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SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES ON BIRDS OF THE ATHENS AREA

By DAVID W. JOHNSTON

Since the significant publication in 1938 by Thomas D. Burleigh entitled *The Birds of Athens, Clarke County, Georgia* (Occas. Paper No. 1, G.O.S.), many ornithologists have studied the avifauna of this area, and some of these workers, notably Burleigh, Eugene P. Odum, and students of the latter, have contributed additional information to Burleigh's list. Most of these notes and major articles have appeared in recent issues of *The Oriole*. From September, 1946, until August, 1950, the writer resided in Athens and during this time kept field notes on the occurrence of birds in this and adjacent areas. Some of these have also appeared from time to time in *The Oriole*. Recently, I have discovered some heretofore misplaced notes which reveal numerous changes and additions to the existing records. These notes are presented here to supplement the already extensive knowledge of the avifauna in this well-worked portion of the State.

The records which follow fall into three main categories: (1) species new to the Athens area, (2) additional data on certain species which breed and/or winter in the area, and (3) changes in extreme dates of migration as presented by Burleigh (*ibid.*). Dates in parentheses are extreme dates given by Burleigh.

Mississippi Kite. *Ictinia mississippiensis*. A single individual was seen circling over the Oconee River bottomland south of the city on June 9, 1949. This represents one of the few records of this species' occurrence above the Fall Line in Georgia.

King Rail. *Rallus elegans*. An adult was flushed from a nest containing nine eggs on April 17, 1949, in the Sandy Creek area and was subsequently observed on April 24. An adult was picked up on the highway five miles north of Monroe, Walton County, on May 28, 1950, and the date and site (marshy areas on both sides of the highway) indicated at least a potentially breeding bird even though it could not be sexed.

Black Gallinule. *Gallinula chloropus*. A bird was found in a weakened condition in the city on May 10, 1949. Burleigh did not record this species, but Denton (*Oriole*, 1: 26, 1936) mentions a specimen collected on May 11, 1936.

American Coot. *Fulica americana*. A single bird, perhaps a cripple even though it could apparently fly well, was seen on Lake Kiota on June 9, 1949 (May 12, 1926). There is a similar record from Atlanta (see Johnston, *Oriole*, 10: 7, 1945).

Bartramian Sandpiper. *Bartramia longicauda*. This species was re-

corded by Burleigh only in April. A bird was seen on a plowed field north of the city on May 18, 1950.

Common Nighthawk. *Chordeiles minor*. Burleigh originally recorded this species as a migrant, giving only one summer record, June 11, 1929, which he considered to be a belated migrant. Since that time the same author (*Oriole*, 6: 38, 1941) took a July specimen which indicated probable breeding. To these summer records another is added: June 10, 1949, and several successive nights at least one bird was heard calling as it flew about over the city.

Chimney Swift. *Chaetura pelagica*. March 24, 1949, ten birds. (March 25, 1929).

Eastern Wood Pewee. *Contopus virens*. April 11, 1947 (April 19, 1927).

Horned Lark. *Eremophila alpestris*. In view of the recent discovery by Griffin of this species breeding in the State and of its general "invasion" of southeastern states in recent years, one would expect to find earlier birds in the fall now than in the past. Several birds were seen and heard flying over the city on October 20, 1948 (November 9, 1928).

Brown Creeper. *Certhia familiaris*. April 16, 1947 (April 14, 1928).

Solitary Vireo. *Vireo solitarius*. Considering the recent spread of this species as a breeding bird in the State, it seems desirable to point out one more occurrence in the vicinity of Athens in addition to the records presented by Odum (*Oriole*, 13: 17-20, 1948). On the edge of a sixty-year-old pine tract (*Pinus echinata* and *P. taeda*) one mile south of the city, an adult was seen feeding a well-fledged young on May 12 and 26, 1949. In the meanwhile, at least one other adult could be heard singing in a contiguous habitat similar to that in which Burleigh found singing males in Upson and Jones counties in 1947, viz., sparse tall pine timber with a secondary understory of deciduous trees. The Athens birds were absent from this area in 1950.

Cape May Warbler. *Dendroica tigrina*. May 21, 1949 (May 12, 1928).

