

THE ORIOLE

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



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No. 4

THE ORIOLE

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CONTENTS

A RESUME OF JOHN ABBOT'S "NOTES ON MY LIFE"

By Elsa G. Allen 31

COMMENTS ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF CERTAIN GEORGIA

BIRDS — By Henry M. Stevenson 32

GENERAL NOTES: First Occurrence of the Florida Cormorant in Georgia,

33; A Further Extension of the Breeding Range of the Mountain Vireo
in the Lower Piedmont Plateau of Georgia, 34; Common Loon and
Bonaparte's Gull in Demorest, Georgia, 34.

NEWS AND COMMENTS 34

IN MEMORIAM 36

NEW G. O. S. MEMBERS 37

EDITORIAL 38

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A RESUME OF JOHN ABBOT'S "NOTES ON MY LIFE"

BY ELSA G. ALLEN

While borrowing the self portrait of John Abbot which hangs in the Cornell Department of Entomology, a few weeks ago, I was fortunate in meeting Dr. W. T. L. Forbes, of Cornell University, who pointed out to me an interesting article by Mr. C. L. Remington in the *Lepidopterist News* for March, 1948.

This paper concerns Mr. Remington's findings of the manuscript, "Notes on My Life" by John Abbot, of Georgia, the British naturalist whose work on birds and lepidoptera has been the subject of several American articles.

Now at last we know from this article, printed verbatim by Mr. Remington that John Abbot was born in London on Bennet Street, St. James, on June 1 ("old stile") 1751. His father was an attorney and apparently the Abbot home was one of comfort and culture, with a country place at Turnham Green.

Abbot, senior, provided drawing lessons for his son and through various contacts, John gained entree with several learned entomologists, whose cabinets of insects were a source of inspiration to him.

His father, likewise, bought him four volumes of George Edwards' "Birds," and Lady Honeywood presented him with Catesby's *Natural History of Carolina*. Abbot does not mention his formal education, but says, "I was Articled to my Father as his Clerk for 5 years to be an Attorney, but deeds, Conveyances and Wills, etc., was but little to my liking when my thoughts were ingrossed by Natural-history."

By 1773, Abbot, after working on a collection of insects and building his reputation as an artist, was determined to go to America. He then sold his cabinet of insects and had other smaller cases made to take with him.

Going to the Coffee House to get the news, one morning he learned that the ship, on which he had engaged passage, had already sailed, with his clothes and baggage on board. Abbot hired a post chaise to overtake the vessel before it should get out of the river and into the open sea. He managed to sight it from a high point of land but it was necessary to go all the way to Deal on the coast, and there take another boat to put him aboard. After all this effort, the ship did not sail for three days.

The passage took six weeks and Abbot made friends with a Mr. and Mrs.

George Goodall and a Mr. Balfour, who offered to take him on his sloop up the James River to Jamestown, where he intended to take on a shipment of grain. At that time Jamestown was a very unhealthy part of Virginia; the collecting, also, was poor; hence, when intercourse with England was to be terminated, John Abbot, with his friends, the Goodalls, decided to migrate to Georgia.

They traveled by cart and horses—Abbot, Mr. and Mrs. Goodall, their child and a little Negro boy.

After many vicissitudes, including heavy snow, mistaken bad roads, inhospitable innkeepers and the like, they came at last after two months, to the plantation for which Mr. William Moore, Goodall's brother-in-law was overseer. This property was located thirty miles south of Augusta. It was the middle of February, probably of 1774, and Abbot at once set to work to help Mr. Goodall build a log house on land adjoining Mr. William Moore's land. In this dwelling the little party lived for some time.

In concluding these notes, John Abbot says, "When I am again settled, I will continue them (these notes) with many curious anecdotes (*sic*) of the Times. Indeed, I often think if I had the Genius of a Scot or Bulwar to colour some parts highly, and some occasional additions, It might make an amusing novel of 2 volumes."

Mr. Remington is to be congratulated on finding this manuscript—now well over a hundred and fifty years old—and we hope that additional matter about Abbot's later life may eventually come to light.

