

THE ORIOLE

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



Vol. XV

MARCH, 1950

No. 1

THE ORIOLE

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ST. MARY'S, GEORGIA: 1877

FROM THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM BREWSTER

EDITED BY FREDERICK V. HEBARD

(Published with the permission of the authorities of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, where the original journal is lodged. The journal is here copied almost verbatim except for the substitution of presently used English names for the scientific nomenclature normally employed by Brewster and the omission of some lists of birds collected or observed where no life history notes are appended. Figures in parentheses are the page numbers of the original journal. The manuscript was typed by Elizabeth Fales Hebard, a great-niece of Smith Owen Dexter, editor of Brewster's *October Farm*.—FREDERICK V. HEBARD)

(73) Thursday, April 5. Clear and a fine day with bracing N. W. wind. The steamer started up river at nine and we arrived at St. Mary's by 10:30. Went at once to "Orange Hall" where we were established in two fine large rooms that opened into one another. The house is a fine old planter's mansion with beautiful gardens and grounds ornamented with various exotic and native trees and shrubs. Spent most of the day about the house getting our things in order, writing, etc. As we sat smoking on the spacious veranda after dinner, I was intensely interested in the chameleons. The balcony and pillars in front are over-run with fine luxuriant ivy and trumpet vine and these beautiful lizards bounded among the leaves. When all was still, one would run out into the sunshine on the floor of the veranda—then dart back again as nimbly as a squirrel. I saw them change to three (74) different colors, viz. light but intense green; light brown; and dark clove brown—nearly black. This change may be accomplished in two or three seconds or it may be extended through minutes. Sometimes the body will change to green, the tail remaining brown. The skin about the eyes frequently changed suddenly to bright blue, then back to brown again. The color is adapted evidently to natural surroundings but is not in any way produced by them. *Of this I am sure*, for I saw one run out three or four yards on the brown piazza floor and remain there many minutes without in the least paling his intense green. They tilt their bodies up and down on their four feet and blow the skin of the throat in a bright scarlet sac. When two came together once, they raised a conspicuous crest on the back of their necks and threatened one another (75) with

various menaces. Just before sunset I rambled about a little outside the town. I was much pleased at establishing—what I have so long suspected—as a fact, viz. that the warbler heard singing on the Wekiva and since is really the Yellow-throated Warbler. I heard him today all along the streets in the moss hung live oaks and finally caught him in the act. The garden is full of Mockingbirds. I saw also a Ruby-throated Hummingbird around the trumpet vine flowers and numerous flocks of Cedar Waxwings feeding on the mistletoe berries! Mr. Gale has four or five Towhees in a cage. They have all red eyes. The trees that form a hedge around the garden are all overrun by the Cherokee roses in fullest bloom and the trumpet vine runs all over the tallest live oaks. I heard a Chuck-will's-widow this evening.

(76) Friday, April 6. Clear and warm. Thermometer 80° at noon. Started immediately after breakfast and took the road through the cemetery. I had gone not over one-eighth of a mile when I heard a Yellow-throated Warbler singing on the edge of a hummock and, striking across a field, I shot both him and his mate from a pine just outside the woods. Next a Red-bellied Woodpecker lit overhead and in a few minutes another—both males. Their ordinary note is almost exactly like that of a Purple Grackle; they also utter almost precisely the same note as one of the Flicker—a rolling *wor-to-too*. Entering the hummock I found a splendid place for birds and filled with them too. It was a grand old forest of live oaks and magnolias, pretty open underneath, with numerous little pools surrounded by thick underbrush. Around these pools were little companies of birds, most of them silent, but White-eyed Vireos singing in all directions. (77) I shot a Prothonotary Warbler from the top of a tall bush and noted nothing peculiar about its motions. Hooded Warblers were in little companies with Redstarts and occasionally one would sing in an undertone. They kept very low down and often lit on the ground. I heard a number of Pileated Woodpeckers and one Crested Flycatcher. In the piney woods outside the hummock I heard numbers of Prairie Warblers singing. Saw a few Palm Warblers and, shooting one, found a typical Western and in nearly perfect plumage. Kingbirds were abundant and the *peto, peto* of the Tufted Titmouse came up from the cedar swamps. Saw Black and White Warblers and White-throated Sparrows in numbers, Field and Chipping Sparrows and Downy Woodpeckers. Got in by 11:30 and finished up all my birds by six p. m. In the garden I saw a Loggerhead Shrike sitting on top of an orange tree, uttering continually his blue-jay-like note. Chimney Swifts appeared over the town this evening. The woods are full of butterflies.

