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BIRDS OF THE SEA ISLAND, GEORGIA, REGION

BY BARBARA WOODWARD

The area covered in this report is limited to Sea Island, St. Simons Island, the eastern portion of Little St. Simons Island and what is known as Pelican Island. The Hampton River separates Little St. Simons Island from Sea Island and the Black River runs through the salt marshes between Sea Island and St. Simons Island. Habitats offered in this area and the birds characteristic of them are briefly described below.

Beach and Ocean.—There are five miles or more of flat, straight beach that is deep and evidently slopes gradually seaward. A boat was not used except to get to Little St. Simons Island and to Pelican Island, but a 20-power spotting scope was helpful in seeing Gannets and other birds off shore. At the mouth of the Hampton River, sand bars exist to vary the habitat and the water there in places is, I imagine, brackish rather than salt. The beach is bordered by dunes, followed by salt marsh, then door-yards or woods. The southern tip of Sea Island is beach and dunes separated from the salt marsh by the Black Banks River. Pelican Island is washing away, from what I can gather. In 1946 there were grasses on the more elevated parts, but in 1948 there was no evidence of vegetation. According to Mr. Ruhland Rebmman, there were bushes growing there a few years back.

Dunes.—The area covered by dunes is considerable, especially on the eastern part of Little St. Simons Island. Bird life is rather limited, however, Ground Doves and Savannah Sparrows being the only regular inhabitants. In the little intervals of Cabbage Palmetto, Yucca, Wax Myrtle, Cassena (*Il x vomitoria*) and a few Prickly Ash and Bumelia, the birds increase and include the regular door-yard species such as House Wren, Song Sparrow, Catbird and Mockingbird. Sea Cats, Sandspur, Smilax (*S. auriculata*), Blackberry, Pony's Foot and Beach Morning Glory are other plants of this habitat.

Salt Marsh.—The extent of the salt marshes is greater than any other area for one habitat. They run between the islands and the mainland and are laced together with little winding tidal rivers. If only the marsh were a little bit more substantial, it would be a thoroughly satisfying place, but as it is, progress is difficult once you have left "shore" for any distance because of the soft mud and water. I have been remarkably unsuccessful in identifying the plants that grow there, but they each stick to their own zone as rigidly as if they had been planted so. Upon entering the marsh, the first plant encountered I call "Rail Grass" (though it most likely isn't a grass at all) because I have quite often flushed

Clapper Rails from its cover and their coloring is much the same in effect as that of the grass. This "Rail Grass" grows in patches near the land where the ground is damp but not too wet except maybe at flood tide. It is exclusive of other plants. Next comes a plant that is branched and grows from one to 4 feet tall. The stem is pale gray and the leaves are thick and crisp to break, being watery inside, but flatter in cross section than the following species. They are frosted green in color and have the remains of a flower or fruit at the tip. This is the shape of a prickly flattened doughnut. The next zone is occupied by a much shorter and unbranched plant. It seems to have a vine-like disposition and re-roots, forming wickets low to the ground. The little leaf clusters are like those of the preceding plant, but rounder in cross section, and they snap off as you walk through them. Next comes the lowest plant that only grows a few inches tall. The "leaves" are stacked one on top of the other like a chain rather than being hitched to the main stem. It, too, is vine-like or creeping, and its color ranges from deep coral red to pale yellow green. Snails and fiddler crabs abound in this and the previous zones. Last, but not least, as it forms the bulk of the marsh, comes the marsh grass which in summer reaches a height of 5 or 6 feet. Through these belts with the exception of the last, there are scattered bare places, like a beach. Not even the fiddler crabs have holes there. It is quite barren and the gulls seem to like it for a place to nap and preen. Winding through the marsh are the rivers and channels and just plain trickles of brackish water. Here the cluster oysters grow and little fish with fat stomachs jump out of the water. Smaller minnows run in schools. The terns, pelicans and herons follow these waterways with very profitable results.

Woods.—Woods and their edges where they border fields, roads or marshes are the most important habitat for the smaller birds. The Water Oaks, Live Oaks, pines, and palms, vines and palmettos form the woods that shelter the Pileated Woodpecker, Chickadees and others, and provides a winter home for the White-throat, Myrtle Warbler and Hermit Thrush from farther north. Most of these birds are also found in the door-yards.

Ponds.—I have found five small ponds on St. Simons Island. Two of these are in settled areas and are a bit tidier than the wild ones. The wild ones are surrounded by marsh and choked by it and the pond lilies. They are green with duck weeds and other aquatic plants. Near one the saw palmettos and members of the heath family have made a good sized community of their own. It is scattered with pines and evidently quite home-like to Yellow-throats, Prairie Warblers, Towhees and a pair of Brown-headed Nuthatches. Two of these ponds serve as nesting sites for Herons, Egrets, Anhingas, White Ibis, and possibly Pied-billed Grebes that are there during the spring season.