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COMMENTS ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF CERTAIN GEORGIA BIRDS

By HENRY M. STEVENSON

A careful perusal of the range outlined for certain species of birds in Georgia (*Birds of Georgia*, Greene, *et al.*, 1945 and subsequent notes), in conjunction with the known range of these species in adjacent states, leads the writer to believe that Georgia observers might look for range extensions in these species. Therefore it appears advisable to place in the hands of Georgia bird students recent information pertaining to the distribution of these species in neighboring States.

Snowy Egret: *Leucophox thula thula*. Although reported as a breeding bird only in coastal Georgia, this wader breeds commonly at Tallahassee, Florida, and may consequently be expected to nest in other parts of southern Georgia.

Virginia Rail: *Rallus limicola limicola*. Tallahassee winter records suggest the possibility of this bird's wintering in south-western and south-central Georgia.

Sora: *Porzana carolina*. Because it rarely occurs in winter at Tallahassee, this little rail may be looked for at that season throughout southern Georgia, where the only winter records extant are near the coast.

Forster's Tern: *Sterna forsteri*. In view of the lack of records from the interior of Georgia, it seems well to mention the regular occurrence of this species in migration at Tallahassee, where there is also one winter record. Such records are based on careful study of birds at close range, as the Common Tern (*S. hirundo hirundo*) also migrates through the Tallahassee region.

Bewick's Wren: *Thryomanes bewicki altus*. This species is restricted in summer to "the mountains and the Appalachian Valley" in Georgia, and "there are no breeding records from Atlanta or Athens." In this connection, the fact that it has been heard singing in mid-summer at Roanoke, Alabama, suggests that it may breed further south in the western part of Georgia.

Magnolia Warbler: *Dendroica magnolia*. "Generally rare in south Georgia in fall," this warbler appears to be a regular and rather common fall migrant at Tallahassee.

Black-poll Warbler: *Dendroica striata*. Although this large warbler has never been recorded from extreme southwestern Georgia, present evidence indicates that a few pass through Tallahassee each spring in late April and early May.

Eastern Field Sparrow: *Spizella pusilla pusilla*. As no summer records for this sparrow are mentioned for extreme southern Georgia, it should be stated that it still occurs as an uncommon summer resident in the Tallahassee region, the most recent records being in July, 1947, and late May, 1948.

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GENERAL NOTES

FIRST OCCURRENCE OF THE FLORIDA CORMORANT IN GEORGIA.—While cataloging specimens from the Isaac F. Arnow collection in the University of Georgia Museum, the writer found two Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), one of which was an adult, and the other a small, light juvenal female collected by H. P. Hopkins on May 9, 1908, at St. Marys, Georgia. This latter specimen was called the subspecies *floridanus* by Hopkins. It was measured and all the measurements were more typical of *floridanus* than of *auritus*, the northern form.

Consequently these two birds and another adult taken at Tifton by Robert Norris were sent to the U. S. National Museum in Washington for subspecific identification. Dr. Herbert Friedmann kindly made the identifications and replied (personal correspondence): "... I have examined these specimens and find that the smallest of the three is, as you suspected, the race *floridanus*. The other two are the northern form."

"Birds of Georgia" (Greene, *et al.*, 1945, Page 28) points out clearly that *floridanus* should occur in the state since it has been recorded both north and south of Georgia, but that no specimens had been collected. This Hopkins specimen, then, represents the first and only known specimen of the Florida Cormorant in Georgia. Further collecting and identification of existing specimens should reveal that *floridanus* occurs at least sparingly along the Georgia coast.—

DAVID W. JOHNSTON, Department of Zoology, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

A FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE BREEDING RANGE OF THE MOUNTAIN VIREO IN THE LOWER PIEDMONT PLATEAU OF GEORGIA.—In connection with the exceedingly interesting discovery by Raymond J. Fleetwood of the breeding of the Mountain Vireo (*Vireo solitarius alticola*) in Jones and Jasper Counties in central Georgia (See *Auk*, Vol. 64, No. 3, pp. 462-463), it seems desirable at this time to record the presence of this well-marked race in Upson County during the summer months. On June 14, 1947, I was carrying on field work 7 miles south of Thomaston, the county seat of Upson County, when one of these vireos was heard singing close by, and a short search soon revealed it feeding leisurely in the upper branches of a large loblolly pine. I was unsuccessful in locating a nest, but the bird, when collected, proved to be a male with well developed testes indicative of breeding at this spot. Thomaston is approximately 50 miles southwest of the area in Jones County where Fleetwood found this species well established in June, 1946, so the presence of this singing male in Upson County extends materially the range of the Mountain Vireo in the lower Piedmont during the summer months. My opportunity for studying the habits of this vireo in central Georgia has been rather limited, but I was nevertheless impressed by the fact that its presence or absence was invariably limited by the stretches of larger pine timber scattered through this part of the State. A decided preference was shown for feeding in the upper branches of the tallest trees, and where such trees did not exist in sufficient numbers the Mountain Vireo was never found. This was radically different from the habits of the birds I was familiar with in the mountain counties, but no more perplexing than the occurrence of this species so far south of its long-accepted range.—THOS. D. BURLEIGH, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Moscow, Idaho*.