Black-throated Blue Warbler. *Dendroica caerulescens*. May 27, 1950 (May 20, 1929).

Palm Warbler. *Dendroica palmarum*. A single bird was seen near Hartwell, Hart County, on September 15, 1949.

Baltimore Oriole. *Icterus galbula*. Burleigh listed only one fall record, September 17, 1926. On September 20, 1949, a bird was observed south of the city.

Blue Grosbeak. *Guiraca caerulea*. April 11, 1947 (April 15, 1929).

Bachman Sparrow. *Aimophila aestivalis*. October 19, 1948 (no previous fall departure date was given by Burleigh).

White-crowned Sparrow. *Zonotrichia leucophrys*. Although this species is generally regarded as scarce in the State, more and more records of its occurrence are being amassed each year. While taking a Christmas bird census on December 28, 1949, the writer found a flock of five immatures near the airport in a large open field with blackberry thickets, and a solitary individual was collected at the

edge of a cultivated field south of the city. The group of immatures had been seen the previous day.

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology
Berkeley 4, California

THE MCKINNEY'S POND HERONRY

By EUGENE P. ODUM AND ROBERT L. HUMPHRIES

For bird students in the northern part of the State the most accessible heronry is located in the northern part of Emanuel County, just south of Midville at McKinney's Pond. As far as is now known this rookery represents the northernmost large concentration of nesting herons in the State; it is also one of the most inland, since it is about 140 miles "as the heron flies" to the Atlantic coast. One may easily visit the heronry and return the same day from Athens, Atlanta, Macon, Milledgeville, or Augusta, and it is well worth the trip.

To reach the rookery drive south from Midville on State Highway 56 and turn left at the McKinney's Pond sign a short distance after crossing the Ogeechee River. The heronry is not on McKinney's Pond itself but on a smaller limesink pond nearby. The visitor should stop at the concession stand and obtain directions for reaching the rookery. The owners have told us that visitors are welcome. One may drive his car within a couple hundred yards of the rookery and observe the herons coming and going, or perched in trees, without getting his feet wet. However, for the best results it is necessary to wade out into the pond for a short distance, the water usually being between knee and waist deep. Old tennis shoes and old pants are the standard attire for exploring this heronry. Experienced herpetologists have explored the rookery many times and report that they have never seen a cottonmouth moccasin in the rookery (whether birds have anything to do with this is a matter of speculation!), so one need not be afraid of snakes. Opportunities for taking pictures are excellent, since many nests are but a few feet above water. May is the best time for a visit.

We have visited the heronry several times, as has Dr. J. Fred Denton, Dr. Don Jacobs, and others. Several times a rough estimate of the heron population was made, but this spring (1953) the senior author decided to take his University Ornithology class to the rookery and make a systematic count. Since the nests were concentrated in a fairly small area it was possible to divide the colony into small sections and assign a section to one man for a systematic count. The following is the final tabulation of the total occupied nests (eggs or young) on May 15, 1953, compared with a count made by the junior author on May 27, 1951:

	1953	1951
American Egret	239	44
Little Blue Heron	90	141
Anhinga	3	2
Little Green Heron	1	0
Total Nests	333	187

Thus, there were at least 666 breeding birds (assuming a pair to a nest) in this rookery in 1953 and 374 birds in 1951, with the possibility that some Egrets had finished nesting by late May. There is a partial segregation of the two commonest species within the rookery and also a difference in breeding time. In 1953 Egrets were concentrated in one portion of the rookery and Little Blues in another. On May 15, 1953, Egret nests contained young, many almost fully grown, while most of the Little Blue Heron nests contained eggs. On May 27, 1951, all Egret nests contained young while 45 of the Little Blue nests contained eggs. The Anhinga nests contained young on both visits. In some years we have seen as many as a dozen Anhinga nests.

In the rookery area in 1953 we also noted six Grackle nests with eggs or young, a Prothonotary Warbler nest with four eggs and, at the edge of the pond, a Pied-billed Grebe nest with a female incubating one egg. Thus, within about an hour and a half we had seen 341 nests of seven species, a real bird city!