Fields.—Scattered fields furnish homes for Bluebirds and Meadowlarks and are welcomed by the Palm Warblers and Pipits when they arrive for the winter. The Golf Course at St. Simons Island is favored by many species.

Observations in the region were made between January 15 and April 15, 1946-1948. During this period a total of 144 species were definitely identified. These are given in the annotated list below. In addition to the identified species,

there are those whose identity, for one reason or another, remains uncertain. Among these is a Jaeger, observed February 5, 1948, as it flew along the breakers harassing the terns and then disappeared with incredible speed with no apparent effort over the ocean. Two loons seen off shore looked suspiciously like Red-throated Loons, but I could not be sure. Four large ducks with much white across the back and extending out onto the coverts of the wings were apparently Eiders, but they were too far away to be sure. Accipiters are not uncommon in the region but I need a very good look to be sure of their identity and the opportunity never occurred.

I would like to thank Mrs. Margaret Davis Cate for her help and encouragement in my birding exploits while at Sea Island. Also, thanks are expressed to Mr. George Green of Sea Island, Mr. Paul Baker of Connecticut and Mr. and Mrs. Ruh and Rebmann of Pennsylvania for various aids. Lastly, appreciation is expressed to Dr. J. Fred Denton of Augusta, Georgia, for many helpful suggestions in the preparation of the manuscript.

ANNOTATED LIST OF SPECIES

COMMON LOON: *Gavia immer*. January to early March. On March 15, 1948 one was seen in the marshes, evidently sick. On April 4, 1947 one was on the beach at Sea Island, and though many well-wishers returned him to the water, he dragged himself ashore again. He too was evidently sick. The well birds leave before the middle of March. From 4 to 12 or 14 will be seen a'long the Sea Island beach in January or February.

HORNED GREBE: *Colymbus auritus*. Two males seen April 6, 1948, on Little St. Simons Island.

PIED-BILLED GREBE: *Podilymbus podiceps*. Observed February through April on fresh water ponds.

BROWN PELICAN: *Pelecanus occidentalis*. January through April. They are less numerous in January when 2 or 3 may be seen in a day as compared with over 30 at the same place in April.

GANNET: *Morus bassanus*. Fairly common off shore in January and February, fewer in March. Five were seen April 11 and one April 12, 1948. Thirteen were seen at one time February 5, 1946.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: *Phalacrocorax auritus*. January through April. Large flocks migrating are seen in the first week in April.

WATER-TURKEY: *Anhinga anhinga*. March 26 through April. A female seen on a nest in 1947 and again in 1948. Three males seen in April 1948. They nest in a heronry on St. Simons Island.

GREAT BLUE HERON: *Ardea herodias*. January through April, nesting in the heronry on St. Simons Island.

AMERICAN EGRET: *Casmerodius albus*. First dates, February 13, 1946, March 19, 1947, January 18, 1948. They nest in the heronry on St. Simons.

SNOWY EGRET: *Leucophoyx thula*. January through April, nesting in the heronry on St. Simons.

LOUISIANA HERON: *Hydranassa tricolor*. January through April, nesting in the heronry on St. Simons.

LITTLE BLUE HERON: *Florida caerulea*. January through April, nesting in the heronry on St. Simons.

GREEN HERON: *Butorides virescens*. Seen March 26 through April near the heronry. As there was a pair in 1948 they apparently nested although not in the heronry.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON: *Nycticorax nycticorax*. March 24 through April, nesting at the heronry.

WOOD IBIS: *Mycteria americana*. Two seen on St. Simons Island near the heronry on April 8, 1947.

WHITE IBIS: *Guara alba*. From April 4 on. Reported as nesting at the heronry the summer of 1947. Twenty-four seen April 12, 1947.

BLACK DUCK: *Anas rubripes*. Two seen March 3 and 11, and 12 on March 13 off Little St. Simons Island.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL: *Anas discors*. Two seen flying near shore at Sea Island March 31, 1947.

BALDPATE: *Mareca americana*. Two seen February 22, 1946 and 12 on March 13, 1948.

SHOVELLER: *Spatula clypeata*. Two males and a female seen at Sea Island April 2, 1948.

WOOD DUCK: *Aix sponsa*. Seen April 12, 1947 and in April 1948 near the heronry on St. Simons.

LESSER SCAUP DUCK: *Aythya affinis*. January through April, large rafts off shore. They number from around 200 to well over 2000 along the Sea Island coast.

RUDDY DUCK: *Oxyura jamaicensis*. Three seen between March 3-20. Once 5 were seen during this period. They stayed to themselves, but were near the Scaup off shore.

