

# THE ORIOLE

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



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No. 1



# THE ORIOLE

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## THE BURROWING OWL IN COASTAL GEORGIA AND SOUTH CAROLINA

BY IVAN R. TOMKINS

In "SOUTH CAROLINA BIRD LIFE," Sprunt and Chamberlain have given a paragraph to the occurrence of the Western Burrowing Owl, (*Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea*), in South Carolina, based on a sight record of mine, made on Bay Point, Beaufort County, on Dec. 7, 1943. Although in the letter reporting the occurrence to Chamberlain, I offered the theory that a specimen would probably prove to be *hypugaea*, the inclusion in that form in the work was the doing of the authors.

Burleigh, in "GEORGIA BIRDS", places the species on the hypothetical list as far as Georgia is concerned, because the Menabonis reported one seen on a "Sea Island" in McIntosh County. There is no island of that name in that county, so perhaps the captials were better left off. Burleigh gives the reference incorrectly in the bibliography as Oriole 8, 13-14. It should have been Oriole 6, 13-14.

Although there still seems to be no specimen from either state, and according to our standards the species is still on the hypothetical list, some of my later observations are detailed here, as a guide to some other who may be lucky enough to obtain a specimen, and prove which subspecies is to be occasionally found along this coast.

On Feb. 17, 1953, I found one of these small owls on Elba Island, Georgia, about five miles east of Savannah along the river. It was flushed twice and plainly seen in flight. It was a month later before I got back to the locality, and the bird was not there, but it had been using a shallow hole in the earthen dike under the end of a 6"x6" timber. Eight pellets were found, and were much smaller than pellets from the Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) or the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) the only other owls one would expect to find in such an open location. Some remains of the Fiddler Crab, *Uca* sp, were noted and the pellets were examined by Dr. David Johnston, who found the remains of 22 House Mice (*Mus musculus*), and the elytra of some beetles. The pellets were also measured and photographed.



Again on Nov. 3, 1959, I found a Burrowing Owl close by U. S. Highway Alt. 17, about two miles north of the Georgia line, in Jasper County, South Carolina. Unfortunately I did not succeed in collecting the bird, but saw it on the ground, in a small willow, and several times in flight. It could not be located on succeeding days, and though the place has been visited numerous times since, no other has been seen.

So there are reports of the species on four different occasions, in November, December, January, and February, spread out over about 90 miles of the coast. Certain things in common add up to a desired habitat. It has only been reported from near the coast; on open ground; and with a certain type of shelter available. The bird seen by the Menabonis used a hollow log; the Bay Point bird was near some timbers from a wrecked lighter; on Elba Island it used a hole under a timber; and on Alt. 17, it was seen near an old shack with some board piles near. It is obviously superfluous to suggest that all birders examine such places. Ivan R. Tomkins, 1231 East 50th St., Jan. 11, 1961.

## THE OCCURRENCE OF THE RUFF IN GEORGIA

BY ALMA COOKE AND HEDVIG CATER

On March 31, 1961 the writers investigated a shallow wet weather pond in a pasture in Houston County, Georgia south of Warner Robins. The area is part of a flattened out ridge being about 200 feet higher in altitude than the Ocmulgee River which is four miles to the east. It is open country, mostly in pasture and cultivated fields. On a number of occasions we have seen shore birds and ducks at this site when there has been enough rain. Also in this same land lot Golden Plovers have been seen two different years during the fall migration.

The pasture had been burned over so the field was relatively free of vegetation except for the new bermuda grass. The closest trees or shrubs are about 125 yards to one side of this pond and much more distant on the other three sides.

A number of shore birds were recognized at the edges of the pond including Pectoral Sandpipers and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. There was also a group of small sandpipers at one end.

Our attention, however, was attracted to a single sandpiper which was in the company of the Yellowlegs. We observed the bird over a period of two hours in midafternoon from a distance of 75 feet with 7 x 50 binoculars and with the 15 power ocular of a telescope. The bird

was viewed from all angles, having the best lighting when the sun was behind us.

The size was between that of the Lesser and the Greater Yellowlegs. We had all three birds in the same field of vision more than once.