(78) Saturday, April 7. Clear and very warm. Started out immediately after breakfast with S(tone). Went over to Mr. Fordham's farm and found a splendid ground there, the trees fairly alive with birds. On the way back I went through the swamp where I was yesterday but all the birds had left. I shot a typical Yellow Palm Warbler from the same tree

where I shot a typical Western Palm Warbler yesterday. There were indeed several of the latter variety with it this morning. I can easily distinguish the two varieties a gun shot off. The White-eyed Vireo is one of the most abundant birds here. They sing very differently from the northern bird and hardly two individuals sing alike. They show much talent for mimicry and deceive me often. One that I shot imitated a Chuck-will's-widow very closely; another a Loggerhead Shrike. The Yellow-throated Warbler is common but hard to obtain. They are found almost invariably (79) in pine woods and have very nearly the habits of Pine Warblers. The song resembles the Nashville Warbler's most closely but is much sweeter and the prettiest *Dendroica's* song I know. My rendering of it in words was inaccurate. Carolina Chickadees were abundant in the oak scrub. The males were singing as in Virginia and a prettier little song I have rarely ever heard. It is of four syllables and has a wild clear ring. I should compare it as in Virginia to the song of a Black-throated Green Warbler but the performance of one individual recalled the Meadowlark's whistle. A female that S. shot had laid all her eggs and was sitting. A Red-eyed Vireo was singing in the tall buttonwoods in the village. The Yellow-throated Warbler will lay soon. I dissected a female that had eggs nearly half size. There were immense flocks of birds in the oak scrub most of them Parula and Prairie Warblers, both singing. The Orange-crowned Warbler was in a thicket and silent. I shot an immature night heron in ragged plumage. Hummingbirds are abundant in our garden and Cedar Waxwings fairly swarm in the wild olive trees. Saw a Veery, an arrival probably. Heard a Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the oak scrub.

(80) Sunday, April 8. Rained hard last night and a heavy thunderstorm this forenoon. After breakfast walked over to Mr. Fordham's nephew's place. Saw several Mourning Doves and a flock of Meadowlarks. Crested Flycatchers have become abundant and are very noisy in the trees around the house. As I write, I can hear Yellow-throated Warblers singing in various directions. Blue Jays are abundant in the gardens and are very tame. Mockingbirds fairly swarm and some of them are lovely singers. Both buzzards are present in nearly equal numbers but they are not so abundant nearby as in Florida. Some Purple Martins are building their nests in the angle formed by the roof and cornice of our house. The orange trees are going out of blossom at last, but the trumpet vine, the Cherokee rose, the Pride of China and the red honeysuckle are still in their full glory. Cardinal Grosbeaks are not common and confined almost exclusively to the garden. Saw a fine male Summer Tanager in the olive hedge just before sunset. He uttered a low four-syllable call.

(81) Monday, April 9. Clear and cool. Wind N. W. Woke at daylight to hear the Chuck-will's-widow singing in the distance. Rose and going out into the garden shot a fine adult male Orchard Oriole that was singing in the wild olives. His note—as recorded in 1874—is exactly