HOODED MERGANSER: *Lophodytes cucullatus*. January through March 17. They seem to stay in the marsh rivers rather than out in the open water.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: *Mergus serrator*. January through April 11. They may be seen either in the rivers or on the ocean.

TURKEY VULTURE: *Cathartes aura*. Permanent resident, fairly common in winter.

BLACK VULTURE: *Coragyps atratus*. Permanent resident, common in winter.
RED-TAILED HAWK: *Buteo jamaicensis*. Observed January 27 through April 12.
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK: *Buteo lineatus*. Seen February 25 through March 8.
BALD EAGLE: *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. One nest found on St. Simons Island,

one in use on Little St. Simons and one on Sea Island. The latter raised one young in 1947 and one in 1948. Other nests are reported in the vicinity. One immature was seen flying over the airport at St. Simons in January. The young evidently hatch in January and by the end of March are flying, but return to the nest until the middle of April anyway.

MARSH HAWK: *Circus cyaneus*. Observed January through April.

OSPREY: *Pandion haliaetus*. March 3 is my earliest date for this bird. From the middle of March on it is fairly common, much to the Eagles' delight.

DUCK HAWK: *Falco peregrinus*. One immature bird observed for some time at Pelican Banks on March 11, 1948.

SPARROW HAWK: *Falco sparverius*. Seen January through April 6.

KING RAIL: *Rallus elegans*. Two seen in St. Simons marshes March 11, 1946.

CLAPPER RAIL: *Rallus longirostris*. Permanent resident, seen occasionally and heard more often.

FLORIDA GALLINULE: *Gallinula chloropus*. Not uncommon in the fresh water ponds on St. Simons.

COOT: *Fulica americana*. Seen only in January through March 28, 1948, when they were common at the two "civilized" ponds, but absent from the wild ones.

CYSTER-CATCHER: *Haematopus palliatus*. Seen January through April. The largest numbers observed at one time were 22 in 1946, 20 in 1947 and 16 in 1948.

PIPING FLOVER: *Charadrius meiodus*. January through April, fairly common.

SEMPALMATED FLOVER: *Charadrius hiaticula*. January through April, more common in March and April.

WILSON'S FLOVER: *Charadrius wilsonia*. February 26, 1947 is the earliest date of arrival; seen through April.

KILLDEER: *Charadrius vociferus*. January through March, not seen in April.

BLACK-BELLIED FLOVER: *Squatarola squatarola*. January through April, seen in small numbers.

RUDDY TURNSTONE: *Arenaria interpres*. January through April, fairly common.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: *Numenius americanus*. None seen in 1946. Five seen April 3, 1947, remained until April 11 on the north end of the Sea Island beach. One seen March 11, 1948 at Little St. Simons Island.

HUDSONIAN CURLEW: *Numenius phaeopus*. March 25 through April 20, 1947. First seen in 1948 on April 6 when a flock of over 30 flew in.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: *Actitis macularia*. Seen occasionally along the rivers, January 22 to April 11.

WILLET: *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*. A few (Western?) are present from January on, but the main flocks (Eastern?) come around the middle of March.

GREATER YELLOW-LEGS: *Totanus melanoleucus*. January through April, more common in March and April.

KNOT: *Calidris canutus*. February 25 through April 6. As many as 300 birds seen in a flock April 3, 1948.

LEAST SANDPIPER: *Erolia minutilla*. January through April (see Western Sandpiper).

RED-BACKED SANDPIPER: *Erolia alpina*. January through April, common. They begin to acquire their breeding plumage around March 13.

DOWITCHER: *Limnodromus griseus*. Seen chiefly the first week in April.

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER: *Ereunetes pusillus*. January through April (see Western Sandpiper).

WESTERN SANDPIPER: *Ereunetes mauri*. In order to distinguish the "Peeps" (Western, Semipalmated and Least), I require good light, time for close observation and at least two species present for comparison. Therefore, I am unable to make an estimate of their comparative numbers. I have seen as many as 23 Westerns in a flock. The Least I have seen were in with Westerns and Redbacks and other sandpipers and were outnumbered by the other species. The Semipalmated seem to be a bit more abundant than the Least. All three species are common.

MARbled GODWIT: *Limosa fedoa*. Three seen April 3, 1947 and four March 11, 1948. On both occasions they were in company with the Long-billed Curlews.

SANDERLING: *Crocethia alba*. Abundant, seen January through April.

HERRING GULL: *Larus argentatus*. Common.

RING-BILLED GULL: *Larus delawarensis*. Abundant.

LAUGHING GULL: *Larus atricilla*. Common, March 7, 1948 is the earliest I have seen them.

BONAPARTE'S GULL: *Larus philadelphia*. January through April. Seen only in small numbers until 1948 when in March and April flocks of 12 or more were seen.

FORSTER'S TERN: *Sterna forsteri*. Abundant through period.