Its legs were a dull yellow rather than the bright yellow of the Yellowlegs. The legs were shorter in proportion to the body so did not give the long-legged appearance of the Yellowlegs. They were long, however, in proportion to those of the Pectoral Sandpiper so did not give the "squat" appearance of the latter.

The bill was dark (we could detect no lighter color near the base) and was longer than the width of the head but not long—appearing like that of the Yellowlegs. The bill was slender like that of a sandpiper rather than short and knobbed like a plover's bill. It did not have the small—head, thin—neck appearance of the Upland Plover. The general proportions and shape of the bird were more like that of the Solitary Sandpiper.

There were no markings on the head or crown. There was no eye stripe and no conspicuous eye ring. The eyelids, however, made a thin light outline above and below the eye. It was not a continuous ring.

The back was a mottled darkish brown with lighter feather edgings, as opposed to the gray color of the Yellowlegs. Its head, neck, throat, and upper breast was a dark color, almost charcoal, except for a slightly lighter "chin area". The fine streaking or mottling on the breast blended into the white of the belly leaving no distinct line of demarcation as in the Pectoral Sandpiper. The rest of the belly was solid white.

The bird stayed in the shallowest water probing deliberately and very busily in the mud, appearing more hungry than the Yellowlegs. The Yellowlegs would feed in a little deeper water. The bird in question did not seem easily frightened but flew a few feet to another location on the shore when the other shore birds would fly. When he flew, two white oval-shaped areas separated by the dark color of the rump and lower back were clearly visible.

The last view we had was after he had walked onto dry ground, "sat down" in the low cropped grass, and was preening himself. Soon after, a shot was heard and all the shore birds flew in an easterly direction toward the river.

Besides binoculars and telescope, we had both Peterson's and Pough's



field guides with us so could check carefully all the identification marks noted.

The size, coloring, general contour, patterns (still and in flight), and habits seemed to us to fit only one bird in the Field Guides, . . . that of the Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) in changing plumage since this was the end of March. We learned later that the female, called a Reeve, is considerably smaller than the male and would be smaller than a Lesser Yellowlegs. We also read that there are no subspecies and no near allies, and that no other wader is quite like it.

The bird was not collected and the observers are not familiar with this species in its normal range. We report it only for consideration for Georgia's hypothetical list. We feel such a report may help our collectors to be on the alert for this species.

From the literature we learn that the Ruff's normal range is in the eastern hemisphere but it is a great wanderer and has been noted almost annually on our Atlantic coast. It travels with the Yellowlegs and has been observed from Greenland and the Maritime Provinces of Canada to North Carolina and the Barbados as well as Surinam (Dutch Guiana). It also has been seen inland to Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa.

Most of the observations of this species in the western hemisphere have been in the fall so if this was indeed a Ruff we saw, our observation is the more interesting since this was late March, in the spring migration.

Ed. Note: Since receiving this report Drs. Harrington and Denton inform me that they observed a Ruff at the Savannah River Refuge, on the S.C. side in late January 1961. Miss Cooke and Mrs. Cater's long, careful observation of the bird here in reported should entitle it to a place on our hypothetical list until collections substantiate the record.

Alma Cooke

Butler, Georgia

Hedvig Cater

Warner Robins, Georgia

January 31, 1961

## GENERAL NOTES

**THE PIED-BILLED GREBE BREEDING IN BURKE COUNTY, GA.**—Breeding records for the Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) in Georgia are still too few to allow accurate definition of its breeding range and abundance in the state. The reporting of additional records will help clarify this point.

While driving along Georgia Highway 56 in Burke County on May 22, 1960, members of the Augusta Bird Club observed two adult Pied-billed Grebes accompanied by five or six young, possibly one-third grown. This family of Grebes occupied a shallow pond approximately one-half acre in size located 10 miles south of Waynesboro. The pond was dry during the drought of 1958 but during seasons of normal rainfall usually contains some water. The vegetation in the pond consisted mostly of weeds and small hardwood saplings. No one ventured to wade the pond in an effort to locate the used nest.—J. Fred Denton, 1510 Pendleton Rd., Augusta, Ga., Feb. 2, 1961.

