, Telfair St., Augusta, Ga.

CORRECTION.—Through an oversight of the editor several minor errors occurred in the recent article entitled "A Review of Christmas Bird Counts in Georgia" by Branch Howe, Jr. (*Oriole* 9:26-29). Among the abbreviations of localities in the list of species, *Sc* should read *Cb* after the following species: Red-shouldered Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Robin, Palm Warbler, Yellow-throat and Grackle.—EDITOR.

BREEDING RECORDS TO BE COLLECTED DURING 1945

As a cooperative project members of the G. O. S. are requested to collect information on the nesting activities of our birds this spring and summer. It is hoped that every individual breeding record of every species made in Georgia during 1945 by every G. O. S. member and his friends will be recorded and reported. It is suggested that the several bird clubs in the state make this a club project for this year. After the breeding season this data will be tabulated and reported in the December issue of *The Oriole*.

The data desired concerning each breeding record is: species, date, contents of nest or number of young birds observed, locality—city or county, and name of the person responsible. Additional information concerning rare or unusual nests, or nests studied in more detail should be submitted as a separate note or article for the prize described below and for publication in *The Oriole*.

Records which will be accepted for inclusion in the tabulated report are: 1, observations of birds constructing nests; 2, records of nests containing eggs or young birds; 3, observations of adult attending young birds recently out of the nest.

Many species are already breeding so lets get busy and record them.

NEWS AND COMMENTS

CHECK-LIST — The *Birds of Georgia: A Preliminary Check-List and Bibliography of Georgia Ornithology* finally appeared March 15, after more than two months delay due to serious shortages in materials and manpower in printing and binding establishments. Higgins-MacArthur Company did an excellent job with the makeup of the volume. Almost 300 prepublication orders were received before any general advertising was done. If you have not ordered your copy (University of Georgia Press, Athens, \$2), don't delay. Also send Dr. Odum the names of persons or organizations who you think might be interested in the book. A two-page announcement has been prepared for wide distribution.

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SPECIAL NOTICE — PRIZES!! Two special prizes are announced. The G. O. S. needs more members. In order to encourage old members to help secure them, the following prizes are offered: Any member sending in two paid memberships at \$2.00 (Regular) or over will receive a beautiful, colored bird print suitable for framing. These prints are size 12 x 14 inches and are from paintings by the great artist Fuertes, one of the best in America. Or send in \$4.00 for four associates, but try to sell Regular Memberships except to young students. Send in four memberships at \$2.00 or eight at \$1.00 for a prize of two prints, and eight members at \$2.00 for five prints; all different subjects. Open to all. Send memberships to the Treasurer, Ray C. Werner, 758 Wildwood Rd., N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Odum, to encourage the study of birds in the field, is offering either a free copy of *Birds of Georgia* or a year's membership in the G. O. S. to the person who sends in the best original observations on the nesting habits of Georgia birds for the 1945 season. When your papers are ready, send them to Dr. Odum, Biological Division, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

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NEWS OF MEMBERS — Bill Griffin, 1st Lt. U. S. Marine Corps, is now on Samoa; he has collected a few birds but doesn't think he will

be able to bring them back. Bobby Norris is on the staff of a hospital ship in the Pacific. Charlie Wharton, 2nd Lt. U. S. Army, is now engaged in malaria control on Guadalcanal, but he finds some time to collect snakes and observe birds. Dave Johnston is training at Bainbridge, Md., for a job similar to Bobby's. Milton Hopkins of Fitzgerald is also in training with the Navy, but at Norfolk. With these active observers otherwise occupied, it is no wonder the editor finds it hard to get notes for *The Oriole*!

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DUES — We positively must get in all back dues immediately. Many members have sent in payments for 1945. If you owe any amount now past due, *The Oriole* will be discontinued and membership dropped as ordered at the last annual meeting. Please continue your membership and loyal support. Let's get ready for a successful post-war period and growth.

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PUBLICATION DATE — The next *Oriole* goes to press JUNE 15. Be sure to send in your notes and articles.