LEAST TERN: *Sterna albifrons*. Common, April 7 is the earliest I have recorded them.

ROYAL TERN: *Thalasseus maximus*. Common, January through April.

CASPIAN TERN: *Hydroprogne caspia*. Fairly common, more are seen in March and April.

BLACK SKIMMER: *Rynchops nigra*. Seen January through April.

MOURNING DOVE: *Zenaidura macoura*. A few present all winter.

GROUND DOVE: *Columbigallina passerina*. Permanent resident, common.

GREAT HORNED OWL: *Bubo virginianus*. One seen on Sea Island April 9, 1947.

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: *Caprimulgus carolinensis*. First dates, March 24, 1948, April 1, 1947 and April 6, 1946.

NIGHTHAWK: *Chordeiles minor*. First dates, April 10, 1946 and April 15, 1947; none seen by April 15, 1948.

CHIMNEY SWIFT: *Chaetura pelagica*. First recorded April 8, 1946, April 11, 1947 and April 15, 1948.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD: *Archilochus colubris*. First seen March 31, 1947 and April 3, 1948.

BELTED KINGFISHER: *Megasceryle alcyon*. Permanent resident, fairly common.

FLICKER: *Colaptes auratus*. Permanent resident, not very common.

PILEATED WOODPECKER: *Dryocopus pileatus*. A pair seen on St. Simons Island and a pair on Sea Island.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: *Centurus carolinus*. Permanent resident, quite common.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER: *Sphyrapicus varius*. Winter resident, fairly rare.

HARRY WOODPECKER: *Dendrocopos villosus*. Fairly rare permanent resident.

DOWNY WOODPECKER: *Dendrocopos pubescens*. A scarce permanent resident.

EASTERN KINGBIRD: *Tyrannus tyrannus*. Earliest arrival April 7, 1946.

CRESTED FLYCATCHER: *Myiarchus crinitus*. First dates April 7, 1946, April 8, 1947 and April 6, 1948.

PHOEBE: *Sayornis phoebe*. Winter resident, seen January through March 24.

TREE SWALLOW: *Iridoprocne bicolor*. Flocks seen January through April.

PURPLE MARTIN: *Progne subis*. First seen March 11, 1946, February 25, 1947 and April 3, 1948.

BLUE JAY: *Cyanocitta cristata*. Permanent resident, especially common near towns.

CROW: *Corvus brachyrhynchos*. Permanent resident, scarce.

FISH CROW: *Corvus ossifragus*. The common crow of the region.

CAROLINA CHICKADEE: *Parus carolinensis*. Permanent resident, common.

TUFTED TITMOUSE: *Parus bicolor*. Scarce, one seen in 1946.

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH: *Sitta pusilla*. Two seen April 4, 1948 on St. Simons Island.

HOUSE WREN: *Troglodytes aedon*. A quite common winter resident.

CAROLINA WREN: *Thryothorus ludovicianus*. A common permanent resident.

MOCKINGBIRD: *Mimus polyglottos*. Permanent resident, rather common.

CATBIRD: *Dumetella carolinensis*. A few seen all winter.

BROWN THRASHER: *Toxostoma rufum*. Permanent resident, quite common.

ROBIN: *Turdus migratorius*. Wintering flocks observed commonly, rare in spring.

HERMIT THRUSH: *Hylocichla guttata*. Seen January through March 20.

BLUEBIRD: *Sialia sialis*. Permanent resident, quite common in winter, fewer in spring.

BLUE GRAY GNATCATCHER: *Poliophtila caerulea*. First seen March 9, 1946, April 3, 1947 and March 15, 1948.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET: *Regulus calendula*. Present January through April.

AMERICAN PIPIT: *Anthus spinoletta*. Present January through March 11.

CEDAR WAXWING: *Bombycilla cedrorum*. Seen March 16 through April.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: *Lanius ludovicianus*. A scarce permanent resident.

STARLING: *Sturnus vulgaris*. A common nuisance.

WHITE-EYED VIREO: *Vireo griseus*. Common, present all winter.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO: *Vireo solitarius*. One seen January 25, 1948.