Students who participated in the census were as follows: Charles Durant, Robert Harrington, Jack Lowe, William Thomas, Marvin Williams, Hershell Webb, and Edward Kuenzler.

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Athens, Georgia

ST. MARY'S GEORGIA: 1878

FROM THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM BREWSTER
EDITED BY FREDERICK V. HEBARD

(This is the second of three installments to be published in *The Oriole* from the famous ornithologist's journal for 1878. As in the first installment, Mr. Hebard has here copied almost verbatim from the journal. Figures in parentheses are the page number of the original.—Ed.)

(158) (Tuesday and Wednesday rainy—no observations made) Thursday, February 28. Clear and a lovely day. Spent the forenoon in the garden watching the birds. In the afternoon wrote steadily on correspondence until dark.

A pair of beautiful little Ground Doves were running about on the grass ground in the front yard for an hour or more yesterday. I watched in vain to see them raise their tails as presented in Audubon's plate. They are very tame and I stood for a long time within ten yards of them. They creep about with their breasts al-

most touching the ground. Their red bills are conspicuous but the essential difference in the coloration of the sexes is only apparent when one is very near and views them under a favorable light.

This evening after sunset the Mockingbirds were very noisy in the garden. Their ordinary call note is a loud *tchip*, like a loud smack of the lips. When angry they utter a scolding *tchay-tchay-tchay* varied sometimes to *tcher-tcher*.

(159) Friday, March 1. Clear and warm with that soft hazy atmosphere peculiar to the South. Started immediately after breakfast with C. in Wright's team, for the pine woods where we spent the forenoon getting back at 1 o'clock. I shot ten birds, five Gray-headed Nuthatches, 1 Red-cockaded Woodpecker, 3 Pine Warblers and 1 White-eyed Towhee. Spent the afternoon in skinning them. The piney woods were very lovely this morning. There is much water everywhere in the depressions and the rude roads are perfect sloughs. Two species of frogs are singing everywhere in the pools, one the commonest is the species that I found last year in Florida and called for want of a better name, the crackling Hyla, the other I take to be the Bell Frog. In damp shady places among the pines are beds of beautiful little white flowers.

(160) Gray-headed Nuthatches are very abundant everywhere through the pine woods: almost invariably in pairs: not nearly as noisy as in April last year. They are most like Red-breasted Nuthatches in motions; feeding principally at the ends of the branches among the pine needles. I shot five, two males, three females. One of the former had testes at full size: the other about one-third developed. The ovaries of the latter were in a uniformly undeveloped condition. Examination of their stomachs showed that their food was principally insects. I found beetles making up the balance of the undigested masses, next in quantity larvae and in two stomachs a good many pine seeds. They are never fat and their flesh has a peculiar resinous odor characteristic of most woodpeckers, Titmice and a few other pine frequenting species. They are very lively and industrious birds, even more so than either of the other two species. They are very tame and unsuspicious.

(161) Pine Warblers are very abundant. The males, though not in full song, utter their trill at frequent intervals. Apparently they are already paired.

I heard several male Yellow-throats singing. They frequent the thickets of saw palmetto. Myrtle Warblers are very abundant throughout the pine woods in small companies. I saw many little companies of Hermit Thrushes around the edges of hummocks and one Brown Thrasher in a live oak hummock. I heard one Ruby-crowned Kinglet distinctly and saw one Golden-crown in a dense thicket.

A Bittern rose from the road and lit by a clump of saw palmetto which covered not over six square yards. I went directly to the spot without taking my eyes off it and heard the bird rustle among the dry fronds as I approached but no amount of thrashing and poking in the leaves could (162) make it disclose itself.

I saw many Towhees but shot only one which proved a female

White-eye. Its irides were brownish yellow, or dull opaque amber. Its stomach was crammed with "Seal" berries upon which the Robins feed here. Its ovaries were quite largely developed, some of them being as large as #8 shot. A male, presumably its mate, escaped me. The notes of both birds differed considerably from those of our northern race. The *towhee* was harsher and shorter and the male uttered a sharp, clear, almost startling whistle like a sportsman's call to his dog. They were among saw palmetto under thickly growing pines.

I saw numbers of Bluebirds, all paired, but the males were silent. I saw one Catbird on the edge of a swampy hammock. I heard several Carolina Wrens singing and saw a single very shy male Red-bellied Woodpecker. Several male White-eyed Vireos were in full song.

(163) Saturday, March 2. Warm, the sun shining dimly through a smoky atmosphere. Off after breakfast in the wagon, driving as far as the Boling Broke Road (to the Spanish Mission-Ed.) and returning in time for dinner. A good day for birds and we saw a great many. I shot seven, three Gray-headed Nuthatches, two White-breasted Nuthatches, one Loggerhead Shrike and one Florida (?) Crow. In one of the shiny pools I saw and essayed to catch a little frog, presumably a *Hyla* of some species. It was not over an inch in length, of a wood brown color, with rather rough, warty skin, its two toes supplied with small discs for clinging by suction. In the same pool I found to my surprise numerous small fishes. I had previously supposed these pools evanescent as they are very shallow and the water is dark colored and stagnant. (How the fish, *Gambusia holbrooki*, reach these rain water pools is a mystery. Ed.) I found a few white violets and numbers of the beautiful little white flowers seen yesterday. I saw a beautiful fox squirrel as black as a Crow.

(164) Loggerhead Shrikes are apparently confined to the village (as they usually are today. Ed.) I see none in the pine woods. A female shot today on the border of Clarkesville had the ovaries considerably enlarged, some of them as large as #6 shot. Its stomach was crammed with beetles and grasshoppers in nearly even proportions.

I shot one Red-eyed Towhee (perhaps an Alabama. Ed.) from a flock of at least twenty individuals that were feeding among the saw palmetto on the edge of the hammock. Its irides were as red as in our northern specimens. I think that there was a pair of White-eyed Towhees among the red-eyed birds. I recognized them at once by their different notes and shot at the male but missed him. They kept together as if paired while all the others mingled indiscriminately in a loose sparrow like company.

I saw several House Wrens among saw palmettos near a swampy hammock. (165). I heard a Meadowlark chattering.

I shot a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches that were feeding together on a tall pine. The female had the ovaries much more developed than those of any Gray-headed Nuthatch I have shot. She also had a perfect *black cap* like the male but of a slightly duller cast. Their stomachs contained *beetles* and *larvae*.

I saw two Ospreys flying high over the woods.

A few Mockingbirds occur in the pine woods miles from any house. Those that I have seen in such places have been invariably silent and rather shy (Village Mockers invariably start singing in the region about two weeks before the pine barren Mockers—Ed.)

The male Bluebirds were singing freely today and exactly as at the north. I saw several Flickers and heard others singing as at the north. No species of Woodpecker is common hereabouts.

(166) Sunday, March 3. Clear and a beautiful day. Spent the greater part of both morning and afternoon writing letters.

In the old field adjoining our garden were three Loggerhead Shrikes. I watched three of them for a long time. They sat perched on the top of some dead corn stalks watching exactly like Hawks for their prey. Occasionally one would swoop down to the ground and seize a grasshopper and then frequently, instead of flying up to its perch, would ascend the nearest corn stalk by side long hops, clinging to its shaft like a Wren or Reedbird: then regaining its summit would assume its former erect attitude. At one time all three betook themselves to a small area of ploughed ground and for ten or fifteen minutes ran about exactly like so many Robins, picking up something at the end of each short run. Occasionally two would meet and show signs of fighting but without action.

(167) Monday, March 4. Cloudy and cold most of the forenoon with high wind. Clearer and warmer in the afternoon. Off rather later than usual driving nearly to the oyster-beach. Returned to dinner and spent the afternoon skinning birds. Small birds were excessively scarce this morning and very silent. I shot one Cardinal, one Red-bellied Woodpecker, one Yellow Palm Warbler and one Turkey Vulture. The Yellow Palm Warbler was a male in winter plumage. It was solitary and near a live oak hummock.

The Turkey Vulture was a fine male. Two others of the same species with a Black Vulture came up and sailed about over the spot, occasionally stooping gracefully down to within a few yards of their dead companion. I fired twice at them before they left. This was in the pine woods. I skinned the one shot and found it not so very offensive. It emitted a strong, musty odor; its head was livid purplish red when first shot.

(168) Tuesday, March 5. Clear and still with fine, crisp, bracing air. A white frost last night, the thermometer falling to 37°. Off after breakfast in the wagon with C driving out a few miles into the pine woods. Shot seven birds, one Grackle, one Hairy Woodpecker, one Tufted Titmouse, one Mockingbird and three Pine Warblers. The pine woods are very lovely this morning and the saw palmettos looked remarkably green and fresh. Returned to dinner at 2 o'clock and skinned the birds in the afternoon.

I was delighted to hear the sweet song of the Yellow-throated Warbler again in the pines beyond Clarkesville. Only one individual was detected but that one sang quite steadily as long as I remained in the vicinity: whether to set it down in my mind as a forerunner of the migration or as a resident, I am uncertain.

I shot three Redpoll (Palm) Warblers this morning along the edge of an oak hammock, the identical spot where I secured the first one yesterday. The first two (169) both females, I killed with one shot as they ran hopping about together on the ground. One of them was typical *palmarum* (Western); the other almost exactly intermediate between that form and *hypochrysea* (Yellow). The third specimen was typical of the latter variety. As with the Yellow-throated Warbler singing this morning it is hard to say whether these birds are newly arrived from farther south or have wintered here and previously escaped my notice. The former hypothesis I consider most likely, however, all things considered. (If Brewster's surmise is correct, the winter range of *hypochrysea*, at least, has extended north in the past 75 years. Ed.)

I saw a very large flock of Robins in the pine woods. They were singing in a confused chorus exactly as they sometimes do of bright winter days in Massachusetts when collected around an asparagus bed.

I saw several Grackles with Robins and shot a fine male. They were singing also; their notes not very unlike those of Massachusetts grackles.

(170) I saw a female Sharp-shinned Hawk in the pine woods. It was amusing itself by harassing some Florida Crows, driving down over them as they sat upon the trees.

Carolina Chickadees are not at all a common bird here. I see a pair occasionally along the edge of an oak hummock or the heavier swampy forest of bay trees, sweet gum and magnolia. This morning I heard a male singing and listened a long time to its sweet and plaintive song. As often before noted it consists of four syllables and reminds me most thoroughly of one variation of our northern Meadowlark's song: less so of the Black-throated Green Warbler. I have often tried a whistled imitation of the *phe bee* of the Black-capped Chickadee which is so invariably successful in eliciting a prompt response from the northern species but invariably it is disregarded by the southern bird.

Twenty or thirty Vesper Sparrows were in the garden this morning; a few Chipping Sparrows associating with them.

(171) Wednesday, March 6. Clear and warm. Rose at 6 o'clock and made an early start in a sail boat with Mr. Lucas, a very intelligent colored man, as skipper. The breeze was very light and baffling and we were three hours in running over to Fernandina where we remained for two hours and then returned before a fresh wind reaching St. Mary's at 4 p.m. I took my gun but did not fire a shot as we did not stop to hunt birds.

The Laughing was the commonest gull on Cumberland Sound. I saw several with apparently full black heads. I saw a number of Bonaparte Gulls sitting on the water in the foam streaks that washed in from the bar and apparently busily feeding. Royal Terns were the most numerous water birds except the preceding. A small tern seen in moderate numbers was probably Forster's.

Hundreds of Fish Crows milled around the wharves at Fernandina

as tame as street pigeons. When any garbage was thrown overboard from any of the vessels, they collected in swarms over the water where it floated, mixing indiscriminately with Gulls and picking it up in the same way. Boat-Tailed Grackles were almost equally numerous around the wharves.

I saw a fine adult Bald Eagle drop like an Osprey into the water and secure a fish. One Black-bellied Plover was on the beach. Seaside Sparrows were singing in the salt marsh sedges as were Long-billed Marsh Wrens.

Redwings were singing everywhere in the salt marshes. Both song and call notes differed considerably from those of the northern bird. Several large flocks of sandpipers which I did not identify were seen.

(173) Friday, March 8. Clear and warm. (Yesterday was a lovely day but as C. got badly sunburnt Wednesday we remained in the house all day. Through the forenoon I heard a Yellow-throated Warbler singing in the village). Off after breakfast as usual in the wagon with C. Drove out as far as the Bolingbroke Road and returned by 1 o'clock.

