

# THE ORIOLE

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



VOL. XXVIII

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No. 3



# THE ORIOLE

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## AN UNUSUAL GATHERING OF SHOREBIRDS AT AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

By J. FRED DENTON and WILL POST, JR.

An unusual gathering of shorebirds occurred at Augusta, Georgia, in the fall of 1962. The site of concentration was one of the oxidation ponds at the Continental Can Company pulp mill located nine miles south of Augusta in Richmond County, Georgia. The oxidation ponds, of which there are several, were built in 1959 to detoxify the pulp wood waste. The pond that was particularly attractive to shorebirds is the first to receive the waste from the mill. In this rectangular pond with dimensions of 300 by 1000 ft., the undigested cellulose rises to the surface to form a floating cake up to 8 inches thick in places. This cake, concentrated at the northern end of the pond, forms an artificial "mud flat" of approximately one and one-half acres. The dry, slightly uneven surface of the cake is a dark gray-brown color. Inside, it is a dark gray and has the consistency of soft mud. The birds seem to find abundant food as well as a place to rest on the flat. A cursory examination of some of this material from near the edge revealed only a few minute Diptera larvae and several larvae of the rat-tailed maggot (*Aristalis* sp.).

From 5 September through 2 December, 1962, the authors, either singly or together, made 23 trips to the oxidation ponds. During this period 22 species of shorebirds were recorded. The dates of occurrence and the number of individuals of each species recorded are shown in table 1. The three species, excepting the common resident Killdeer, that occurred in greatest numbers were the Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper and Semipalmated Sandpiper. Of the shorebirds recorded with any degree of regularity in the Augusta area only the Whiterumped Sandpiper failed to appear on this "mud flat"—and it may have been missed. Six species were recorded for the first time in Richmond County and the Dowitcher recorded definitely for only the second time. Summaries of their occurrence and comments on the more unusual species recorded are presented below. Although the collection of several species was indicated, this was impossible because of the depth of the pond and



nature of the floating cake. However, each species was carefully and leisurely studied from three directions with glasses and scopes.

#### Summary of Species

Semipalmated Plover (5 Sept.-4 Nov.). This plover is a regular but scarce spring and fall transient at Augusta. Previous records for occurrence in fall ranged from 1 August to 18 September; they are now extended to 4 November.

Golden Plover (13 Sept.-2 Dec.). This species is now a regular but scarce fall transient occurring between 10 September and 2 December; it is of irregular occurrence in spring. Several of the birds seen in September were in partial molt from breeding plumage indicating they were adults.

Black-bellied Plover (6 Sept.-28 Oct.). This is the first record of this species for Richmond County. Two birds were recorded at the Clark Hill Reservoir some 30 miles north of Augusta on 13 May 1958. The single birds seen 26 and 28 October were associated with Golden Plovers.

Ruddy Turnstone (13 Sept.-6 Oct.). This is the first record of the occurrence of this bird in Richmond County and only the second record of its occurrence in the interior of the state, the first being two birds observed by Denton at the Clark Hill Reservoir on 13 May, 1958.

Upland Plover. A rare spring and fall transient in Richmond County; dates of fall occurrences 4 August to 13 September. The single bird recorded was carefully studied at close range.

Knot (5-6 Sept.). This is the first record of this species for Richmond County and also the first from the interior of the state. The two birds, present for two days, were in fall plumage. They were carefully studied at 30 yards through the telescope and compared with nearby Pectoral Sandpipers and Lesser Yellowlegs as to size and body shape. In flight they flocked with the Pectoral Sandpipers revealing their contrasting light tails.

Dunlin (26 Oct.-2 Dec.). The three previous records of the occurrence of this species at Augusta were of single birds recorded during the period 1-8 November. Apparently the attractive habitat induced a greater number of birds to stop over for a longer period of time.

Dowitcher sp (19 -30 Sept.). The single previous record of the occurrence of this species in Richmond County was a bird collected by Murphey in September, 1894.

Stilt Sandpiper (16-29 Sept.). A fairly regular but scarce fall migrant at Augusta with previous records of occurrence 1-22 September.

Western Sandpiper (7-23 Sept.). Although not definitely recorded before in Richmond County, this species undoubtedly passes through the Augusta area at infrequent intervals in fall. On each occasion it was possible to compare this species with the Semipalmated Sandpipers with which it associated.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper (16-23 Sept.). This is the first record of the occurrence of this species at Augusta and only the second record of its occurrence in the interior of the state, the first being a single bird observed in Irwin County by Hopkins on 6 September, 1957.

Wilson's Phalarope (13-16 Sept.). When first observed this bird was associated with a flock of 30 Blue-winged Teal with which it swam and fed. It also flew with the ducks the several times that they were flushed, so it is likely that it had been migrating with them. When observed three days later the Phalarope was feeding with a flock of Lesser Yellowlegs and Pectoral and Semipalmated Sandpipers in a shallow mud hole left in a drained oxidation pond nearby. This is the first record of the occurrence of this species at Augusta, as well as in the interior of the state, the several previous records all having been from Savannah.

1510 Pendleton Road  
Augusta, Georgia  
and  
1360 Boulevard  
Athens, Georgia



Table 1. Occurrence and numbers of shorebirds at Augusta, Georgia, fall 1962.

	5 Sept. (1.5 hr)	6 Sept. (1.5 hr)	7 Sept. (1 hr)	9 Sept. (1 hr)	10 Sept. (2 hr)	13 Sept. (2.75 hr)	14 Sept. (1.5 hr)	16 Sept. (2.5 hr)	18 Sept. (2.5 hr)	19 Sept. (1.75 hr)	22 Sept. (2 hr)	23 Sept. (1.5 hr)	29 Sept. (1.25 hr)	30 Sept. (1.5 hr)	6 Oct. (1.5 hr)	26 Oct. (1 hr)	28 Oct. (1 hr)	4 Nov. (1.5 hr)	10 Nov. (1 hr)	18 Nov. (1 hr)	21 Nov. (1 hr)	1 Dec. (1 hr)	2 Dec. (1 hr)
Semipalmated Plover	14		7	4	5	6	6	5	11	6	6	6	1		3	2			2				
Killdeer	8	8	8	6	8	9	14	16	14	14	22	20	12	14	12	24	24	20	20	28	25	32	20
Am. Golden Plover							1	1	1	3	5	5	5	6	3	8	6	4	6	3	4	1	1
Black-bellied Plover		2														1	1						
Ruddy Turnstone						5	5	3	4	5						1							
Common Snipe										1	1	1	2		5	8	8	5	11	8	10	5	3
Upland Plover						1																	
Spotted Sandpiper	2	1	1			5	2	3	1							3	1						
Solitary Sandpiper								1		2	2	2											
Greater Yellowlegs	1		9							1	1	1		1									
Lesser Yellowlegs	16	15	25	12	20	18	22	20	35	25	20	20	5	4	8	7	4						
Knot	2	2																					
Pectoral Sandpiper	38	30	35	20	30	35	35	25	37	35	35	32	48	50	10	7	6	1	3				
Least Sandpiper	20	18		2	7	4	6	9	1	14	11	10	1	1	6	2	1	3	3	4	2	4	
Dunlin																12	12	14	21	10	15	4	4
Dowitcher sp.													1	2	2	1	1						
Stilt Sandpiper													2	2	3	2	1						
Semipalmated Sandpiper	20	15	35	5	10	2	15	17	14	12	15	13	4	4						4			
Western Sandpiper					5			4	1		2	1											
Buff-breasted Sandpiper								2	4	3	3	2											
Sanderling	3	2			4	2	3	3	4	4	9	9	3	2	1								
Wilson's Phalarope						1																	

## A VISIT TO MINNIE'S ISLAND, FORMER HOME OF THE IVORY BILL

By EUGENE CYPERT

For the past two decades some of us have entertained a faint glimmering hope that Okefenokee Swamp may still shelter somewhere within its vast almost inaccessible forests a few Ivory-billed Woodpeckers (*Campephilus principalis*).

Since my recent trip to Minnie's Island, one of Okefenokee's most inaccessible spots, my hopes that a few Ivory-bills still persist in the swamp are even more faint.

May 31, 1963 Refuge Aid Jewett Hall and I had the good fortune to get transported to Minnie's Island by helicopter and to spend the day there. It had been more than thirty years since anyone had been on the island. Some time before the cessation of the timber cutting operations by the Hebard Cypress Company about 1927, the old logging railroad was removed. Since then a dense underbrush and a rough, log strewn, bog-hole swamp has been an almost impenetrable barrier between the Island and Minnie's Lake, the nearest negotiable water course.

Minnie's Island was the haunt of the Ivory-bill before and during the timber operations (1909-1927). Apparently this bird was always rare in Okefenokee as it was elsewhere. Nearly all the recorded observations of it in the swamp were made at or in the immediate vicinity of Minnie's Island.

Bryant Lee who lived most of his long life in the swamp told me that he had seen only a few Ivory-billed woodpeckers and that these were always at Minnie's Island. He must have been grown or nearly grown before he saw his first one. He said he killed it "to see what it was".

John M. Hopkins (1947) saw Ivory-bills on several occasions on Minnie's Island during the timber cruise for the Hebard Company 1901-03. Although he worked in the swamp for more than 40 years, first as superintendent of the Hebard Cypress Company and later as Manager of the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, he never saw the bird alive in woods after 1903.

Sam Mizell brought to Mr. Hopkins in 1912 a wounded Ivory-bill taken on Craven's Island, which is about two miles west of Minnie's Island. The bird was turned over to Dan Hebard who had it mounted.



The specimen is now in the Museum of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

A. H. Wright and Francis Harper (1913) did not see the bird in their reconnaissance in 1912. Their guide showed them three Ivory-bill nesting holes, all on or near Minnie's Island. They stated that only on rare occasions had Ivory-bills been seen by the natives as far away from Minnie's Island as Minnie's Lake or Billy's Lake.

Frederick V. Hebard (1941) reported that Bud Carter had told him of seeing Ivory-billed Woodpeckers on Minnie's Island as late as 1924.

Later reports of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in Okefenokee Swamp are open to doubt. Thomas Roddenberry and John Burch told Hebard (1941) of a large woodpecker which frequented a burn near the end of Suwannee Canal in 1933-34 which they believed was the Ivory-bill. Hebard believed that he had a glimpse of one at Round Top in Chase Prairie November 25, 1937.

There are rumors of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers being seen in various parts of the swamp as late as 1948 but there are no other published records.

Mr. Hall and I found that much of Minnie's Island is rather low ground probably subject to occasional flooding. There is a sparse stand of pond pine (*Pinus serotina*) of pulpwood size on the north end and a fair stand of slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*) of pulpwood and small sawlog size near the center. Much of the lower ground has a rather dense growth of hurrah bush (*Lyonia lucida*). The higher elevations in the pine woods have an abundance of blueberries (*Vaccinium*) and huckleberries (*Gaylussaccia*) of several species. Less abundant are other flatwoods shrubs like wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), fetterbush (*Leucothoe racemosa*) and switch cane (*Arundinaria tecta*). Saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) was present on the higher ground but was generally less abundant than is usual in the pine woods.

Probably the most distinctive feature of Minnie's Island is a hardwood hammock near the south end. Most of the trees in this hammock are second growth. They are predominantly water oak (*Quercus nigra*) and sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). There are more sweet gums here than I recall seeing on any of the other Okefenokee islands.

For some reason, let us hope for esthetic reasons, several large live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*) were left by the timber cutters. One of these

measured 16'6" in circumference at breast height. Also three or four large slash pines were left uncut in this hammock.

I believe that this hardwood is the part of the island that was attractive to Ivory-billed woodpeckers before the timber operations. Tanner (1942) says that over-aged sweet gum is the most important tree for Ivory-bills and that more use of them were made by the Ivory-bills on the Singer Tract in Louisiana than of any other kind of timber.

One can visualize the Minnie's Island hammock before the timber operations. There must have been a forest made up principally of over-aged oaks and sweet gums. Adjacent was the over-aged pine forest on the upland and the blackgum-bay forest and cypress forest in the swamp. In such a forest there would have always been some dead and decaying trees and limbs with accompanying bark beetles and borers which are so important as food to woodpeckers.

It is doubtful if the hammock alone could have supported a pair of Ivory-billed woodpeckers but it was probably the focal point of their range. The hammock coupled with the nearby over-aged pine and blackgum-bay forest could well have furnished a sustained yield of the insect food required by these birds.

There is no such over-aged forest on Minnie's Island now. Doubtless after the timber operations the few Ivory-bills which frequented the area were dispersed. Perhaps some of them survived for a few years but it is very doubtful if there are any at all in the swamp now.

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## GENERAL NOTES

**DICKCISSELS AGAIN BREEDING NEAR ATHENS, GEORGIA.**—On May 1, 1963, R. H. Peak and W. Post, Jr. observed several Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*) singing in a wheat field on the Agricultural Farm southeast of Athens. These birds remained there for several days, but abandoned the field when it was mowed. On May 19, W. Baker and I observed three males singing in a large one year old field approximately six miles southeast of Athens. On July 7, my wife and I briefly visited the field and saw at least two singing males and a female. One pair became greatly agitated as I approached the edge of the field. At this time the dominant plant in the field was camphor-weed (*Heterotheca latifolia*) with scattered clumps of Johnson-weed (*Holcus halapensis*), Lambs-quarters (*Chenopodium album*), and Ragweed (*Franseria*). Plants varied from one to five feet in height.

Search for more positive evidence of breeding was made on July 14. Two immature birds were flushed and a female was observed carrying a caterpillar in her bill. In the latter instance, the female, a male, and one immature bird became very agitated while I was in one part of the field. A search for the nest was fruitless. At least three pairs of adults were present in the field at the time. Nesting in the same field or along its edge were several pairs of grasshopper sparrows (*Ammodramus saviannarum*), field sparrows (*Spizella pusilla*), and redwings (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), and a pair each of blue grosbeaks (*Guiraca coerulea*), indigo buntings (*Passerina cyanea*), and bluebirds (*Sialis sialis*).

The most recent breeding record of the dickcissel in the Athens area was reported by Johnston in May, 1950 (Oriole, 15:34-46) in a wheat field north-west of the city. This site is now occupied by an industrial plant. HERBERT W. KALE, II. *Department of Zoology, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, July 17, 1963.*

**BARN SWALLOW NESTING IN WHITE COUNTY.**—A barn swallow was observed flying in the vicinity of an old barn in White County on July 2, 1963 by Alma Cooke and Marene Snow. The barn is located 1.5 miles north of Mossy Creek Camp Ground on Georgia Highway 254. We saw the bird again on July 4th.

Subsequently, on July 8, one bird was seen flying near the barn by Mrs. Snow. On July 10th, she observed a pair.

Mrs. Snow and Miss Lou Hoben returned to White County on July 12th and received permission from Mrs. Martha Hunt, on whose property

the barn is located, to search for a nest. They found the nest just inside the barn door on a rafter ten feet above the ground. It was lined with white chicken feathers and held three young birds. M. ALMA COOKE, *Butler, Ga.*, MAURENE W. SNOW, *2036 N. Johnson Ferry Road, Marietta, Ga.*

**ESCAPED GAMBEL'S QUAIL IN ATLANTA.**—The Gambel's quail (*Lophortyx gambelii*) is a native to the arid country of southern California and Mexico. Perhaps the capture of a male of this species in downtown Atlanta is worth recording for its curiosity value.

On August 14, 1963, I was called to Hayden Street in downtown Atlanta, a section of warehouses and light manufacturing. Three hours earlier, employees in one business had discovered a strange bird helpless in an areaway about 18 inches wide between two buildings. The bird was rescued, placed in a box and given water. I took the bird to the home of Mrs. Claire Gordon, and together we identified it as an adult male Gambel's quail. All markings were clear. The bird's wings were clipped (not severely, if I can judge right) and it shed many feathers in its efforts to escape. Preliminary inquiries at pet shops and game-bird breeders gave us no indication of who might have introduced this western species to Georgia, nor of how far it travelled to its discovery spot.

I released the bird at Piedmont Park, where it quickly took cover and was lost to view completely, five feet from a path. LOUIS C. FINK, *688 North Parkwood Road, Decatur, Georgia. August 15, 1963.*

**PIED-BILLED GREBE BREEDS AT ROME.**—On May 26, 1963 several members of the Floyd County Audubon Society made a field trip to the campus of Berry Schools at Rome, Ga. We had a visiting group from the Cherokee Audubon Society of Dalton, Ga. with us. On Victory Lake on the campus we saw an adult Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) leading five striped young birds across the water and into hiding in a thick growth of floating water weeds. The young birds were too small to have been hatched anywhere but at this lake. As far as we know, this is our first breeding record for the Pied-billed Grebe in Floyd County. GEORGE A. DORSEY. *Darlington School, Rome, Ga., June 4, 1963.*

**WESTERN LARK SPARROW AT TYBEE ISLAND, GA.**—On March 2, 1963, Ivan R. Tomkins and I collected a lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) at the lighthouse on Tybee Island, Chatham County, Ga. It has been



identified by the U. S. National Museum as the western form, *C. g. strigatus*. The skin will be deposited in the collection of the Zoology Department of the University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

The only other specimen of the lark sparrow from Georgia was taken by Arnow at St. Mary's, Camden County, in August, 1908 (Burleigh, T. D. 1958. Georgia Birds). Burleigh (op. cit.) records that one as the eastern form, *C. g. grammacus*. L. B. DAVENPORT, JR. *Biology Department, Armstrong College, Savannah, Georgia, June 10, 1963.*

**WHITE PELICANS AT FITZGERALD.**—On June 11, 1963 twenty-nine White Pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) were observed at close range on several occasions during the afternoon. The flock first passed over in a loose v-shaped formation heading east at 5:30 P.M. At this time they were approximately 150 feet above the ground. The flock returned, flying west, within 10 minutes and were then seen to circle a sewage disposal pond SW of Fitzgerald for over twenty minutes. A large group including the following persons; Carol Hopkins, Milton Hopkins, III, B. B. Rogers, Sarah Rogers, Richard and Ramona Rogers, et al witnessed the first two "fly-overs" and all agreed that the birds were indeed "white" pelicans.

This large flock was seen again just as the sun was setting circling over two large ponds approximately 3 miles WSW of Fitzgerald, Ben Hill County, Georgia. Later questioning failed to locate anyone else who had seen the birds or reported their landing. MILTON HOPKINS, JR., 202 W. Roanoke Drive, Fitzgerald, Georgia, Sept. 14, 1963.

**LARK SPARROW SEEN AT WAYCROSS.**—On July 27, 1963, my wife and I flushed a Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) from a roadside on the outskirts of Waycross. The bird flitted into the roadside shrubbery, about 50 feet from us, then dropped down into the road where it stayed for a few moments, flew into a bush on the opposite side of the road and stayed perched there for a short time. It then flew down the road about 150 feet and dropped down behind the hedgerow where we lost sight of it.

We had ample opportunity to observe the white-tipped outer tail feathers, the face pattern, and the dark spot on the breast.

Burleigh (Georgia Birds) lists only two records of the Lark Sparrow in Georgia, one by Arnow at St. Marys, Georgia, August 11, 1908, and the other by Pindar at Chickamauga Park, May 1 to 10, 1919. There is also a record in the files of the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge

of a lark sparrow seen along a road near Camp Cornelia, March 29, 1954, by Richard Rosche, who was one of a group of ornithology students from Cornell University who were visiting Okefenokee Swamp. EUGENE CYPERT, *Wildlife Biologist, Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, August 1, 1963.*

**BLACK TERN IN ATLANTA.**—The black tern (*Chlidonias nigra*) is an uncommon fall transient in the Atlanta region. Personally, I have not seen the bird in the past twelve years nor have I heard any reports of it. Four young observers—Chris Floyd, Tom Fulton, Charles Quirk and Collins DuBose—found three black terns in typical fall plumage on a five-acre pond on Panthersville Road just southwest of the U. S. Honor Farm. The three birds were seen on August 28, missing on the 29th, two birds present on the 30th, and three again on the 31st. On the latter date, I confirmed the identification; the birds were present from about eight A.M. to ten A.M. On the afternoon of September 1, from four to six P.M., I could not find the terns.

Seven blue-winged teal (*Anas discors*) were seen on the same pond on August 30 and 31, with the number reduced to four on September 1.

On August 25, at the same location, the young men saw a mixed flock of several hundred chimney swifts, purple martins, barn swallows (one or two), and bank swallows. They estimated about 50 bank swallows, in contrast to Burleigh's observations that flocks in Georgia were small, "rarely as many as ten." I found a similar mixed flock of swallows on September 1, in the company of W. E. Freeborn, president of the Atlanta Bird Club, and Mrs. Freeborn. We also estimated a minimum of 50 bank swallows.

The four young men, all careful and conservative observers, reported one lesser yellow-legs on August 23, plus spotted sandpiper, least sandpiper, great blue heron and other pond birds. LOUIS C. FINK, 688 North Parkwood Road, Decatur, Georgia, Sept. 3, 1963

**ANOTHER NIGHTHAWK NESTING ON ROOF IN GEORGIA.**—On June 13, 1963, R. B. Darby called to tell me of a nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) nesting on the roof of his printing plant on Central Avenue in downtown Atlanta. The building is four stories high, located near Atlanta's City Hall. Men working on an air-cooling unit disturbed the bird (which had two young) and the nighthawk put on a completely realistic show of being mortally injured, dragging a wing and attracting attention to itself and away from its young.



On June 14, I climbed to the roof and found the two young at nine A.M. There was no nest, but half an egg which matched Chapman's description for this species. The young were well feathered. They remained motionless for a full hour, except to move about twelve inches closer to a low parapet as they found themselves exposed to the full sun.

Mr. Darby and I found the adult bird resting on a nearby roof about 25 feet away. The buff throat and lack of white in the tail seemed to mark this adult as a female. She sat on the edge of the roof, with tail extended into space.

We tried repeatedly to make the adult move. Hand-clapping and waving of cloths did not disturb her. Small pebbles thrown close to her repeatedly had no visible effect, even though the pebbles made a substantial clatter. To avoid exposing the young (temperature was 90 degrees F.), we left at ten A.M. LOUIS C. FINK, 688 N. Parkwood Rd., Decatur, Georgia, Aug. 20, 1963

#### FIRST SPECIMEN OF FLORIDA RED-TAILED HAWK FOR GEORGIA.—

On January 13, 1963, I found a dead Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) on Georgia Highway 149 approximately 9.5 miles northeast of Jacksonville, Telfair County, Georgia. Examining the hawk I saw that the rufous tail was barred with dark gray, different from the Red-tails I was used to seeing. Upon the suggestion of Mr. Milton N. Hopkins, Jr., I sent the specimen to the University of Georgia. Herbert W. Kale, II of the University Zoology Department sent the hawk on to the U. S. National Museum in Washington, D. C.

Dr. Richard H. Manville, Director of the Bird and Mammal Laboratories, Branch of Wildlife Research, U. S. National Museum, replied that, "... both John Aldrich and Roxie Laybourne agree that the Red-tailed Hawk specimen is *Buteo jamaicensis umbrinus*, the form that occurs in peninsular Florida. Your specimen has the overall dark coloration, the barred tail, dark belly, and rufous streaking on the chest of typical *umbrinus* specimens in the national collections. Since *umbrinus* is much less commonly represented in collections than the western race, we presume you would like to have the skin returned." The skin was returned and is now in the University of Georgia Collection (No. 2117).