- RED-EYED VIREO: *Vireo olivaceus*. First seen April 7, 1946, April 12, 1947 and April 3, 1948.
- YELL W THRO TED VIREO: *Vireo flavifrons*. One seen April 13, 1948.
- BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER: *Mniotilta varia*. Not very common, seen January through April.
- PROTHONOTARY WARBLER: *Protonotaria citrea*. Recorded April 7, 1946 and April 16, 1948.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER: *Helmitheros vermivorus*. Seen April 12 and 14, 1947.
- ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: *Vermivora celata*. One seen January 18, 1946.
- PARULA WARBLER: *Parula americana*. Arrived March 8, 1946, March 2, 1947 and March 24, 1948.
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER: *Dendroica caerulescens*. Recorded April 16, 1947.
- MYRTLE WARBLER: *Dendroica coronata*. January through April. They are plentiful until the middle of March but become quite scarce by the middle of April.
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: *Dendroica dominica*. First seen March 9, 1946, February 25, 1947 and March 12, 1948.
- FINE WARBLER: *Dendroica pinus*. Permanent resident, quite common.
- PRAIRIE WARBLER: *Dendroica discolor*. Recorded April 8, 1947 and March 26, 1948.
- PALM WARBLER: *Dendroica p. palmarum* and *D. p. hypochrysea*. January through April, quite common.
- YELLOW-THROAT: *Geothlypis trichas*. Quite common in suitable habitat.
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: *Icteria virens*. One seen February 28, 1947.
- HOODED WARBLER: *Wilsonia citrina*. Recorded April 6, 1947 and March 28, 1948.
- REDSTART: *Setophaga ruticilla*. Seen April 16, 1947.
- MEADOWLARK: *Sturnella magna*. Permanent resident, common.
- RED-WING: *Agelaius phoeniceus*. Permanent resident, common.
- ORCHARD ORIOLE: *Icterus spurius*. Seen April 10, 1946.
- BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE: *Cassidix mexicanus*. Permanent resident, common.
- GRACKLE: *Quiscalus quiscula*. Permanent resident, fairly common.
- SUMMER Tanager: *Piranga rubra*. First seen April 3, 1947 and April 14, 1948.
- CARDINAL: *Richmondia cardinalis*. Permanent resident, common.
- INDIGO BUNTING: *Passerina cyanea*. Three seen together on April 16, 1947.
- PAINTED BUNTING: *Passerina ciris*. Recorded April 16, 1947.
- PURPLE FINCH: *Carpodacus purpureus*. Seen March 15, and 17, 1947.
- GOLDFINCH: *Spinus tristis*. January through April 12, 1946 and April 1, 1947; seen only in February in 1948.
- TOWHEE: *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*. Permanent resident, common.
- SAVANNAH SPARROW: *Passerculus sandwichensis*. January through April, fairly common.
- SEASIDE SPARROW: *Ammospiza maritima*. Three seen February 14, 1946.
- CHIPPING SPARROW: *Spizella passerina*. Observed March 17, 1947.
- FIELD SPARROW: *Spizella pusilla*. Seen March 24, 1947.

- WHITE-THROATED SPARROW: *Zonotrichia albicollis*. January through April, common.
- SWAMP SPARROW: *Melospiza georgiana*. Recorded March 14, 1948.
- SONG SPARROW: *Melospiza melodia*. January through March 15, 1946, March 14, 1947 and April 6, 1948.

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GENERAL NOTES

A SPECIMEN OF WILSON'S WARBLER FROM UNION COUNTY, GEORGIA.—While examining specimens in the W. H. LaPrade collection at Emory University, the writer was surprised to find a previously unrecorded specimen of Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) taken by the late W. H. LaPrade at Canada, Union County, Georgia, on September 8, 1921. The bird is recorded as being a male. The skin is well preserved, and bears the Emory Collection no. 1627.

To the best of the author's knowledge, this is the only record of this species from the Mountain Region of northern Georgia, and one of the few extant specimens from the State.—GEORGE W. SCIPLE, JR., 100 Terrace Drive, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW IN NORTHWEST GEORGIA.—On October 21, 1948 while observing swamp sparrows in a small swamp near Plainville, Gordon Co., Georgia, I collected a Lincoln's Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolni*). According to *Birds of Georgia* (Greene, et al., 1945) the Lincoln's Sparrow is a rare fall and winter transient in Georgia. So far as known this is the first bird taken in Northwest Georgia. The bird was checked with specimens in the University of Georgia collection where the specimen is now deposited.—H. V. AUTRY, *Bureau of Entomology & Plant Quarantine, 1006 Milledge Rd., Augusta, Georgia.*

BLUE GOOSE AT DEMOREST, HABERSHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA.—On November 17, 1948 I was amazed and delighted to discover a Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*) on Lake Demorest. I immediately spread the news among all local ornithologists and called Mr. W. W. Griffin of Atlanta. On November 20 he came to Demorest and watched the goose go through its paces of swimming, feeding, honking, etc. It remained on the lake until late in the afternoon of November 24. It was very calm and unwary and seemed content to feed in company with other occupants of the lake, Pied-billed Grebes and Scaups. One of the local citizens put out corn at the lake edge and in the water each night and claimed that the goose ate it. I was unable to verify this.

All other published records for the Blue Goose in the state are from extreme South Georgia, Atkinson, Camden and Grady Counties, or from the coast, Chatham County and Blackbeard Island. This record from Habersham County represents, therefore, a great extension of the known range of the species in Georgia.—MRS. CHARLES NEAL, *Demorest, Georgia.*

SIGHT RECORD OF A SNOW GOOSE AT MARIETTA, GEORGIA.—On February 28, 1949, about 2 P.M. as an Atlanta-Pine Forrest bus (which I was aboard) turned into the Victory Homes section, the call of a goose was noted. Presently a large white bird with black wing tips was clearly seen flying low and climbing slowly against a very strong northeast wind. I watched while it circled to the north until I soon lost sight of it. The color of this bird, white with black wing markings, made it easily identifiable as a Snow Goose (*Chen hyperborea*). This was a thrilling sight that I shall always remember. Other people on the bus saw the bird too.—MANILLA B. LAND, *102 Winn Street, Marietta, Georgia.*

THE PHILADELPHIA VIREO AT ATLANTA, GEORGIA.—On October 9, 1948, I observed a Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*) in some woods near my home about eight miles north of the center of Atlanta in Fulton County, Georgia. Attempting to collect the bird, I winged it and it fell to the ground. I approached within arm's length where I could see its markings clearly. I reached for the bird but missed it, and it disappeared in the most mysterious manner. I searched the area for two hours but was unable to find a trace of the bird.—RICHARD A. PARKS, *2303 Pembroke Pl., N. E., Atlanta, Ga.*

SORA RAIL NEAR ATLANTA, GEORGIA.—A Sora Rail (*Porzana carolina*) was observed by Thomas F. Davis, Jr. and me on the morning of May 2, 1948 while on a field trip to the South River area about five miles southeast of Atlanta. The region is traversed by several small streams and is partly marshy pasture with vegetation sparse in some parts. The rail was flushed 5 or 6 times from weeds

and coarse grasses and was plainly seen in bright sunlight both with and without 6x glasses at a range of from 40 to 70 feet. It seemed nervous on the ground but flew only a short distance with an apparently weak flight. This was a first record for me as the bird is rare in Atlanta and vicinity. The shape, black on the face, white tail coverts, grayish breast and distinct yellow bill were clearly seen as it walked in the weeds.—RAY C. WERNER, *758 Wildwood Rd., N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.*

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER AGAIN AT ATHENS, GEORGIA.—On September 16, 1948 a small *Empidonax* flycatcher was collected by the writer in a second-growth oak-hickory area dotted with mature pines about one mile south of Athens. The bird, an immature female, at first resembled the common Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*), but its measurements were considerably smaller than those of *virescens*. Upon examination of literature on *Empidonax* measurements I found that the measurements of this bird were closer to those of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*), and this tentative identification proved true when Dr. John W. Aldrich of the National Museum in Washington examined the bird. This is the second record for the Athens area, and the fourth record for the state, all other specimens being taken by Thos. D. Barleigh. The present specimen is now in the University of Georgia Zoology Museum bearing their number 658.—DAVID W. JOHNSTON, *Dept. of Biology, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.*

SUMMER RECORDS OF THE BLACK DUCK IN THE COASTAL PLAIN OF GEORGIA.—Davis and Johnston (*Oriole*, 12:47, 1947) reported the Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) in summer near Atlanta and Covington. They also listed a summer record in the Coastal Plain near Valdosta, but suggested that the birds seen might have been wandering Florida Ducks (*Anas fulvigula*). The following Coastal Plain records would seem of interest.

On June 5, 1948, two Black Ducks were seen in a shallow lake on the Coastal Plain side of Augusta, Richmond County.

During the week of July 11-17, 1948, I noted several scattered pairs and single birds of this species in northern Emanuel County at McKinney's Pond, a large solution lake about 4 miles southeast of Midville, Burke County. A few others were noted about large flatwoods ponds in the general area. Several birds were killed near Midville by local residents, who reported the species as not uncommon in summer in recent years.

On August 28, 1948, I had an excellent view of a single Black Duck at Miller's Pond in northern Burke County, about 5 miles southeast of McBean, Richmond County, Georgia.—WILFRED T. NEILL, *Augusta Junior College, Augusta, Georgia.*

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE CHACHALACA ON SAPELO ISLAND, GEORGIA.—The Chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*) has been included in the hypothetical list of birds for Georgia (*Birds of Georgia*, 1945). It was known to have been introduced on Sapelo Island about 1923, and it had been reported on neighboring Blackbeard Island. It has not been seen or reported for many years on Blackbeard, and it is generally agreed that it is absent at the present time on that island.

The Chachalaca may now be regarded as definitely occurring in Georgia since it has been observed at close range on Sapelo Island by Dr. E. P. Odum, Dr. Donald C. Scott, and the author. This bird is particularly interesting not only because of its rarity in Georgia, but for its limited range within the United States. It occurs naturally only in the lower reaches of the Rio Grande Valley.

The coastal islands of Georgia present many unique biological situations. In early June, 1948, I was invited to accompany a Soil Conservation Service soil survey party to Sapelo Island. Since field work was being carried out there by the field party, it afforded the author an excellent opportunity to make some limited observations on this historically rich island. At 6:55 A. M. on June 4, 1948, the strident cackling of the Chachalaca was heard at the south end of the island. It was fairly simple to locate the noisy tree-top birds. At least six birds were calling at this time. These large brown birds, which have a superficial resemblance to the female of the Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), were exhibiting a typical habit in this area of walking slowly through the tops of the large live oaks. Later during the same day three more Chachalacas were observed near the heron rookery at the north end of the island.

On July 15 some additional field work was done on the island and five birds were observed, of which at least two were new birds.

On August 11, Dr. Odum, Dr. Scott, and this observer visited the island and were able to see two Chachalacas at close range on the north tip of the island. There can be no doubt that the Chachalaca is now a breeding bird in Georgia. Young birds have been observed on many occasions by several of the permanent residents of Sapelo. Since no further introductions have been made, the birds have been maintaining themselves for a minimum of about twenty-four years.

I should like to express my appreciation and that of Dr. Odum and Dr. Scott to Mr. R. J. Reynolds, owner of Sapelo Island, for his generous hospitality and interest in our field studies and to Messrs. Frank and Tom Durant of Sapelo Plantation for their many courtesies. Mr. John B. Hungerford, Soil Scientist for the Soil Conservation Service has been particularly helpful in acquainting the author with several of the lesser known areas of south Georgia.—JAMES H. JENKINS, *State Game and Fish Commission and Department of Biology, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.*

REDDISH EGRET IN GEORGIA.—On April 20, 1877 an immature Reddish Egret (*Dichromanassa rufescens rufescens* (Gmelin)) was collected by the late William Brewster near St. Marys, Georgia. The skin is still in the collection of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Cambridge, Massachusetts, as Mr. Ludlow Griscom very kindly verified for me. I am deeply indebted to him and also to other officials of the Museum for permission to publish this record, discovered by a study of Mr. Brewster's unpublished journal of his stay at St. Marys.

I am not surprised by this record since Howell's map in "Florida Birdlife" shows a breeding colony at or near the mouth of the St. Johns River as late as 1884. The post-breeding northward migration of herons would lead one to expect some of these reached Georgia.—FREDERICK V. HEBARD, *1500 Walnut St. Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa.*

WINTER SPECIMEN OF THE BROAD-WINGED HAWK FROM ST. MARYS, GEORGIA.—According to *Birds of Georgia* (Greene, et al. 1945. P. 35) there are several winter sight records of the Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) from Georgia, but only one specimen: an adult female collected by Dr. Murphey at Augusta on Feb. 20, 1935 (Murphey, E. E. 1937. Observations on the Bird Life of the Middle Savannah Valley, 1890-1937. P. 13). In the Isaac F. Arnow collection recently donated to the University of Georgia Museum there is a second winter specimen of this bird taken by Arnow December 29, 1902, at St. Marys, Camden County, Georgia. This bird (University of Ga. No. 533), a young female, has been compared with other Broad-winged and Red-shouldered Hawks (*Buteo lineatus*) in the collection. The first three primaries of the Broad-wing are whitish basally and blackish on the tips, exactly as are shown on page 223 of Frank M. Chapman's "Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America", while these primaries on Red-shouldered Hawks have several narrow brownish bars on a white background and are dark brown terminally. The tail is quite unlike the conspicuous black and white barring on summer adult Broad-wings. There is one dark band on the tip and the remainder of the tail is lightly barred, similar to, but not as prominently as in the Red-shouldered Hawk.—DAVID W. JOHNSTON, *Department of Biology, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.*

NEW LITERATURE

FLIGHT INTO SUNSHINE.—By Helen G. Cruickshank. The Macmillan Co., New York. p. 132, figs. 1-121, October 5, 1948. \$5.00.

This well-written book is an account of a several months trip through Florida taken by Mr. and Mrs. Cruickshank for the purpose of photographing birds and should have a wide appeal to those who like their nature books well-diluted with personal anecdotes and travelogue descriptions. The principal attention was devoted to rookeries of herons, ibises, etc., and the author has given us a wealth of detail from her observations of these interesting and often little known birds. Her story includes also many vivid comments on plants and animals encountered in the search for bird subjects and the reader becomes very familiar with the whole picture of swamp habitat complete with heat, mosquitoes and cottonmouth moccasins. She brings to our attention minutia of bird plumage and behavior impossible to observe except by spending long hours in a blind but she is at her best in describing the sweep and majesty of flight patterns of the big cranes across the Florida sky.

The long fight for conservation waged by the Audubon Society nowhere shows more dramatic and successful results than in the population figures of the Florida rookeries. Mrs. Cruickshank very properly underlines this and demonstrates by accounts of recent slaughters the need for continued and constant vigilant protection.

Needless to say, Mr. Cruickshank's photographs are beautiful and exciting and his wife's emphasis on the physical difficulties he encountered in obtaining them adds to the reader's appreciation.—D.P.N.

HOW TO KNOW BIRDS.—By Roger Tory Peterson. Mentor Books, 1949. Paper cover, 7¼"x4¼", VII + 141 pp. 400 illustrations. 35 cents.

In the preface to this book Mr. Peterson states that it "was written mostly for those who have never had a bird guide before," and it should prove very successful in serving that purpose. The famous *Field Guide* has been "boiled down" and further simplified to make this elementary and introductory volume. The birds included are about one-half of the species found in Eastern North America and are discussed under the heading "What to Look For," "Bird Families" and "Habitats." The book is profusely illustrated with Mr. Peterson's usual, excellent black and white sketches.

Although necessarily limited in scope, this little book is admirably arranged to serve as a starting point into the field of bird study for in it Mr. Peterson again proves himself to be the perfect teacher, always understanding the point of difficulty, never confusing with unnecessary detail and always stimulating a desire for further knowledge. Teachers, scout leaders and all who know someone who wants to "know the birds" will do well to investigate this booklet.—D.P.N.

NEWS AND COMMENTS

SPRING MEETING.—The twentieth semi-annual meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society was held in Statesboro, Georgia, on April 2-3, 1949, with a total registration of 60 members and guests. Members assembled and registered in the Biology Building of the Georgia Teachers College during the rainy afternoon. Informal discussions and examination of exhibits consumed the time until 6 P. M. when supper, which was planned for out-of-doors, was served in the same building. At 7 o'clock the group adjourned to the visual education room for a brief business meeting.

Mr. William Griffin, President, called the meeting to order. The minutes were read and approved with corrections. The Nominating Committee distributed blanks to permit members to nominate a slate of officers for election at the fall meeting. During a discussion of the place of the fall meeting, Mrs. Tom Cater read a letter from L. B. Wilson, Mayor of Macon, inviting the Society to meet there in the fall. On motion it was voted that the fall meeting be held in Macon. The Education Committee, Mabel T. Rogers, Chairman, reported that it had initiated work through the garden and 4-H clubs. The three field trips outlined for the next morning were discussed by Miss Malvina Trussell. The Treasurer, Ray Werner, reported \$120 on hand.

The President then called on Mr. Harold Peters of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. Peters mentioned two new books: Chamberlain and Sprunt on South Carolina Birds, and Burleigh and Peters, "Birds of Newfoundland". He described the project he is to assist with on a study of the Mourning Dove in the Southeastern States. There are two phases to this project: (1) intensive banding, (2) study of the age of doves shot by hunters. Mr. Peters brought greetings from Mr. Tom Burleigh in Moscow, Idaho and from Dr. Harry C. Oberholser who had been in Charleston.

Mr. Griffin then announced that Mr. Peters had been elected a member and Mr. Burleigh a fellow of the A.O.U. Thanks were expressed to Miss Trussell and her efficient group for the splendid arrangements and gracious hospitality.

Dr. Paul Kellogg, of Cornell University, then told of the frog recordings Dr. Arthur Allen and he had made. Recordings of the songs of frogs and toads have been made since 1929. In that time they have recorded the voices of 25 different frogs. Many of the members had heard the recent recordings during the afternoon when the live frogs in the laboratory answered their brothers.

Following the business meeting the group assembled in the auditorium where Miss Trussell introduced Dr. Arthur Allen of Cornell University. Dr. Allen spoke briefly and showed colored moving pictures of the search and discovery of the breeding grounds and nest of the Bristle-thighed Curlew in Alaska. The expedition made by Dr. Allen and three others was under the auspices of the National Geographic Society.

On Sunday morning the three groups went out at 7:30 to the swamp, the pond and high lands and the campus to regroup at 11:30 at the home of Miss Trussell for a delicious lunch and the pooling of the count of species. Ninety-one kinds of birds were seen including all of the herons except the Louisiana, all of the woodpeckers except the Red-cockaded, sixteen warblers and all four vireos. Nests of the Bluebird, the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and the Brown-headed Nuthatch were observed.

DUES.—We regret that this issue of *The Oriole* is so late appearing. Many circumstances, among them failure of the membership to cooperate, are responsible for this delay. Another issue, July, of *The Oriole* is in press and will be mailed to members soon. BUT only to those who have paid their dues for 1949. The excessive cost of publication prohibits sending the journal to those who have not paid. Please send your checks to Mr. Werner immediately so that there will be no delay in receiving your *Oriole*.