Birds were very abundant and sang all thro' the forenoon. I had miserable luck with my shooting missing very badly and losing many birds that were hit. Took nine specimens in all: seven Gray-headed Nuthatches, one White-eyed Vireo and one Red-bellied Woodpecker. The woods are getting more beautiful every day; wild flowers are springing up; the grass in the open glade is becoming greener and butterflies, a few of which were out on our arrival, are daily increasing in numbers. The roads are also drying and becoming very passable.

(174) I heard a male Yellow-throated Warbler singing in the same spot as on Tuesday. Yesterday and this morning one was singing in the village. Saw numbers of Redpolls (Yellow Palm Warblers) everywhere in the pine woods but did not shoot any. I am now quite sure they do not winter here but have recently arrived from farther south. In the past week Myrtle Warblers have been steadily decreasing in numbers and now in a forenoon I do not see one where I used to notice fifty. Only three or four frequent the cedar trees in the garden in place of the swarms a week ago. Since the arrival of a pair of Purple Martins on February 22, no additional ones have been seen tho' those two birds have twittered about the eaves of Orange Hall every pleasant morning. Today, however, I saw six flying about the house at one time. (175) On the edge of an oak hummock were a pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers which had evidently just arrived. A pair of Carolina Chickadees were at work busily deepening a hole in the top of a low oak stub. It was afterwards abandoned.

I heard a male Pine-woods Sparrow singing this morning. Following up the sound I discovered him perched on a short twig of a pine in the usual situation, but as I was about to shoot, he dropped to the ground beneath and escaped me as I could not flush him tho' I went directly to the spot. He was a wretchedly poor singer. (Their song is quite mechanical in the early days of spring. Only when the eggs are laid does it reach its sweetest beauty.—Ed)

The generative organs of seven Gray-headed Nuthatches were in various stages of development but none would have laid for a long time. (I have found eggs in early March, 20 miles off in the 1940's.—Ed.) A male Red-bellied Woodpecker had the stomach filled with gallberries. The note of the White-eyed Towhee is a sharp whistle.

(176) Saturday, March 9. Clear, warm and still. Started at nine o'clock and made a long forenoon of it driving out as far as Sandford's Plantation and getting back rather late to dinner. Birds were plentiful. I shot eleven in all: two Gray-headed Nuthatches, two Florida Grackles, one Meadowlark, one female Cardinal, a male Bluebird and a male and female White-eyed Towhee. Spent the afternoon as usual in skinning them. Missed a number of good shots this morning. In one place while sitting in the wagon looking around for birds, a fine Red-shouldered Hawk swept behind my back and literally within six feet of me. I shot before it had got 80 yards off but missed.

A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was around some honeysuckle blossoms which have just opened in the garden. A small company of five Meadowlarks was feeding on burnt ground in the pine woods. Occasionally one of the males would utter the same wild sweet song noted last year at Mellonville. They were not at all shy tho' much more so than in Florida. The generative organs of the White-eyed Towhees shot this morning were considerably developed. Numerous others seen were all in pairs. Their sharp whistle is unmistakable. They were all in saw palmetto thickets in the pinewoods. The pair of Chickadees were working at the hole discovered yesterday. The male sang at frequent intervals.

Three Song Sparrows were seen near an old field and I shot one of them. Bluebirds were exceedingly numerous in the pine woods everywhere. They are almost invariably in company with Pine Warblers. A male shot today had the generative organs of full size. I saw two Phoebe in the pine woods and found a large flock of Vesper Sparrows in Sandford's clearing with a few Chipping Sparrows. Saw the last Robins today.

(178) Monday, March 11. Clear in a.m. and very sultry. Thunder shower in afternoon. Off after breakfast as usual driving out of town a few miles. Had most execrable luck, seeing almost nothing of any interest and bagging only five specimens: two Gray-headed Nuthatches, one Flicker, one Ruby-crowned Kinglet and two female Cardinals. I saw two Golden-crowned Kinglets in the pines.

The *chee-dee-dee* of the Tufted Titmouse is a coarser and louder note than that of the Black-Capped Chickadee. It is a wonderfully smooth, trim looking bird in life. I heard two different male Yellow-throated Warblers singing this morning one of them the same individual that I have heard every day in the heavy pines beyond Clarkesville. A Sparrow Hawk has his favorite perch on the lightning rod of a church across the street in the village.

(To be continued)

GENERAL NOTES

COWBIRD BREEDING AT ATHENS.—Several members of the Athens Bird Club, participating in an early morning field trip, Sunday, May 10, 1953, observed a group of two male and four female Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*) in the vicinity of the University of Georgia refuse dump along the Oconee River. While being observed, one of the females flew into a thicket bordering a small temporary pond. The bird immediately began its characteristic nest searching actions, neck-craning, head-bobbing as it stalked through the thicket. It stopped to study one spot in particular, and this revealed to us a nearly-completed Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) nest.

The nest was revisited several times, and the following observations recorded:

May 15—three bunting eggs present.

May 17—two bunting and one cowbird egg present.

May 28—bunting eggs hatched, photos taken, (cowbird egg not hatched).

May 30—nest deserted, nestlings dead, cowbird egg unhatched.

This discovery was reported to Dr. Eugene Odum of the University of Georgia, and he and several students visited the nest just before and after the eggs hatched. Desertion may have been due to human disturbance. On June 4, 1953, in the same vicinity, a second breeding record was obtained when a female Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) was observed feeding a well fledged young Cowbird out of the nest.

All evidence seems to point to the fact that the Cowbird is a recent addition to the breeding birds of middle Georgia. The first breeding



Cowbird egg and two young buntings in Indigo Bunting nest in blackberry thicket at University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, May 28, 1953. Photograph by Eugene P. Odum.

record for the State was obtained by Denton, who found a Cowbird egg in an Indigo Bunting nest at Augusta, on July 12, 1945 (*Oriole*, 11:24-27, 1946). Parks found the Cowbird breeding in Atlanta in 1949 and 1950, a Hooded Warbler and a White-eyed Vireo successfully raising young Cowbirds (*Oriole*, 15:8, and 15:32, 1950).

The first definite breeding record for Athens was made by Johnston who collected a female Cowbird with well developed egg in the oviduct on June 13, 1950 (*Oriole*, 15:34-36, 1950).

The observation of a Yellow Warbler raising a young Cowbird is of considerable interest in itself. To the north, the Indigo Bunting and many other species are very commonly passive hosts for the parasitic Cowbirds, but the Yellow Warbler rarely tolerates Cowbird eggs. Usually it buries the intruding egg along with its own by building a new nest over the parasitized one. Nests as high as five stories have been reported resulting from successive attempts of the Cowbirds to lay in the nest of the Yellow Warbler. It will remain to be seen whether the Yellow Warbler proves to be a more passive host in this region where, presumably, the Cowbird is a recent invader.

Athens Bird Club members making the initial observation recorded here include: Dr. W. P. Kellam, Carrol Hart, Fred Birchmore and the author.—DON L. JACOBS, *Department of Botany, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia*.

COWBIRD BREEDING AT DALTON.—A young Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) was observed in our yard at Dalton, Georgia, during July and the early part of August, 1953. The Cowbird, following and being fed by a male Towhee, was first identified on July 13, although it had been seen several days earlier.

During the first week of observation the adult male Towhee fed the Cowbird regularly. There were two young Towhees, approximately the same size as the Cowbird and apparently about the same age, in the yard. The adult male Towhee cuffed the young Towhees when they sought food from him, and at no time did we see him feed the young Towhees. We never saw the female Towhee feed the Cowbird.

By July 19 the "father" Towhee was beginning to wean the Cowbird. Thereafter, feedings by the adult Towhee were irregular, although the Cowbird continued to follow the Towhee and to give insistent food calls.

The Cowbird remained in the yard and visited our feeding station almost daily through the first week of August and was last observed on August 7.

Several families of Towhees grow up in our yard each year. The Cowbird was conspicuous because it walked and had no white in its tail. When the two young Towhees and the Cowbird were together, differences in shape, coloring, and actions were readily noted.—

ANNE AND R. E. HAMILTON, 704 Greenwood Drive, Dalton, Georgia.