Sprunt (1954) gives the range of the Florida Red-tailed Hawk in the United States as southern Florida, north at least to Tampa Bay and the Kissimmee Prairie, possibly to San Mateo and Cedar Keys. Burleigh

(1958) does not give this race as having ever been recorded in Georgia. The only other Georgia record is a report of two decomposed specimens seen by F. V. Hebard at Coleraine, near the Okefenokee Swamp, May 25, 1949 (Carter, et al). C. WILLIAM DOPSON, 708 Graham Street, McRae, Georgia, August 15, 1963

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#### ON SWAINSON'S THRUSH AND THE HERMIT THRUSH SINGING IN GEORGIA.—

I was glad to read Dr. Charles Hartshorne's recent report in The Oriole (Vol. XXVI, p. 30, 1961), "Olive-backed Thrush Singing in Georgia." The common name of this species has recently been changed to Swainson's Thrush (*Hylocichla ustulata*) in the 5th edition of the A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds, and it may be well to use the new name here.

In corroboration of Dr. Hartshorne's paper, I may add that I have heard a Swainson's Thrush in song at Rome, Ga. I found a bird of this species that stopped over with us in a quiet wooded ravine for several days of its spring migration in 1953. I saw the bird in this same place from April 24 to May 16, very likely the same individual. On the morning of May 1, 1953, I observed the bird in song, somewhat soft in volume, but with complete phrasing. It sang several times before my presence caused it to fly away. I heard the bird again a few days later, but I was not able to see it, and I did not record the date. I have given some particular notice to bird songs for a number of years, but I have not heard the Swainson's Thrush on any other occasion. It is usually very shy in temperament. Perhaps one should listen for it in dense forested hills with ravines.

I have observed the Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata*) to sing in Georgia on five occasions. On March 30, 1929, Waldemar Ziegler and I saw one and heard it sing in Collier's Woods in Atlanta, with volume about half the full song. On November 12, 1938, near College Park, Ga., at about 11 A.M. (E.S.T.) I watched one sing a whisper-song with complete phrasing and beauty of effect for a couple of intervals of about a minute or more each. On April 5, 1941, near Vinings, Ga., a



Hermit Thrush was in full song just before 8 A.M. (E.S.T.), on a cool, bright, still day, and it sang for perhaps ten minutes. On March 14, 1942, again near Vinings, I observed another Hermit Thrush singing, with volume about half that of the full song. On April 4, 1942, also near Vinings, a Hermit Thrush was singing with a little more volume than that of a whisper-song.

It would seem that neither of these two species sing very commonly while they are with us in Georgia, but that a few of them do sing on occasion. GEORGE A. DORSEY, *Darlington School, Rome, Ga., June 5, 1963.*

**WASHINGTON COUNTY OBSERVATIONS:**—Cattle Egret: On April 13, 1963 I saw what I believe to be the first Cattle Egret (*Bulbulcus ibis*) recognized in Washington County. It was a single bird feeding with cattle in the pasture near Harrell's Pond and along State Highway 24 about a mile east of Davisboro. Dr. W. B. Warthen verified my identification. The following day my husband, Jesse Newsom, and I returned to Harrell's Pond and looked again at the one egret. The next time I passed it was no longer there. On May 4, my husband saw two Cattle Egrets in his pasture about 2 miles north of Davisboro at his farm on the Fenn's Bridge Road. The next day he took me to see the two which we both studied with binoculars. The buffy feathers were more prominent on one than the other, those on the back reaching to the end of the tail. A few days later these two left and none could be found in the vicinity.

Upland Plover: April 17 Jesse Newsome saw three Upland Plovers (*Bartramia longicauda*) in the pasture where chickens were being ranged, on his Fenn's Bridge Farm. The next day I went to see them and found five. I followed them about, looking at them with binoculars and telescope. The men working with the chickens said they had been seeing them for several days, but they were not seen again after the afternoon of April 18.

Fledging Cowbird: On June 2, Jesse Newsom and I saw a White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*) feeding a fledging cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). The Cowbird was on a limb about 20 feet above a stream of water and just as we stopped on Chickesaw Bridge for a look-see the Vireo flew to the fledging with food. Chickesaw Bridge is about ten miles east of Sandersville on the Fenn's Bridge Road. The fledging was almost twice as large as the foster parent that apparently was devoting its full time to the task of feeding the parasitic species. We watched the fledgling being fed four times in what we estimated to be less than ten minutes.

King Rail: One evening the first week in April a friend phoned that he had a strange bird he wanted me to identify. Hearing a strange noise, he had gone out and caught it, with a scoop net, of all places, coming out from under his car in the porte-cochere. It was a King Rail (*Rallus elegans*).

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: May 5 Jesse Newsom and I watched Red-cockaded Woodpeckers (*Dendrocopus borealis*) from 5:45 P.M. until 7:10 P.M. The nest tree is located on the Fenn's Bridge Farm within a half mile of Fenn's Bridge on the edge of an upland pine area. Woodpeckers flew into the nest hole a total of 11 times, flying out again after one or two minutes inside. May 12 Dr. and Mrs. Harold Jones and Miss Katherine Weaver joined us in our observations from 6:15 until 6:33. The bird brought food three times and the young were heard after the parent entered with food. June 6 my husband and I watched from 5:30 until 6:21 but none were seen or heard. We have observed this species in this area for several years. ELIZABETH P. NEWSOM, 110 West First Ave., Sandersville, Georgia, June 8, 1963.



## FROM THE FIELD

On July 28, 1963 Tom and Hedvig Cater noted five immature White Ibis in Houston County at the north end of Robins Air Force Base. On August 3 one immature bird was seen feeding and a flight of twelve and a group of eight, all immature, were seen flying over the river swamp. On August 21, 1963 they saw three Black Terns feeding over Lake Henry in Crawford County.

L. A. Wells reports Grasshopper Sparrows summering at the Columbus Municipal Airport and has seen many young birds of this species.

William Dopson found the Limpkin on the Ocmulgee River on June 21 and 22 about 10 miles east of Jacksonville, Georgia. He noted Black Terns at Little Ocmulgee State Park on July 15 and saw 20 of this species there on August 14.

R. H. Peake, Jr. noted several species lingering late in and around Athens this past spring including Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on May 2 and May 10. He reports that he and Herbert Kale noted a Vesper Sparrow on May 4 and that Will Post located a Song Sparrow at Sandy Creek Bottoms on May 4.

Fr. M. Martin of the Monastery of The Holy Ghost, Conyers, Georgia sends a very good description of a sight record of the Piping Plover from the monastery grounds on July 14. He had Killdeer in the same field of view. On July 15 he noted Least and Spotted Sandpipers at this same locality.

Bobby Crawford saw a flock of 28 Cattle Egrets near Thomasville in April. He reports that the Cattle Egret is nesting in this vicinity in good numbers.

Mrs. J. W. Jones reports the finding of a Phoebe's nest by Mrs. Felix Pierce in Waverly Hall, Georgia. Mrs. Jones has located three R. T. Hummingbird nests this season and has had a pair of Prothonotary Warblers to nest in a box she placed near a creek at her home.

Alma Cooke noted three adult White Ibis flying over the Flint River Swamp in Taylor County on April 16, a flight of 32 adults on April 19 in the same location, and three adults flying over the Flint River Swamp in Macon County near the ferry on Ga. highway 127.

Philip M. Ham, George Dorsey, and other members of the Floyd County Audubon Society report seeing a female Least Bittern on April 21, 1963, at Victory Lake, Berry Schools campus, at Rome, Ga.

## NEWS AND COMMENTS

The fall meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society will be held at Rock Eagle Park, Eatonton, Georgia on October 11, 12, and 13th. Details of the plans for this meeting will be sent to members within the next few days. Lodging and meal prices are reasonable and facilities will permit the entire group to remain together during the weekend.

ORIOLE EXCHANGES—Herbert Kale has arranged for all Oriole exchanges to be filed at the University of Georgia Library. This should permit members and others interested in ornithology to know what we have and where to find it. Louis Fink reports that we now have 25 magazines coming into the library in exchange for *The Oriole*.

Audubon Wildlife Films in Atlanta—Jay G. Brower, Chairman of Wildlife Film Committee, