

# THE ORIOLE

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



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No. 3

# THE ORIOLE

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## CONTENTS

ST. MARY'S, GEORGIA: 1877. From the Journal of  
William Brewster. Edited by Frederick V. Hebard . . . . . 25

GENERAL NOTES . . . . . 30

NEWS AND COMMENTS . . . . . 36

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## ST. MARY'S, GEORGIA: 1877

FROM THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM BREWSTER

EDITED BY FREDERICK V. HEBARD

(This is the last of three installments published in *The Oriole* from the famous ornithologist's journal for 1877. As in the first two installments Mr. Hebard has here copied almost verbatim from the journal. Figures in parentheses are the page numbers of the original journal.—EDS.)

(112) Monday, April 23. Clear and Warm. Off after breakfast walking over to "Borel" with S. In a strip of scrub palmetto and live oak scrub on the western edge of the clearing I shot my first Nonpareil, a very fine male. It was silent and shy but I recognized it at a glance. Came home by way of the "bay gall." I proved conclusively that the whistling sound of wings produced by the Acadian Flycatcher is *vocal*, for a wounded one uttered it while I held it in my hands. The Yellow-billed Cuckoo is now very abundant everywhere. Cedarbirds are nearly all gone. Redstarts and Black and White Warblers I have not seen since the first few days. Palm and Myrtle Warblers are still here in small numbers. I saw a single Rough-winged Swallow today, the only one for some time. Saw three male Black-throated Blue Warblers, all up high in the bay trees. The Crested Flycatcher is the commonest flycatcher here and is found everywhere—in pine woods, gardens and hummocks.

(113) *Trip to "Dungeness"*

Tuesday, April 24. Clear and warm. Started off with S. for all day in Mike's sailboat. Ran down to the mouth of the river with fair wind and tide and then kept to the south'ard 'til we came to Tiger Island beach where we landed. I got a shot into the flock of Skimmers off the beach and killed three. When we landed, I found one apparently wounded for it could not fly. I caught it and brought it home alive. It is in my room as I write. It stands exactly like a tern and runs prettily over the straw matting with short, mincing steps. When I advance my hand, it snaps its bill sharply and bit me tonight so fiercely that it almost drew blood. I also shot two Willets on the beach. After that I crossed



the marsh to a clump of live oak trees where I found a colony of about twenty pairs of Boat-tailed Grackles breeding. Their nests were built in the trees at or near the tops and some twenty-five feet up. They were (114) suspended among the fine twigs. I succeeded in reaching only two which contained respectively only one and two eggs. The birds were quite shy and showed but little solicitude. I also found a nest of a Loggerhead Shrike among the thorny twigs of a scraggly, isolated live oak. The female was sitting on five eggs and flew off in silence. We saw Ruddy Turnstones. Saw also the same flock of small white herons (Snowy Egrets?). They flew in a close body and fed in the flats of the low tide. At noon we started for Cumberland Island where we landed, visited the picturesque ruins of "Dungeness," saw fine specimens of the date palm and sago palm in the garden, and then walked across the island through a most enchanting avenue cut through the live oaks to the beach. There we stayed a little while watching the foam-crested (115) breakers rolling in. There were no birds at all on the shore there. The vegetation behind the sand hills rises before the eye like a solid floor of green. Coming back through the woods I noticed Cardinals really abundant, the first time I have found it so in the South. Saw also several pairs of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and shot a Worm-eating Warbler in the oaks. Also heard two Nonpareils *singing*. Their song is quite pretty though feeble. It is almost exactly like that of the Canada Warbler though less strong and emphatic. White-eyed Vireos were very abundant. Saw also two Black and White Warblers and several Black-throated Blue Warblers. Got back to St. Mary's at six p. m. Coming up the river the high tide had flooded the marshes and thousands of Seaside Sparrows and Long-billed Marsh Wrens were singing from the tops of the grasses. Saw also numbers of Swamp Sparrows. The marsh exhibits now various colorings from the different growths and kinds of grasses—light yellowish green, olive green, brown and dark green forming beautiful contrasts.

(116) Wednesday, April 25, clear and warm. Spent the a. m. in the house skinning the birds shot yesterday. About four p. m. I started out alone going through "bay gall" first. Then struck over to "Borel." Saw two Black-poll Warblers, a pair of Black and White Warblers and one Redstart. Just at sunset I started a little company of Bobolinks on the edge of the salt marsh of "Borel." Then in a sandy field I also shot a Grasshopper Sparrow. I had seen them elsewhere before. I saw a White-eyed Towhee in the scrub and heard it singing. Its notes are all higher and feebler than those of the Red-eyed Towhee but similar. I heard at sunset a male Summer Tanager singing from the top of a tall pine. Its song I now on better acquaintance think most closely resembles the Robin's. The Acadian Flycatcher is *very* tame. It has one note almost

exactly like the *whit* of the Least Flycatcher. The Blue Jays here are very small, very tame always and keep exclusively about the houses. I heard in the "bay gall" and in several places in the pines a bird I did not know, I think a woodpecker, and likely enough the Red-headed Woodpecker. Of Black-throated Blue Warblers I saw at least fifteen males.

(117) Thursday, April 26. Cloudy in forenoon. Clear in p. m. Felt very tired this morning so I did not go out but skinned the birds killed yesterday. After dinner, however, I started off alone. Went directly over to "Borel" shooting a Gray Kingbird on the way. I was crossing an old field when it lit on a post within good range and I shot it almost instantly. I recognized it at once by its large size and gray color. There were some Eastern Kingbirds apparently in company with it. As I was forcing my way through the saw palmetto at "Borel," I started a pair of Chuck-will's-widows almost from under my feet. The male uttered repeatedly a hoarse *whock*, almost like the cry of the night heron. They flew only a little way and the male lit on the topmost frond of a saw palmetto within good range. I shot at him with number eight and knocked him down when—he fluttered a while in the leaves, then rose and, coming directly for me, tried in (118) vain to light in the top of a live oak sapling over my head. Then almost before I knew it he went off through the woods and I could find neither him nor the female again. I was so sure of him I would not fire again and I was almost sick with vexation at losing him finally. In the oak openings north of the plantation I found birds very abundant, and saw seven Painted Buntings, including one female. They were mostly silent and very shy and restless. I heard one male sing a number of times. Heard the chirp for the first time; it is sharp and exactly like the Indigo Bunting's. Their bright plumage makes them very conspicuous on the ground or in the bushes but in the tree tops they are not easy to see as the trumpet flowers that are blooming still deceive one. Warblers were in large flocks. I saw a number of Black-poll, one Prairie and plenty of Parula and Myrtle Warblers, also a pair of Redstarts. Saw also two Ovenbirds. (119). I saw a most astonishing number of Catbirds in the openings, all in pairs, and counted eight in one bush. The Brown Thrasher is also common but neither of these birds ever utters any but the most feeble song here. Whether they are migrants or not I cannot say but the Catbirds look small and dark. I sometimes hear both species singing in an undertone as some other northern birds do here. I do not hear more than one Yellow-throated Warbler a day now and they sing very feebly at that. The Mockingbirds are in fullest blast. These fine moonlight nights I often wake up to hear them pouring out their melody in the garden. The White-throated Sparrow is still present in small numbers. I visited my nest of the White-eyed Vireo



found building April 14th and took it with four fresh eggs. The female sat very closely as they do north and scolded in the same way. The large butterflies are getting scarce. The Cedarbird is still here in small flocks.

(120) April 27. Clear and very hot in the middle of the day. Thermometer 84° at noon. Started off at 8:30 as usual making directly for "Borel." The Nonpareils were quite abundant in the oak openings and the males sang freely and chased each other and the females about. They are shy restless birds. I started a pair of Chuck-will's-widows from the ground on the edge of a thicket in the "Ramble." They both lit in the pines about twenty-five feet up and I got a hard snap shot at the female and killed her. The male uttered the same cry as the one yesterday. This big southern Whip-poor-will is much shyer than our northern species. I looked for eggs where the female started but in vain, but when I dissected her, I found that she had already laid one and the other was nearly ready for the shell. I also started another female and missed her. Blackberries are ripe now. Saw a most elegant coachwhip snake in the road in front of the cemetery. It was about four feet long. It was very tame and gentle. S. and I let it run about our feet when all the time it was *licking up ants* with its tongue. Caught a horrible looking lizard which is now in my room.

(121)

*A Georgia thundershower.*

Saturday, April 28. Cloudy and sultry all day with a short but heavy thundershower in the afternoon. I noticed that the lightning flashes and accompanying thunderclaps followed each other in much quicker succession than at the North—sometimes as many as three each minute—and the thunder had a sharper, shorter sound. This last effect may be due to the general flatness of the country and absence of hills or rocky places—hence absence of echo. Had breakfast at six a. m. and got off with S. immediately for a long forenoon's work. Went directly over to "Borel" where we found a number of Nonpareils but they were excessively shy. They sang but little and kept in the densest thickets. S. shot a male Chuck-will's widow; he saw it perched *crossways* on a pine limb. Upon examining it we found that it was the same one that I wounded day before yesterday as one of its eyes (122) was fearfully swollen and the poor thing must have suffered terribly. From there I struck across the plantation to the "Ramble." The Nonpareil has, besides its Indigo Bird chirp, a peculiar note *exactly* like the Connecticut Warbler's. In general habits and motions it differs little from the Indigo Bunting. I find many old last year's nests just like the Indigo Birds but in places where the Nonpareils abound, and I have no doubt that they are their old domiciles. Coming home through the scrub I started a pair of White-

eyed Towhees. I can tell this variety now at a glance from the Red-eyed Towhee when it (123) is alive. It is an infinitely shyer bird, rising wildly at the least alarm and flying longer distances and when it lights pitching directly into the thickest scrub. I saw a number of the Red-eyes today, but all were apparently migrants to judge from the localities in which I met them. Lizards of various species now fairly swarm in the woods. At nearly every footstep you send them scurrying off over the dry leaves. One pretty little fellow has stripes on each side alternately black and yellow while the back is wood brown. A species of cicada was singing everywhere in the woods today for the first time. One hears very few species of birds singing in any one locality here, and birds do not seem to sing as enthusiastically somehow as at the North. Thus I do not hear an average of one Towhee, Catbird or Brown Thrasher each day though I may *see* dozens. Saw Cedarbirds, White-throated Sparrows and Ovenbirds.

(124) Monday, April 30. Cloudy and sultry. Started with S. after breakfast taking the direction of "Borel." As we passed through the south end of the "bay gall" it seemed absolutely alive with birds, mostly Redstarts, Black-throated Blue Warblers and Black and White Warblers. The first and last are now much more abundant than they were the first two days I was here. I also shot two Nonpareils in the thicket on the swamp edge. Of the Red-headed Woodpecker I saw a *flock* of eight or ten. They were in the open field lighting on bean poles and fence rails—they were very *tame* and uttered a *mew* exactly like that of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. I found them very tough and hard to kill. They had a habit of dodging around the posts like squirrels keeping always on the farther side and peeping at one occasionally. Saw a female Indigo Bunting distinctly. Yesterday S. and Mr. Fordham saw a Swallow-tailed Kite at "Borel." Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and White-throated Sparrows all gone, I think.

(125) Tuesday, May 1. Clear and very cool with N. W. wind. Thermometer 50° at sunrise. Rose early, had breakfast at 6:30 and got off with S. hiring a horse and buggy of Wright and driving out to the old ruin at Bolingbrook. It was so cool that the birds were not singing. The Pine-woods Sparrows are now building. I shot two females, one of which had laid all her eggs but one and that was ready for the shell. The Pine-woods Sparrow is a curious bird in its ways. In flight and mating and chirping it reminds one most of the Field Sparrow. In its habit of skulking until nearly trodden on and then rising underfoot it is like the Henslow's Sparrow. In its song it is *unique* and incomparable. It almost invariably sings from a short dead twig of a pine about 20 feet up. I am so used to this unvarying (126) twig and height that I can now find one



almost at a glance though they are extremely hard to see as they remain perfectly immovable and the song is ventriloqual in its character. We drove directly under one today and it did not move. Another hopped up under my feet and lighting (exceptionally) on a low twig within six feet of my head, chanted its entrancing tender music for many minutes. I saw a female Red-cockaded Woodpecker coming out of the nesting hole which she was at work upon. It was bored into the trunk of a perfectly live sound pine about thirty feet up. I think they always nest in this way as I see many similar holes. At Bolingbrook I shot my first fox squirrel, a noble fellow, and found a nest of the Cardinal in a live oak sapling about fifteen feet up and in the top. The female sat rather closely on three fresh eggs. I did not hear a single Yellow-throated Warbler all day. It is *not* a common bird breeding here. There were neither snakes or lizards out today it was so cold. Heard a pair of Barred Owls hooting at noon at Bolingbrook answering one another.

(127) Wednesday, May 2. Clear and cold with bracing N. W. wind. Started out after breakfast for my last day in the beautiful woods of St. Mary's. Spent the forenoon about "Borel" but did not try much for birds as I wanted to enjoy the last day in rest and quiet. Saw very few birds that were of interest, however. The one event of the day was the securing of the nest of the Yellow-throated Warbler found building April 18. Stone climbed to it for me and found the female sitting; he shook the limb several times before she would fly off but after that she showed not the slightest concern, feeding off through the woods in silence. The male was singing about one hundred yards off. After we had secured the nest, I followed and secured them both. The eggs had been incubated about five days. The nest was rather firmly attached to the bare limb. Saw one White-throated Sparrow and one female Hummingbird today. Saw only two Nonpareils — both females.

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## GENERAL NOTES

### A GEORGIA BREEDING RECORD OF THE BLACK-NECKED STILT.

—Occurrences of the Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) along the Atlantic coast north of the St. Johns River, Florida, are not common, yet there are enough accounts to prove that the species is quite a wanderer. There are several specimens from South Carolina, and one partial set of eggs, as well as a couple of old accounts of the species in Georgia, though there appears no case in which a specimen was taken.

In 1938, Mr. Samuel A. Grimes showed me a pair just north of the St. Johns River, and described the habitat he believed necessary, involving a shallow fresh water pool with sandy shores and scant vegetation. Some years before that Alexander Sprunt, Jr., had shown me the place on Sol Legare Island where the unsuccessful nest, mentioned in *South Carolina Bird Life*, was located. These two localities were quite similar, and for many years since I have watched for similar habitat in Chatham County, though such places are not common, because the silty soil encourages the growth of rank vegetation at the edges of most fresh water pools.

This year the search was rewarded on June 21, by finding a single bird on Hutchinson Island, across the river and a mile from the City Hall. The next day, with the assistance of Eugene P. Odum, a pair was located not far away that seemed to be settled on territory.

On July 2, George Sciple and I found the nest, which contained one egg. A week later there were no eggs in the nest, though the birds continued to claim the territory, and one of them returned to the nest site several times. The area was carefully searched, and it was quite certain that no other nest existed. By July 12, it was clear that the nesting was unsuccessful, and the male was collected. This specimen bears my number 682, and will be deposited in the Charleston Museum. This bird had testes 3 x 6 and 3 x 9 mm., respectively, and evidently was in about the stage of gonadal development that would be expected in the winter. Whether this condition contributed to the lack of success in nesting cannot be certainly said, yet it seems likely that a bird in this sexually dormant stage would not follow through the intricate behavior of the season of reproduction.

The habitat elements were about the same as those detailed by Grimes and shown me by Sprunt, and included a shallow rain-water pool with shores of dried mud and no vegetation. The nest was located on a slight elevation at the foot of a bush that had been killed by the mud dredged into the area a few months before. The same approximate condition existed in 1949, though rain may have been insufficient to keep water in the pool. There were no Stilts there that summer. — IVAN R. TOMKINS, 1231 East 50th Street, Savannah, Georgia.

**A CASE OF MULTIPLE NESTS OF THE CAROLINA WREN**—On June 3, 1946, I observed an interesting case of multiple nests built by a pair of Carolina Wrens (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). These nests were built under a bridge over a small creek on an unpaved road about 3 miles north of Appling, Columbia County, Georgia. The bridge which was of frame construction was supported by 8 parallel 4" x 12" sills. In the southwest corner of each of the 7 cubicles formed by the junction of the sills with the abutment at the south end the birds had built a nest. Externally all the nests appeared finished. I regret that I did not exam-



ine them more carefully and note how many were complete with linings. All were empty at the time so I do not know in which one they raised their family.

There is no explanation of why these birds built 7 nests rather than the usual one other than that they were confused while building by the similarity in form of the 7 cubicles. Such confusion would occur only when using man-made structures as nesting sites since in nature no two sites so similar in form would be likely to occur close together.—J. FRED DENTON, 1510 Pendleton Rd., Augusta, Georgia.

**BAY-BREASTED WARBLER NEAR ATLANTA IN WINTER.**—While observing birds in the South River area about five miles south of the center of Atlanta in Fulton County, Georgia, on January 21, 1950, the writer collected a specimen of the Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*) as it foraged along a fence-row. The bird appeared to be perfectly normal in all its actions, and a later examination revealed no evidence of broken bones or malformity. It was a female in fall plumage and was moderately fat. Identification of the preserved specimen was confirmed by Allen J. Duvall of Washington, D. C. The skin now remains in my collection bearing my original number 705.

To the best of the writer's knowledge this is the first record of the occurrence of this species in mid-winter in the United States. Normally this bird winters in South and Central America.—WILLIAM W. GRIFFIN, 304 Grant Building, Atlanta 3, Georgia.

**COWBIRD BREEDING AT ATLANTA AGAIN.**—On May 27, 1950, I found a young Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) in a wooded area bordering Peachtree Creek about five miles north of the center of Atlanta in Fulton County, Georgia, and approximately one hundred yards from the spot where a pair of Hooded Warblers raised a young Cowbird in 1949 (see Parks, *Oriole*, 15:8-9). The young bird was hardly more than three or four days out of the nest and was being fed by a pair of White-eyed Vireos. A week later, on June 3, I observed one adult female Cowbird and probably one or two males with a flock of Starlings at a cow pasture about a quarter of a mile from the point where the young bird was discovered.

On June 4, William W. Griffin and George W. Sciple observed three male Cowbirds at the Baptist Children's Home Lower Farm south of Atlanta in Fulton County. And on June 11, Griffin saw two more male birds at the Baptist Children's Home New Farm in Clayton County.

These records and others about the State seem to indicate an extension of range in recent years, as it appears unlikely that such an easily observed bird could have been overlooked by ornithologists in the past.—RICHARD A. PARKS, 2303 Pembroke Place, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.

**THE FISH CROW BREEDING IN McDUFFIE COUNTY, GEORGIA, A FURTHER EXTENSION OF ITS RANGE.**—The Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*) has been reported as a summer resident as far inland in the State as the Fall Line at Augusta (see Murphy, *Birds of the Middle Savannah Valley, etc.*, 1937) Milledgeville (see Tait, *Oriole* 11:48-51, 1946) and Macon (see Greene, *et al.*, *Birds of Georgia*, 1945). The extent of its penetration along the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers in the western part of the State is unknown. However, Fish Crows have been noted in the vicinity of Fort Gaines, Clay County, on the Chattahoochee by Norris (unpublished data) and at Lake Blackshear (Crisp-Sumter Counties) on the Flint by the writer in May, 1942.

Fish crows when first noted at Augusta and Macon were observed only in the immediate vicinity of the rivers suggesting that they followed these water courses in from the coast and that suitable habitat was to be found only along them. However, at Augusta this species has greatly increased during the past eight years until it now equals or even surpasses the Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) in numbers. Also, with increasing frequency, Fish Crows have been noted at considerable distances from the river at Augusta. On June 24, 1947, a nest was discovered about 10 miles west of the city in Richmond County. The nest was situated about 50 feet from the ground in the top fork of a loblolly pine. Although it was impossible to climb to the nest it was obvious from the behavior of the two parents that the nest was in use. This nesting area was formerly a pure stand of pine which in recent years had been logged except for scattered trees left for reseeding.

On June 22, 1949, while exploring pine woods in McDuffie County, I located a pair of Fish Crows and a nest along Highway 78 about 12 miles north of Thomson. This nest was also situated in a loblolly pine in cut-over pine woods and at approximately the same height. Since this nesting tree was impossible to climb also, the contents of the nest could not be determined.

In 1947, Johnston (*Oriole* 12:33-34, 1947) reported the presence of Fish Crows near Athens on April 10. In view of this record and the fact that a nest has been found near Greenwood, S. C. (see Chamberlain and Sprunt, *South Carolina Bird Life*, 1949), it is reasonable to expect that Fish Crows will soon be found nesting in the vicinity of Athens.—J. FRED DENTON, 1510 Pendleton Rd., Augusta, Georgia.

**A FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE BREEDING RANGE OF THE SONG SPARROW IN GEORGIA.**—As has been pointed out recently by Odum and Burleigh (*Auk*, 63: 289-401, 1946) the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) is apparently extending its breeding range from the mountains out into the Piedmont of Georgia. During the summer of 1949 three instances of breeding in new localities in the Piedmont



which support this hypothesis were noted. All three localities are in Habersham County.

At Demorest Song Sparrows were heard regularly and seen frequently through the breeding season by Neal. Early in May Betty Nalls found a pair building a nest in blackberry bushes near the lake in Demorest. This nesting was not completed but these birds were successful in a second attempt since the writers noted them feeding young just out of the nest on June 14.

On May 5, Neal heard a Song Sparrow singing in an overgrown lot opposite the Grand Theatre in downtown Cornelia. This bird was noted singing again in the same place by Neal on May 19. On June 20, Denton stopped briefly to examine this locality. No bird was singing at the time but when he penetrated the area a pair was easily located. The birds became excited at his presence and gave every indication of nesting which along with the fact that they had been present all spring indicates unquestionably that they bred there.

At Clarksville which is north of both Demorest and Cornelia, Neal noted a singing bird on May 19. It is likely that this was a breeding bird.

While traveling south to Athens on June 20, Denton made frequent stops at likely places between Cornelia and Homer (Banks Co.) and in Homer itself to search for Song Sparrows. None were found so apparently Cornelia was the Southernmost point in northeast Georgia at which they bred in 1949.—DOROTHY P. NEAL, *Demorest, Georgia* and J. FRED DENTON, *Augusta, Georgia*.

**SPRING NOTES FROM THE ATHENS AREA.** — During the spring and early summer of 1950, the writer carried out extensive breeding bird populational studies in the Athens area. Though most of the time was required for these studies, considerable random observations were made of the birdlife of the area. These observations revealed several interesting birds and nests, the most noteworthy of which were:

Yellow-throated Warblers: *Dendroica dominica*. One of the writer's population areas was located near High Shoals which is approximately twenty miles southeast of Athens in Walton County. The area studied was an extensive 100-year-old pine forest which had been selectively lumbered in 1949. While mapping this area on April 17, my attention was called to a singing male of this species. At first I believed it to be a migrant, but subsequent censuses on May 6, 10, 19, and 26, revealed its presence on the same territory. On several occasions the female was also observed, and on the last date mentioned, she was seen carrying food. Though the nest itself was not found, there can be no doubt that this was a breeding pair.

Burleigh (*The Birds of Athens, Clarke County, Georgia*, 1938) recorded this species as a "somewhat scarce but regular migrant" with last spring date of occurrence being April 23, 1925.

In Georgia there is a wide east-west belt extending from approximately the 1000 ft. contour line to the Fall Line in which there have been no previous breeding records for this warbler. The present record is an isolated point in this belt. With the appearance of this pair it is apparent that the species is either beginning to occupy this hiatus or that it has been overlooked by observers in the past. The latter possibility is less likely due to Burleigh's extensive observations throughout the Athens area.

Grackle: *Quiscalus quiscula*. During Burleigh's years of residence here at Athens he recorded the Grackle as a transient and winter resident, listing only one June and one July record both of which he regarded as casual (*ibid*). In early June of 1949, the writer observed several birds of this species at Lake Kirota in the city limits of Athens. A female with a slightly enlarged ovary was taken on June 10.

In the spring of 1950, Grackles were observed in flocks of 20-30 in the same vicinity as in 1949, but this time in a thicket along a stream farther in town. All during late April, May, and June at least 20 birds were noted at this thicket or flying into pine woods nearby. Upon many occasions adult birds were seen carrying food and flying back to the thicket, but a search of the thicket and pine woods failed to reveal a nest or young birds. Two females were collected, one April 5 and one May 5. The latter bird had an enlarged ovary. This species has been noted in pairs or small groups at three other locations in the city during the spring and summer months.

The appearance of these birds at Athens may indicate that the species is becoming more common as a breeding bird in the Piedmont of Georgia.

Cowbird: *Molothrus ater*. Although the Cowbird is now listed as a breeding bird in Georgia due to the discovery of an egg at Augusta by Denton (*Oriole*, 11: 24-27, 1946) and a young bird by Parks at Atlanta (*Oriole*, 15: 8-9, 1950), there are few late May, no June, and only a few July records for adults in the State. In April 1950, several flocks of Cowbirds were observed on the University Dairy Farm south of town, and these birds were regarded as migrants. My attention was not aroused until I watched a pair of Grasshopper Sparrows chase a female Cowbird from their nesting territory on May 16. Since the cultivated fields and pastures around the dairy barns were part of my population study areas, all nests found were carefully scrutinized for Cowbird eggs and young. Early on May 23, I observed a male bird, and that afternoon two pairs were observed at close range courting by Dr. E. P. Odum and James C. Major as a third pair flew overhead. May 26, two females and three males were seen. May 29, four birds flew overhead, and somewhat later an adult male was collected. Its testes were at least moderately enlarged—right, 5 mm., and left, 7 mm. The species was next seen June 10, when a single adult male was observed drinking water at a horse watering



trough with English Sparrows. June 13, two males and a female were feeding beside some horses next to the barns. One of the males apparently "possessed" this female because he strutted before the other and wouldn't permit him to get too close to "his" female. This female was collected, and upon dissection a large egg, probably ready to be laid, was found in the lower part of the oviduct. This egg measured 14 x 18 mm. Several other enlarged follicles were present in the ovary. On June 21, two males were seen and on June 30, five adult males were seen picking up grit in the road. Considerable search of the area has failed to reveal any Cowbird eggs or young.

Dickcissel: *Spiza americana*. On May 8, the writer returned to the same large grain field where he and Dr. Odum found Dickcissels singing in 1947. On the above date two males were found singing and two females were seen in different parts of the field. May 16, I went back to the shrubby gully where I had seen the males singing, and soon flushed a female from a low shrub overgrown with honeysuckle. She had a definite brood patch, and a short search revealed a nest in this shrub three feet off the ground. The nest contained four blue eggs, and was a rather deep structure. Nearby fields of oats and vetch were mowed the next few days, but the gully and shrubs containing the nest were undisturbed. On May 18, several of us returned to the nesting site for photographic purposes, and only the female and nest were observed. May 25, the eggs were gone from the nest which was slightly tilted on one edge, and no adults were seen or heard. The only other nest at Athens was found 25 years ago by Burleigh (Burleigh, *op. cit.*) DAVID W. JOHNSTON, *Department of Biology, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia*.

**BREWSTER'S WARBLER AT ATLANTA.**—On April 30, 1949, I collected a male Brewster's Warbler (*Vermivora leucobronchialis*) in Collier Woods in Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia. The bird was feeding with other migrant warblers along the banks of Clear Creek. There are few records of this hybrid for the State.—RICHARD A. PARKS, 2303 Pembroke Place, N. E., Atlanta, Georgia.

## NEWS AND COMMENTS

**FALL MEETING IN DALTON.**—On October 21 and 22, the Georgia Ornithological Society will meet in Dalton, Georgia, at the invitation of the Dalton Bird and Garden Club. Headquarters will be the Hotel Dalton located in the center of town. Registration will begin in the Hotel Dalton lobby shortly after noon on Saturday, and an afternoon business and paper session will follow. Other activities will be the regular Saturday evening banquet and a field trip Sunday morning. Reservation cards will be sent to all members shortly before the meeting. Plan now to attend, and return your reservation card as soon as you receive it.



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