like the *cac* of the Red-wing. The Summer Tanager was also singing in the fine Spanish oak across the street. His song was *almost indistinguishable* from that of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, but, though he sang at intervals through the day, it was always in an undertone and I could not hear it distinctly. After breakfast we got off and spent the forenoon around "Borel." Birds of all kinds were unaccountably scarce and entirely silent. S. had the luck to kill a fine Chuck-will's-widow. He flushed him from the scrub palmetto under some pines. His crop was fairly crammed with (82) insects, mostly *Coleoptera*. The generative organs were in the highest state of development. I shot a pair of Parula Warblers, the female of which was building her nest in a long streamer of Spanish moss. Upon dissecting I found several eggs in the ovaries nearly half size. The individuals of this species are here grouped into two classes: the migrants bound north keep in the scrub oaks in large flocks and in company with Ruby-crowned Kinglets and do not sing. The local individuals, on the contrary, are found in the swampy hummocks where the long moss grows most thickly and the males sing day after day from favorite stations in the tall trees. Heard multitudes of marsh wrens calling in the marshes around "Borel." Saw one little flock of Myrtle Warblers. Loggerhead (83) Shrikes are always tame, almost to stupidity. Mr. Fordham tells me he has caught adult birds in his hand. Their note is very like a Blue Jay's. Blue Jays are almost as tame here as the Shrike and I can get within a few yards of them. I saw three Hermit Thrushes and shot one. After supper I went out after Chuck-will's but did not get a shot though I heard numbers of them. They sang for the most part in the swamp pine woods. I got quite near one that uttered repeatedly a short *chuck*, *hick* and as a male was singing steadily a little way off I thought it might be the female. Their notes are very loud and can be heard at least three-quarters of a mile. When within two hundred yards they say *chuck*, *will*, *widow* very distinctly. At a distance it sounds more like *chuck*, *willow-willow*. Crickets chirping all night as in the North.

(84) Tuesday, April 10. Cloudy and cold. Thermometer 50° at sunrise. Got off at the usual time striking north through Clarksville, a sort of suburban Negro village. Found a fine country for birds beyond in the pine wood—not such piney woods as the open ones in Florida, for the trees grow more thickly and there was a thick undergrowth of scrub palmetto. The first birds that I shot were a pair of Summer Tanagers. They were together in the pines near a swamp of young cypress trees, and in flight and motions resembled Scarlet Tanagers and were quite as tame. A female Brown-headed Nuthatch which I dissected was evidently incubating. Their notes are peculiar to a degree that entirely baffles description. They are very noisy and keep up a constant twittering. Yellow-throated Warblers are just getting ready to build. Pine Warblers were also (85) abundant here and Crested Flycatchers are common everywhere, even among the pines. I heard

a Mourning Dove cooing for the first time since I was in Virginia in 1874 and its deep, mourning notes carried me back to those happy old days. I see or hear about one Carolina Wren each day I am in the woods.

(86)

A Georgia salt marsh.

Wednesday, April 11, Wind N. E. All the people at "Orange Hall" made up a party for "Dungenness" this morning but, after waiting on the wharf three hours for a steamer that did not appear, we gave it up. After dinner S. and I hired a skiff of "a Modoc," as Mr. Gale calls the colored gentry and, crossing the creek, went to work to investigate the salt marsh below the town. I soon got up a Clapper Rail from a clump of tall grass and broke its wing. It ran so nimbly and hid so closely that I caught it with extreme difficulty. I afterwards saw two more, one of which walked out of the tall grass into the open marsh and stood gazing at us until S. fired and missed him and he dove back like a flash of light. The reeds were literally alive, to judge from the noise they made at intervals. Their notes are very like those of the Virginia Rail, but rather louder and harsher. Most of the marsh was open with short grass springing up, but interspersed through it, were beds (87) of tall reeds some five feet high, each blade ending in a point as sharp and hard as a needle. In the reeds, besides the rails, were innumerable Seaside Sparrows and a few Long-billed Marsh Wrens. The sparrows were in full song, the males uttering their notes usually while perched on the tops of the reeds. Their song is simple consisting of only two notes but quite musical. Every now and then one would mount up into the air to the height of a few rods and sing continuously as he descended commencing as usual and ending in a fine liquid warble. When approached, they hid in the reeds and flushed only when nearly trodden on. Their flight was exactly like that of a Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The females were incubating. The nest was woven prettily in between (88) the upright reeds about twelve inches above the ground and containing four eggs. In the next clump I came to I found three nests with four—three—three eggs, all within a few rods of each other. I afterwards found two more with three eggs. All these nests were built within a few feet of open spaces—not in the ranker growth. With the exception of the first the birds left them before I came to the spot. Those with four eggs were all incubated four or five days. Those with three were fresh. The birds showed not the slightest solicitude. I shot one Sharp-tailed Sparrow in the very middle of the moult and saw another, also one Savannah Sparrow, both these last on the open marsh. Saw Boat-tailed Grackle, Red-wing, Spotted Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper (?), Upland Plover, Fish Crow, Semipalmated Plover and Palm Warbler. A flock of about twelve Orchard Orioles in the garden.