**THE MALLARD BREEDING IN GEORGIA.**—On page 20 of the hunting edition (Vol. 9, No. 2, December, 1960) of *GEORGIA GAME AND FISH*, there appears a photograph of a female Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) sitting on a nest. The photograph carries this caption, "Here's proof that waterfowl nest in Georgia. This Mallard was photographed on the Clark Hill Management Area near Thomson." An inquiry to the editor revealed that the nest was found by H. D. Roper, Refuge Manager on the Clark Hill Area, probably in northern McDuffie County, was photographed by Glynn Worley, photographer for the Game and Fish Department, and was a wild Mallard nesting naturally in the area. The date, contents of the nest and the ultimate outcome were not learned.

*GEORGIA BIRDS* (Burleigh, 1958) makes no mention of the Mallard nesting in Georgia; nor are there any records of its nesting in the state recorded in the ornithological literature. Mr. George Moore, Chief of Game Management for Georgia, commenting on my inquiry states, "that attempts by Mallards to nest in Georgia are not unusual and that many of the nesting ducks are successful". That crippled birds sometime nest in the state was suspected, and it is generally known that in recent years many Mallards have been raised in the state under semi-wild conditions by commercial hunting preserves for shooting purposes, but to what extent breeding occurs in the wild is not known. It seems very desirable that bird students investigate reports of wild Mallards breeding in the



state and record them in the ornithological literature.—J. Fred Denton, 1510 Pendleton Rd., Augusta, Ga. Feb. 2, 1961.

**NOTES ON THREE SPECIES BREEDING AT AMICOLOLA FALLS STATE PARK.**—The night of June 14, 1958, I and my family camped in the small island encompassed by the highway at the foot of the falls in Amicolola Falls State Park, Dawson County, Ga. An hour that afternoon and the next morning was spent surveying the birds of the area. Three of the species found breeding there were of particular interest.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: *Centurus carolinus*. A pair was watched as they entered and re-entered their nesting hole in the dead top of a scarlet oak growing in the yard of a house across the road from the park headquarters. Burleigh (1958. Birds of Georgia) mentions a bird collected, and presumably breeding, at Dawsonville. The present record extends its breeding range about 15 miles further into the mountains.

Rough-winged Swallow: *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*. A nest hole of a pair of these swallows was located in a 15 foot high roadcut bank of bright red clay at the entrance to the park. The nest tunnel was two feet from the top of the bank, below the level of the dark topsoil, and quite inaccessible from below. The adults were feeding an undetermined number of young which were audibly "peeping" within the tunnel.

Louisiana Waterthrush: *Seiurus motacilla*. Two pairs of these interesting warblers inhabited the stream within the park. As we ate supper one pair foraged among the rocks and along the stream bank not 10 feet from our table. The next morning I awoke to find a bird peering in the open door of the tent not three feet from my face. Observation of their activities revealed that the young had already left the nest and been guided across the paved road to a large dead log lying in a damp, fern-grown wash by the road shoulder. The parents gathered food in the creek whose banks had been cleared of vegetation then flew across the road to feed the three or four young secreted in the more protected place.—J. Fred Denton, 1510 Pendleton Rd., Augusta, Ga. Feb. 2, 1961.

**BLUE JAY NESTING ON THE GROUND.**—On May 20, 1960, Dr. A. P. Briggs showed me a nest of the Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) located on the ground on the golf course at the Forest Hills Veterans Administration Hospital in Augusta. The nest was situated on the ground between a bunch of cotton grass and the base of a crabapple tree on a gently sloping low bank at the edge of the fairway. The crabapple tree, approximately 5 ins. in diameter, was leaning at about 45° and offered some shelter to

the nest from above. A few weeds, bunches of grass, briars and small hickory saplings, less than two feet high, offered sparse cover to hide it from the many golfers passing every day. In the immediate area, some of them shading the nest site, were other crabapple trees, shortleaf pines and dogwoods. The nest held three young birds four days old at this time.

Dr. Briggs examined the nest the next day and found the nestlings hungry, weak, dehydrated, and apparently deserted. On examination two days later the nest was empty. A search of the area revealed that two of the young had been moved to a new makeshift nest in a bunch of grass two feet from the original nest. These two nestlings now looked healthy and strong again; the third was unaccounted for, probably having died and been removed from the area. On the next visit four days later the family had moved from the area.

A cursory search of the literature has failed to reveal a previous record of the Blue Jay nesting on the ground. However, Bent's LIFE HISTORIES, Vol. 15, describes a nest built under the overhang of a cutbank beside a woodland road, the site being about four feet above the road level.—J. Fred Denton, 1510 Pendleton Rd., Augusta, Ga., Feb. 2, 1961.

**NOTES FROM LAKE BLACKSHEAR.**—On January 18, 1961 at Lake Blackshear from the Crisp County side, we observed the following: scores of American Coot (*Fulica americana*), one immature Common Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus*), one pair American Widgeon (*Mareca americana*), three female Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), both Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) and Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*), and a flight in V formation of 13 Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*). With telescope we could see a light area on the head of the geese bisecting the otherwise solid black appearance of the head and long neck. Alma Cooke, Butler, Ga. and Hedvig S. Cater, 315 Davis Drive N., Warner Robins, Ga., February 10, 1961.

Ed. Note: On January 29 I noted the following species at Lake Blackshear: Wilsons' Snipe 2, American Coot 200 plus, Herring Gull 21, Ring-billed Gull 8, Pintail 2, and Pied-billed Grede 6.

**THE KING RAIL IN TAYLOR COUNTY.**—On January 5, 1961 at the Robert Bell farm pond north of Reynolds in Taylor county, Tom Carter called our attention to a bird entering the tall grasses at the water's edge. As the one bird disappeared another emerged from the other side of the clump of grass. He entered the water and swam in our direction along the edge of the pond "pumping" his head forward and back with each stroke. We



observed him from a distance of 15 feet as he passed a space where no tall grasses blocked our full view. The smooth reddish-brown front and the brown back, the long bill, and the shape of head and neck indicated that the two birds were King Rails (*Rallus elegans*). The pond is marshy around much of its edge and is suitable rail habitat.—Alma Cooke, Butler, Ga. and Hedvig S. Cater, Warner Robins, Ga., February 10, 1961.

**NOTES FROM MIDDLE GEORGIA.**—On May 1, 1960 Mr. Cater and I observed a Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) south of Big Indian Creek in Houston county. He was running down a logging road ahead of our car late in the afternoon. He flew low into the pine trees and disappeared from view. The plumage was much browner than that of the domesticated turkey. The area is reforested with pine trees and is many miles from the closest habitation.

October 29, 1960 we saw three Greater Yellowlegs at the site of Lake Chukalaka just north of Gordon in Wilkinson county. In the lake bed the birds were feeding beside a trickle of water.

January 1, 1961 the writer and Mrs. M. Travis Grubbs saw a single Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*) in the shrubbery bordering a beaver pond in Houston county. The pond itself is thickly grown up with vegetation. The bird was seen at close range showing the yellow eye-ring continuing to the base of the beak, black eye, two white wing-bars, and a vivid yellow throat. This is the same pond where we had a February 23rd observation of a Yellow-breasted Chat and several winter observations of Catbirds—Hedvig S. Cater, 315 Davis Drive N. Warner Robins, Ga., February 10, 1961.

**WINTER RECORDS FOR THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE AT WARNER ROBINS, GEORGIA.**—During the winter and spring season of 1959-1960 we had Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) come to our feeder almost daily from December 16 through April 16. Several days we had three different individuals at the same time. From December 16 through March 29 one and sometimes two "females" appeared. Between February 1 and 15 an adult male in full plumage came daily. From March 5 through 24 a young male not yet in full plumage appeared almost daily. He was much more colorful than the two "females" with whom he appeared. He was darker brownish-black on the back and quite bright orange especially on the breast. Sometimes he would sing a rapid "tew, tew, tew". The number of syllables would vary from one to five. One time a rasping utterance was noted.

April 4th a "female", with brownish back and yellow-orange underneath, but with a black pattern on the throat appeared. April 5, 7, and 11 an adult male came. April 16 an immature male with a black patch through the eye was seen.

Judging by the different plumage patterns we concluded there had been at least six different individuals, probably seven, if the adult male in February was a different bird from the adult male in April.—Hedvig S. Cater, 315 Davis Drive N., Warner Robins, Ga., February 10, 1961.

**HORNED LARK NOTES.**—Our earliest observation of Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*) for the winter season 1960-61 was November 20 when Mrs. M. Travis Grubbs and the writer saw about two dozen in a large plowed field south of Kathleen in Houston county.

January 5, Alma Cooke, Mr. Cater, and I observed several dozen in a grain field in Taylor County. Most of the adult birds we have seen closely (including previous years) have had yellow throats and a white stripe over the eye. In this group we could see some adult birds whose throats were white as well as the eye stripe.

January 8, Mr. Cater and I saw a flock of three to four dozen in a grain field in Peach county just west of the Ralph Tabor farm home. Again we saw adults with white throats as well as with yellow throats and the white eye stripe. There was also one adult with a yellow throat and a deeper yellow color over the eye although it did not seem to extend the whole length of the stripe. Observations were made with a 25 power telescope.

January 18, Alma Cooke and I found two Horned Larks remaining in a plowed field in Dooly county south of Unadilla after we had heard what we thought was a flock of larks flying away. The first bird, an adult, remained on the top of a furrow facing us for a long time affording an excellent view. The second bird, an immature, was not seen until we walked to within a few feet of it.

January 18 we also recognized two adults through our telescopes out of a group of birds in the furrows of a field in Macon county between Montezuma and Marshallville. Three days earlier Mr. Cater and I had found this field "promising" but could not distinguish Horned Larks. Other birds feeding in the field were Water Pipts, Savannah Sparrows, and Vesper Sparrows.—Hedvig S. Cater, 315 Davis Drive N., Warner Robins, Ga., February 10, 1961.



**BLUE JAY OVER 11 YEARS OLD.**—On November 30, 1949, I banded a Blue Jay, (*Cyanocitta cristata*), in my yard with number 36-339604. It was found dead from unknown causes within a block of my home by a pupil of Miss Margaret Carmichael, Morningside School, Atlanta, on January 25, 1961. Thus the bird lived for nearly 11 years and two months after banding, and it was at least 11½ years old. It had repeated only once in my mist nets, on June 6, 1954.—Harold S. Peters, 968 Cumberland Road, N.E., Atlanta 6, Ga., February 15, 1961.

**WHISTLING SWAN IN ROME AREA.**—A Whistling Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) was observed on Paris Lake, a few miles from Rome, on November 20, 1960, by several members of the Floyd County Audubon Society. The lone bird, apparently a stray, was reported to have been on the lake for some days prior to this observation. It was seen first in the water, then in flight, and again swimming in another area of the lake. This was the first record of a Whistling Swan in Floyd County since 1952.—Louise Nunnally, 8 Washington Apts., Rome Ga., March 11, 1961.

**A SECOND SPECIMEN OF THE GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL FROM GEORGIA.**—On February 13, 1961, a dead gull was found on the beach at the north end of Tybee Island. At first glance it seemed to be a Herring Gull (*Larus a. smithsonianus*), but the massive head and bill, then the large size of the bird, suggested a further look. It is quite a different matter to identify a live bird in the field than to do the same with a dead bird in hand. Most of the works available are devoted to other matter than a description of the various changes of plumage, color of bill and eyes, etc., of the subadult stages, but this specimen fits into the meager description and the measurements given in Ridgway's "Birds of Middle and North America," and does not fit those of any other species, so it has been identified as a male Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*), probably in the first winter plumage.

This bird had lost the manus, or hand, of the left wing. It is thought that, being unable to fly and find food in a normal manner, it had drifted and swam into the Savannah River entrance, gone ashore and starved to death. Examination of the viscera indicated starvation. The bird had not been there long, for I had walked over that portion of the beach two days before, and looked over the usual gathering of gulls, terns, etc. It is fortunate that, with a little care, the specimen could be preserved.

Walter J. Hoxie had a specimen brought to him from off Tybee, at

an unknown date, perhaps between 1908 and 1911. It is in the Hoxie Collection at the University of Georgia. Sprunt and Chamberlain, in "South Carolina Bird Life", 1949, list several sight records and a case where photographs of the species were made, but do not tell of an actual specimen.

Sprunt, in his revision of Howell's "Florida Bird Life", lists numerous occasions when the species has been seen, and quotes Cory to the effect that one was shot at St. Augustine in the winter of 1894-95.

In Georgia, aside from the Hoxie specimen, Le Conte in 1849, lists the species as occurring in the state. Evidently specimens are rare anywhere in these southeastern states.—Ivan R. Tomkins, 1231 East 50th St., Savannah, Ga., February 15, 1961.

## FROM THE FIELD

W. A. Wells of Columbus reports a first-year male Baltimore Oriole in Mrs. John T. Miller's yard on Feb. 11, 1961, a female Summer Tanager in early Dec. 1960, and the Tanager again later in January. Mr. Wells et al conducted a census in the vicinity of Columbus on Dec. 31 and turned up Horned Grebe 3, Common Loon 1, American Woodcock 1, Ground Dove 3, Orange-crowned Warbler 1, Brewer Blackbird 10, Pine Siskin 3, and Fox Sparrow 10. He and other members of his party censused Callaway Gardens on Jan. 1, 1961 and found the Horned Grebe 1, Canada Goose 32, Ruddy Duck 6, Pileated Woodpecker 6, Junco 500 plus, and the Fox Sparrow 10. Ivan Tomkins from Savannah wrote around March 9th that a few spring birds were coming in and mentioned four Wilson's Plovers, a few Tree Swallows and an unidentified Jaeger chasing a Forster's Tern. On January 18th he saw over 250 Red-throated Loons moving southward offshore. Eugene and Louise Cypert and party conducted a census of a portion of the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge on Jan. 2, 1961 and reported the following interesting finds: Snowy Egret 1, American Bittern 1, White Ibis 25, Sandhill Crane 18, Herring Gull 5, Tree Swallow 654, Catbird 85, Baltimore Oriole 1, and other species totaling 91 altogether with 12,831 individuals. Milton Hopkins heard flocks of Sandhill Cranes passing near Osierfield on March 3 and 4. He noted an adult Ring-billed Gull over a farm pond on March 18.



## NEWS AND COMMENTS

BACK NUMBERS OF THE ORIOLE AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER.—Ralph Ramsey, 814 Drewry St., N. E. Atlanta 6, Georgia has indicated that all back numbers of The Orioles are available except the following out-of-print issues:

Vol. V No. 3—September 1940

Vol. VI No. 2—June 1941

Vol. XII No. 4—October 1947

These out-of-print numbers will be reprinted as funds become available.

Libraries and others who may wish to obtain a complete set of The Oriole should be encouraged to buy a set now while most of the numbers are still available. Anyone who buys a set now will be sent the out-of-print numbers as soon as they are reprinted. The price of the complete set, Vol. I to Vol. XXIV, is \$55.00. The majority of the back numbers of The Oriole sell for 50 cents each, however, there are several which sell for \$1.00 and a few for 25 cents each.

The following regional papers are also available: Birds of Athens, by Thomas Burleigh, 50 cents and The Birdlife of the Savannah River Delta, Gaviiformes through Charadriiformes by Ivan R. Tomkins, \$1.50

### NOTICE TO ORIOLE CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors of manuscript to The Oriole who desire to obtain reprints of their articles should so indicate the fact when the material is first submitted for publication.

### ATLANTA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Louis Fink has kindly sent me a copy of a compilation of Christmas counts from that area which includes totals of all species and their numbers recorded for each of the years from 1941 to 1960. Rufus Godwin was the compiler. The information is mimeographed and clipped in a paper folder. It is selling for 25 cents and a copy should be useful to all Atlanta birders and other interested persons. It can be obtained from Mr. Fink at P. O. Box 4418, Atlanta 2, Georgia.

MAKE YOUR TECHNICAL WRITING USEFUL—by Werner O. Nagel, 1960 American Fisheries Society, P. O. Box 483, McLean, Virginia, 31pp., \$1.00.

Scientific research is a two-part job. Finding facts or making observations, however is only part of it; making these facts available to

those who need them and are interested in them is the other part. This manual is actually a summary of essential steps in presenting research material clearly and effectively. It should prove useful both to the beginner and the more experienced writer in clarifying and arranging his material for publication.

A GATHERING OF SHORE BIRDS.—by Henry Marion Hall, 1961, The Devin-Adair Company, New York, 242 pp. \$10.00.

This work is edited by Roland C. Clement and illustrated in pen-and-ink sketches by John Henry Dick.

Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the shore birds by Mr. Clement and has headings under general information including nesting distribution, conservation aspects, hints on observing, and two pages on the classification of this sub-order.

Dr. Hall has been informatively interested in the shore bird group since the turn of the century, at which time he was shooting them as game birds but has since devoted over fifty years to the observation of shore birds with binoculars.

As the publisher indicates, this book is attempting to bridge the gap between a scientific monograph and a popular presentation of a sub-order of birds. This goal, in my opinion, has been accomplished, with few exceptions in an interesting and readable manner.

There are accounts of all 57 species which have been known to breed on the North American continent north of the Panama Canal. Ranges given cover the entire species, all races having been lumped together for a particular species. Mr. Dick's 95 drawings accompanying species accounts for the most part interpret that particular bird in typical attitudes but not to scale. The relative sizes of American shore birds are depicted on end-paper drawings. The drawings are not intended for field identification purposes but do effectively and pleasingly present the prominent features of each species.

Following the introduction is a short account of the shore bird families including twelve additional drawings of the shore bird family types.

The major portion of this book consists of species accounts arranged with a short paragraph or two on the family and then followed by general characteristics, distribution, differences in sexes, clutch size, and numbers of species in that family. The species accounts include personal observations of Dr. Hall with additions by Roland Clement. These are supplemented by material gathered by other workers who have done intensive studies on a particular species such as Ivan Tomkins of Georgia on the Oystercatcher and its dependence on oyster ecology.



At the conclusion of each species account information is briefly given on the origin of the nomenclature, field characters, and range, in that order. Following this major section of North American species accounts sections dealing with South American shorebirds, American shorebirds in Europe, European shorebirds in America, Siberian shorebirds in America, a bibliography and an index. These last sections are useful in determining the probability of an American observer's chance of seeing one of the wanderers.

As a reference in addition to our standard field guides and for some good reading concerning shore bird abundance in former times and the singular habits of many in the group this book is an invaluable one for any ornithologist's library.

THE CHRISTOPHER HAPPODLT JOURNAL, Contributions from the Charleston Museum XIII.—by Claude Henry Neuffer, 1960, The Charleston Museum, Charleston, S. C. 214pp. \$5.00.

This volume contains a short biographical sketch of Christopher Hoppoldt, a protege of the Reverend John Bachman. This is followed by a biography of John Bachman consisting of VII chapters, the contents of which will be of interest to ornithologists in particular since his close relationship with John J. Audubon is referred to in numerous instances. Readers familiar with Audubon and Bachman history will recall the marriage of Bachman's daughter Maria to John Woodhouse Audubon and the personal instruction given to Bachman's sister-in-law Maria Martin by Audubon in her preparation of southern flowers and backgrounds for his *Birds of America*.

It was Bachman who supplied much of the scientific accuracy to Audubon's works although Bachman's fame has been overshadowed by Audubon, who is best known for his paintings.

The Christopher Hoppoldt Journal itself brings to light much valuable historical source material that has not been presented before. The journal is an account of a six-month's visit to Europe from June 5th to December 27, 1838 written by Christopher Hoppoldt, who at the time was a fellow traveler with the Reverend John Bachman. At this time Hoppoldt was fourteen years old although he has in these accounts covered remarkably well the happenings during the trip, including dates, places, and the meetings of Bachman with prominent European scientists of that day. The journal is all the more important historically due to the fact that

Bachman's journal was burned along with his library by General Sherman on Feb. 17, 1865.

Dr. Neuffer has done a great service to scientists and historians alike in assimilating this invaluable material in one volume. The journal itself was preserved by Mrs. John B. Ross of Washington, D. C., a granddaughter of Christopher Hoppoldt.—Milton Hopkins, Jr.