COMMON LOON AND BONAPARTE'S GULL IN DEMOREST, GEORGIA.—On April 11 and 12, 1947, a flock of twelve Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) were present on Demorest Lake. All except two were in breeding plumage.

On April 8, 1948, after a night of violent electric storms and rain I observed a flock of gulls rising from the lake. I was able to get outside for a brief look as they passed overhead and saw that some had black heads. I went immediately to the lake and found nine gulls still there. These nine were Bonaparte's Gulls (*Larus philadelphia*). One was in breeding plumage, five in winter plumage and three were immature with the black band on the end of the tail.—MRS. CHARLES NEAL, *Demorest, Ga.*

NEWS AND COMMENTS

FALL MEETING.—The nineteenth semi-annual meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society was held in Athens, Georgia, on October 16-17, 1948, with 52 members and guests in attendance. Registration in Baldwin Hall, University of Georgia, was mostly completed by 2:00 p. m. when the first session, presided over by Dr. Eugene P. Odum, was called to order. Interesting ten-minute reports were heard as follows: "Conservation Education at Summer 4-H Camps," by Frank Fitch, Jr.; "Chachalaca Again in Georgia," by James H. Jenkins; "Notes on Summer Birds in Southwest Georgia," by Robert A. Norris; "Technique of Determining Bird Population in Idaho," by David W. Johnston; "Seasonal Re-

ports of *Audubon Field Notes Magazine*," by J. Fred Denton, and "1948 A. O. U. Meeting in Omaha," by Frederick V. Hebard. Short discussions followed each paper.

After a short recess a business meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. William Griffin. The minutes were read and approved after the addition of 13 species to the list of birds observed on Jekyll Island. These additions, including the Long-billed Curlew, which made a total of 104 species, were the result of observations by Herbert L. Stoddard, Harry Beadel, and Frederick V. Hebard after the list was compiled.

A rather unfavorable and discouraging report was made by the Treasurer, Mr. Ray C. Werner. A discussion of possible means of remedying the situation followed, with the result that the Finance Committee was instructed to make decisions concerning raising funds. It was suggested by Mr. Hebard that each member be given a list of members at the next meeting. The Secretary was instructed to prepare these copies. After some discussion the Education Committee was reactivated with the appointment of Miss Mabel Rogers as Chairman, and Miss Malvina Trussell and Mr. Frank Fitch, Jr., as members. It was moved and seconded that the invitation of Miss Trussell to meet in Statesboro in the Spring of 1949 be accepted. At this point Miss Trussell, First Vice President, took the chair while President Griffin moved a rising vote of thanks to Dr. J. Fred Denton for his exceptionally fine work as Editor of *The Oriole*. The meeting adjourned, after which the members examined the interesting displays of photographs and bird skins.

At 7:15 p. m. the group assembled at the Georgian Hotel for the banquet and evening program. The death of Miss Manie Jones of Milledgeville was reported and the Society rose in respect and deference to her as a valuable member. After several guests were introduced, a vote of appreciation was extended Dr. Eugene Odum and Mr. David Johnston for their fine arrangements and abundant hospitality.

Dr. D. L. Jacobs, a botanist, lately of the University of Minnesota, now of the University of Georgia, was the main speaker of the evening. His kodachrome slides of birds in Minnesota were excellent and his description of taking them and the habitats in which they were made provided a most delightful evening.

On Sunday morning, fifty members and guests gathered about a fire in the yard of "Cardinal Hill," the home of Dr. and Mrs. Odum. Here they enjoyed the fellowship of "bird talk" and a good breakfast. The assembly then divided into three groups, one going to Sandy Creek bottomland, another to the Oconee River, and a third to the wooded area around "Cardinal Hill." At 11:00 a. m. the group assembled at Baldwin Hall on the University campus to pool counts. Fifty-eight species were identified. Photographs of the group were taken by Dr. Eugene P. Odum, Mr. John Goodman, and Dr. D. L. Jacobs.

OUR APRIL-JULY FRONTISPIECE.—The beautiful colored plate of Cedar Waxwings from a painting by Richard A. Parks, which appeared in the April-July issue of *The Oriole* attracted a great deal of favorable comment. The reproduction of this painting was made possible by the gracious loan of the plates by the editor of *Southern Telephone News*, house organ of the Southern Bell Telephone

Company. The painting was originally reproduced on the cover of this magazine.

BURLEIGH ELECTED FELLOW OF A. O. U.—Thomas D. Burleigh, now of Moscow, Idaho, whom we still claim as a G. O. S. member, was honored at the recent meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union in Omaha, Nebraska, by being elected a Fellow of that organization. Tom was one of five ornithologists elevated to this rank which is restricted to 50 individuals who are citizens of the United States, Canada, or Newfoundland.

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT C. RHODES

With the passing of Dr. Robert C. Rhodes in November the Georgia Ornithological Society lost one of its most prominent Life Members. He became a Sustaining Member of the Society in June, 1937 and a Life Member in March, 1939. Though his time was limited by his duties as Director of the Biology Department at Emory University and by other affiliations, he was always an ardent believer in, and supporter of the Society.

Dr. Rhodes graduated from Henderson-Brown College in 1906. After attending Vanderbilt University and serving as Professor of Biology at the University of Mississippi and Henderson-Brown College, he went to the University of California, receiving his Ph.D. Degree there in 1917. He then came to Emory University to organize the Department of Biology and serve as its director. To those who studied under him and worked with him, he was an inspiring teacher and true friend. He was instrumental in establishing the Emory chapters of the Phi Sigma Biological Society and the Society of the Sigma Xi. Although his main interest and efforts were directed toward the Biology Department at Emory, he saw the necessity for science organizations throughout the State and Southeast. He was a Charter Member and one term president of The Georgia Academy of Science and the Georgia Society of Biologists which preceded it. He was active in organizing the Association of Southeastern Biologists and served as its president for one term. His interest in field biology is evidenced not only by his association with our Society but by the fact that he was actively connected with the Georgia Society of Naturalists.

Dr. Rhodes' enthusiasm and devotion to the teaching of the broad fundamentals of biology, the adherence to the scientific attitude, and a true appreciation of nature has left a lasting impression upon his former students and associates.—RALPH RAMSEY, JR.

HATTIE RAINWATER

With the demise of Miss Hattie Rainwater on November 22, 1948, the Georgia Ornithological Society lost within the month a second of its cherished Life Members. Miss Rainwater became a Life Member of the Society at its organization in December, 1936, from which time on she was an ardent supporter of the Society.

Miss Rainwater was born at Veazey, Georgia, but she had lived in Atlanta

for 57 years. She was a graduate of Girls' High School and the University of Georgia. Later she took postgraduate work at Columbia and Oglethorpe Universities.

During a large part of her residence in Atlanta Miss Rainwater was connected with the public school system as supervisor of natural science. In this capacity "the nature lady," as she was called by many of the pupils, charmed the children with her wonderful nature stories and lifelike bird calls. By arousing a sincere interest in birds in some of the youngsters who went on to become serious bird students, Miss Rainwater made her greatest contribution to Georgia ornithology.—J. FRED DENTON.

NEW G. O. S. MEMBERS

During the past year thirty-two new members joined the G. O. S. To these we extend a hearty welcome, and hope that the Society will be of a definite benefit as well as a pleasure to them. We, also, hope that they will attend meetings and otherwise enter into the activities of the Society thus contributing something of value to it. The new members are as follows:

Mr. Edwin W. Allen, 1003 Peachtree Road, Augusta, Ga.
 Mr. H. Lewis Batts, 2930 Washtenaw Road, Ypsilanti, Mich.
 Mr. Haywood Boyd, Route 2, Statesboro, Ga.
 Dr. Maurice Brooks, University of West Virginia, Morgantown, W. Va.
 Miss Genevieve Cox, 308 Oak Street, East Point, Ga.
 Mrs. C. F. Gibbs, Davisboro, Ga.
 Mrs. Caroline Greear, Helen, Ga.
 Mr. J. R. Grobe, 940 Baker Avenue, Augusta, Ga.
 Miss Lou Hoben, 1221 Briarwood Drive, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Miss Eugenia B. Hume, 218 Westminster Drive, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Dr. Don L. Jacobs, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.
 Mr. James H. Jenkins, 2012 Eljosa Avenue, Waycross, Ga.
 Mr. Charles M. Jones, 803 N. Jefferson Street, Albany, Ga.
 Mrs. Thomas B. Jowers, 2366 Edinburgh Terrace, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Dr. Gertrude Manchester, 111 S. Jackson Street, Milledgeville, Ga.
 Mr. Charlton Mosely, Route 3, Statesboro, Ga.
 Miss Betty Nalls, Demorest, Ga.
 Mrs. E. R. Partridge, 981 Oakdale Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Mr. Tully Pennington, Collegeboro, Ga.
 Mr. Jimmy Rigdon, Route 3, Statesboro, Ga.
 Miss Annie M. Robertson, 49 W. Washington Street, Newnan, Ga.
 Mr. Walter H. Rose, 2014 Central Avenue, Augusta, Ga.
 Mr. Dick Sams, 1557 N. Decatur Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Mr. Eddie Sams, 1557 N. Decatur Road, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Mr. Ben Seal, 87 Princeton Way, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
 Miss Jessie Slocumb, 165 Fourteenth Street, N. W., Atlanta, Ga.
 Dr. W. B. Warthen, Davisboro, Ga.
 Mrs. W. B. Warthen, Davisboro, Ga.

Mrs. Isabel M. Weathersby, 5137 Cantrell Road, Little Rock, Ark.
Mr. Lee Weeks, Norman Park, Ga.
Mr. Carter Whittaker, 279 Tenth Street, N. E., Atlanta, Ga.
Mr. R. A. Wood, Box 238, Carrollton, Ga.

EDITORIAL

With the publication of this number, *The Oriole* will have completed thirteen volumes of printed pages, representing thirteen years of cooperation among the ornithologists of Georgia. This is an achievement for which we may be justly proud. Unfortunately, however, our cooperation during most of these years has been strained, and as a result we have found ourselves constantly in a state of crisis. Such is our position today. If we are to continue to achieve, it is essential that each of us assume a greater part of the burden.

The need for greater cooperation in two channels particularly is vital to the continued success of *The Oriole*. First we need more response from the membership in the matter of furnishing material to the editor for publication. Second, we need an increased revenue to enable the Society to combat the steadily increasing cost of printing.

The editor is finding it increasingly difficult with each issue of *The Oriole* to get enough material for publication. It seems to take more personal urging, letter-writing, and begging to get members to furnish the necessary articles, notes, and news items. When material does come in it dribbles, causing delay. Much of it is hurriedly gotten together and poorly prepared necessitating rewriting, retyping, and further delay. The result is that it is impossible to get an issue out on time. In a cooperative magazine effort such as ours it should not be necessary for the editor to have to write personal appeals to members for material. An editorial such as appeared in the January, 1948, number should have swamped the editor under an avalanche of copy, but such was not the case. In fact, he finds himself again without material for the next issue.

In order to keep *The Oriole* coming out regularly and somewhere near on time, it will be necessary for our members to send in more material for publication and to send it in more regularly.

The cost of printing *The Oriole* has spiralled upward more rapidly than our increase in revenue. We are thus faced with the alternatives of reducing the number of pages in each issue as was done this year, or increasing our income in some way. Obviously the second alternative is the better, and we are presented with a problem of how to go about getting more money. One certain way is to increase our membership. Another way is for a considerable number of regular members to increase the measure of their financial support by becoming sustaining members. The need for action along these lines by each member is urgent. When you receive your statement of dues for 1949, consider becoming a sustaining member, remit your dues promptly, and try to get a new member.