(89) Thursday, April 12. Clear and rather warm. Rained in the evening. S. went over to "Dungenness" with the rest and spent the day.

I felt tired and stayed at home blowing eggs and skinning my birds. Spent part of the forenoon in the garden and shot a young male Orchard Oriole. They kept coming to suck the honey from the trumpet flowers, and I spent a good deal of time trying to shoot them. They would hide among the leaves peeping out now and then but always drawing back before I could fire. They resemble Baltimore Orioles in their motions except for their unique habit of jerking the long tail. The males sang very finely. Some passages recall the Baltimore's but it is infinitely a finer performance. Their ordinary note is exactly like the *cac* of the Red-wing. They have also a soft, low note very like the Bluebird or perhaps more like the fall note of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak. I heard a Summer Tanager in the next place this morning.

(90) *Second tramp over the salt marsh.*

Friday, April 13. Clear with wind blowing a gale from the S. W. Started off alone after breakfast crossing the creek in Jack's skiff. Went to work at once on the salt marsh to hunt for nests of the Seaside Sparrows. Found only three during the whole forenoon, each containing four eggs. Two of these were built nearly on top of beds of matted reeds and so exposed that I saw them several yards away. One nest was apparently deserted: the female birds sat rather closely on the two others but flew off silently when flushed. The males were singing everywhere: their notes resembled the Long-billed Marsh Wren's more than any other birds. I started three small rails. I secured one—the finest female Sora that I ever saw. One of the others I thought was a Yellow Rail but I am not sure. While wading some flooded reeds, an animal about the size of a (91) muskrat started under my feet. I trod on its *bushy* tail when it turned on me fiercely and bit at my boot compelling me to let it go when it escaped into some thicker reeds. It emitted a strong *weasel* odor and was apparently deep buff in color. I saw a number of Sharp-tailed Sparrows. Saw also Savannah Sparrows. Large companies of swallows were skimming over the marsh: most of them Tree Swallows, a few Barn Swallows. I also saw a flock of six Little Blue Herons, all white immature birds. Coming home at noon I was crossing the creek in a skiff when a flock of at least seventy-five White Ibis came flying swiftly overhead in a massive column. I shot almost too late and brought down one at long range. He was only wounded and bit and struck at me with all his strength which was not great. His iris was a lovely pale blue. The bare skin of the head, the tarsi and feet were the deepest blood red which faded just as soon as I killed him. His stomach contained the claw of a fiddler crab.

(To be continued)

GENERAL NOTES

PURPLE SANDPIPERS WINTERING IN GEORGIA. — In *Birds of Georgia* (Greene, *et al.*, 1945) the Purple Sandpiper (*Arquatella maritima*) is placed on the hypothetical list on the basis of a single specimen in the Sennett Collection, American Museum of Natural History, which is labeled "Georgia, 1874" without definite locality. Recently, however, Amadon (*Oriole* 14:20, 1949) has shown that this specimen was actually obtained in New Brunswick. Aside from a specimen from Charleston Harbor, South Carolina in 1939, a sight record a few miles north of there ten years earlier, and two specimens from Florida dated 1857 and 1866, there are few records south of New Jersey.

It is therefore a pleasure to report two females (my numbers 680 and 681) collected on Tybee Island on December 26, 1949, from a group of five resting with other shore birds high on the sand over a high tide that completely covered the jetties at the mouth of the Savannah River a mile or so to the northward. On the following day three, possibly the remaining ones, were again resting in the same place.

Having considered the jetties the only likely place and planned for a long time to inspect them some time in mid-winter for this species, I was a little chagrined a week later (January 2, 1950) to find a group of ten feeding on one of the shore protection groins halfway down the front beach, and a single bird a mile farther down. Again on January 7, 1950, there were seven feeding on the first mentioned groin, and three on another one, though in neither case was it possible to inspect all the groins along the beach. The embarrassing thing about it was that these groins have not been looked over very carefully in other winters.

At any rate, we have a considerable number of these northern sandpipers staying and feeding over quite a period this winter. It is certainly not an accidental occurrence, and not caused by too cold weather in their usual range, for it would not be necessary for them to come clear to Georgia to find some relief from the New England climate. I am inclined to postulate a migration previously unnoticed, to suitable habitat, but only a great many observations will clear that up. It is definitely in order to examine all wave washed jetties and breakwaters in these South Atlantic States.

The birds feed with the turnstones, and resemble dark short-legged Red-backed Sandpipers, except that the purplish back and striping on the sides, the yellowish legs and yellowish basal half of the bill, clearly distinguish them. When feeding on the sides of the steel and timber groins, they often feed on the wing, butterfly-like.—IVAN R. TOMKINS, 1231 East 50th Street, Savannah, Georgia.

A SECOND GEORGIA SPECIMEN OF CABOT'S TERN.—While investigating the bird life on the sand spit in the mouth of Saint Andrew's Sound, Glynn County, Georgia, the writer collected on September 4, 1949, a specimen of Cabot's Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*). The bird was resting on a narrow bar in the midst of a group of gulls, terns, and Black Skimmers. It was accompanied by four other individuals of the same species. The specimen collected proved, upon dissection, to be a male. A skin was prepared by William W. Griffin, and the specimen now remains in his collection.

Birds of Georgia (Greene, et al., 1945) notes as previously taken within the state only one bird of this species. This bird, a male, was collected at Wolf Island, Georgia, on September 27, 1892. This specimen is listed as now resident in the collection of Dr. Eugene E. Murphey. In addition to this specimen, there is a sight record by Ivan R. Tomkins. Three birds of this species were seen by Tomkins in Buttermilk Sound and St. Simon's Sound on August 25 and 27, 1942.—GEORGE W. SCIPLE, 100 Terrace Drive, N. E., Atlanta 5, Georgia.

BLUE GOOSE AND SANDHILL CRANE IN JONES COUNTY, GEORGIA.—On November 13, 1949, a Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*) in juvenile plumage was found dead in the water at Five Points Lake on the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge. The bird which had been dead for two or three days died from a breast shot believed to have been received prior to the time it reached the Refuge. This constitutes a new record for the Refuge and is the second record for the occurrence of this species in the Piedmont region of the state (see Neal, *Oriole* 14: 10, 1949).

About 9:30 on the morning of October 31, 1949, a flock of 15 Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) was seen flying over the Refuge. These birds were flying south about 200 feet from the ground beneath a heavy overcast of low lying clouds. This is the second record for the occurrence of this species over the Refuge, a flock of 15 having been seen by Raymond J. Fleetwood on November 1, 1942 (*Oriole* 7: 34, 1942). It is interesting that this flock contained the same number of birds as that observed by Fleetwood and passed over just one day earlier. One would wonder if it were not the same flock.—DONALD R. AMBROSEN, Refuge Manager, Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, Round Oak, Georgia.

COWBIRD BREEDING IN ATLANTA.—On May 19, 1949, I found the nest of a pair of Hooded Warblers (*Wilsonia citrina*) which contained one young warbler, one young Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), and one unhatched egg. The nest was located near the North Fork of Peachtree Creek about five miles from the center of Atlanta in Fulton County. The birds appeared to be three or four days old. The Cowbird was easily three times as large as the young warbler. On May 24 both birds

left the nest, and the Cowbird was collected. Although I was in the area almost daily, no adult Cowbirds were seen. This is but the second breeding record of the Cowbird for Georgia, Denton having found a Cowbird egg in an Indigo Bunting nest at Augusta on July 12, 1945 (*Oriole*, 11:24-27, 1946).—RICHARD A. PARKS, 2303 Pembroke Place, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.

WHISTLING SWAN AND RED-BACKED SANDPIPER AGAIN AT AUGUSTA, GEORGIA.—On November 21, 1949, a Whistling Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) was collected by the writer on the Georgia side of the Savannah River five miles below Augusta, Richmond County, Georgia. The bird was a juvenile, sex undetermined, in good condition. When first noted the bird was resting alone near the bank. This is the second record of the occurrence of this swan on the Savannah River near Augusta, a male in immature plumage having been taken January 1, 1945 (see Murphey, *Oriole* 10: 12, 1945).

A female Red-backed Sandpiper (*Erolia alpina*) was taken by the writer November 6, 1949, at one of the local brick-yard ponds. There is one previous record of the occurrence of this species at Augusta, a bird that was present from November 1, 1942, until found dead on November 8 (see Denton, *Oriole* 7: 34-35, 1942).—C. A. BELGER, 539 Tubman Street, Augusta, Georgia.

FORSTER'S TERN AT AUGUSTA, RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA.—On February 15, 1946, an immature male Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*) was collected at the brick-yard ponds near Augusta by Clarence Belger. Since the bird was immature and in winter plumage its identity remained uncertain until recently when it was sent to Dr. Herbert Friedmann of the U. S. National Museum who kindly identified it as this species.

This is the first record of the occurrence of Forster's Tern in Richmond County as well as the first record of its occurrence anywhere in the interior of the state. The writer is grateful to Mr. Belger for permitting him to report this record.—J. FRED DENTON, 1510 Pendleton Road, Augusta, Georgia.

GLOSSY IBIS BREEDING IN GEORGIA.—The Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) is on the Georgia hypothetical list as the result of sight records of Tomkins in Chatham County and Sprunt on Cumberland Island (see Greene, et al., *Birds of Georgia*, 1945). Specimens have been taken from Nova Scotia, Quebec, several New England states, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey (Bent, *Life Histories of North American Birds*, U. S. N. M. Bull. 135: 51, 1926), so the taking of a specimen in Georgia is to be expected.

On April 27, 1947, my wife discovered the St. Mary's Rookery, probably resulting from the displacement of birds at the great Amelia

Island Rookery by the Naval Air Base. Not being properly dressed we could not go into the rookery that day but saw a number of dark ibis. All those I saw in my glass had white backs so were White Ibis (*Guara alba*) of the previous year. However, both my wife and John W. Burch were confident they saw a number of dark ibis without white backs. We returned the next day with gun and camera and of course found no dark ibis. May 29, 1947, I spent most of the day with Burch in the rookery. After lunch we saw two dark ibis on which we could see no white on their backs fly into the south end of the rookery. The next day Herbert L. Stoddard and I saw no dark ibises. The next year on April 21 and 26 all dark birds seen at the rookery had white backs. On May 25, 1949, Joseph B. McCall, Jr., was taken into the rookery by Burch and took a colored moving picture of a nest of ibises, each young of which had a white patch on its crown. Burch says this nest contained the only young ibises with white on their heads he has ever seen. He said the nest was in the middle of the rookery which is composed of White Ibises, American Egrets, Snowy Egrets, Little Blue Herons, Louisiana Herons and Black-crowned Night Herons. I believe the Glossy Ibis must be added to the Georgia list as a rare breeder and probable transient, since a nestling Glossy Ibis has a white patch on the crown and the nestling White Ibis has none.—FREDERICK V. HEBARD, 1500 Walnut Street Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

NOTES FROM FLOYD COUNTY, GEORGIA. — During the latter part of August, 1949, the writer spent four days in the field near Rome in Floyd County, Georgia. Among the interesting birds seen were several which seem to be noteworthy:

Yellow-crowned Night Heron: *Nyctanassa violacea*. One immature bird of this species was observed on August 21 feeding leisurely along the banks of Armuchee Creek seven miles north of the center of Rome. Jones (*Oriole*, 7:1-5, 1942; 9:1-2, 1944) does not include this species in his list of water birds of Mt. Berry, and it is generally a scarce late summer wanderer in northern Georgia.

Semipalmated Plover: *Charadrius hiaticula*. On August 29 a single individual was seen on a muddy bar at the edge of Lake Arrowhead, a small artificial pond near Floyd Springs, 12 miles north of Rome. This is another species which has not previously been reported from the region (see Jones, *op. cit.*).

Dowitcher: *Limnodromus griseus*. On August 28 the writer was surprised to find a single bird of this species probing the mud at the edge of Lake Arrowhead. This bird, a moderately fat male in breeding plumage, was collected in order to verify the identification. The specimen now remains in the writer's collection and is the second to be collected in the interior of Georgia (see Greene, *et al.*, *Birds of Georgia*, 1945).

Horned Lark: *Eremophila alpestris*. On August 28 a group of five birds was seen at Russell Field, an airport seven miles north of Rome. One adult male in the process of molting was collected and now remains in the writer's collection. The following day the remaining four birds were still at the airport, which offers ideal habitat for this species. The occurrence of this group in August is the first evidence suggesting that the species breeds in Georgia.—WILLIAM W. GRIFFIN, 304 Grant Building, Atlanta 3, Georgia.

NEWS AND COMMENTS

SPRING MEETING AT SAVANNAH. — The 22nd semi-annual meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society will be held at Savannah, Georgia, on April 22 and 23, 1950. Headquarters will be the DeSoto Beach Hotel located on the beach at Tybee Island.

As is the custom at spring meetings, activities will center around field work. Migration will be at its peak at this time, and excellent opportunities to observe the coastal birds will be afforded. At the evening session on Saturday, E. Burnham Chamberlain, Curator of Zoology, Charleston Museum, and co-author of the recently published *South Carolina Bird Life*, will make a short talk.

Reservation cards will be sent to all members shortly before the meeting. All who plan to attend should return them promptly in order that the local committee on arrangements may make the necessary preparations.

NEWS OF MEMBERS AND FRIENDS. — THOMAS D. BURLEIGH reports from Moscow, Idaho, that work on his forthcoming treatise on Georgia birds is progressing steadily and that completion of the first draft is expected by July of this year. J. FRED DENTON, our president, needs more detailed notes from more ornithologists over the state for his digested Southeastern Coastal Region seasonal report published four times a year in *Audubon Field Notes*. In this issue of *The Oriole*, IVAN R. TOMKINS adds the Purple Sandpiper to the Georgia list. For Ivan's information this is the ninth species definitely added by him; he probably has never bothered to count them. Two of our active members are serving the American Ornithologists' Union in important capacities during the year 1950: FREDERICK V. HEBARD was elected an Investing Trustee for this year, and HERBERT L. STODDARD is a member of the Council, the chief governing body, in addition to being a member of the Committee on Finance.

EDITORIAL

Did you ever stop to think of the number of individuals *The Oriole* reaches? Any printed periodical such as ours finds its way into public libraries, not only in Georgia, but throughout the United States. A considerable number of university libraries subscribe. Through the medium of exchange our journal is sent to the libraries of all the leading ornithological societies in the country. Thus the number of persons to whom each issue is made available immediately upon distribution is considerably greater than the actual number of copies printed.

In addition each issue of *The Oriole* is a permanent record—a great deal different from the sort of magazine that ends up in paper sale or furnace. Successive issues are bound into books every five years and kept on file in libraries, public and private, over the United States. Through listings in such important periodicals as *Biological Abstracts*, *The Auk* and *The Wilson Bulletin*, through bibliographies and references in other publications and through our own five-year indices, any material published in *The Oriole* may be easily located by the interested ornithologist. Therefore, during the months and years following its publication each issue reaches an ever increasing number of readers.

The point we wish to emphasize is that *The Oriole* occupies that reference-shelf position which enables it to be read and reread by a goodly number of ornithologists over the nation. The reason this position has been gained is obvious: it has been the policy of past editors to publish material that adds to our total store of printed knowledge rather than drawing from it, material that is the result of original work and thought, material not duplicated elsewhere. It will be the endeavor of your new editors to continue this policy.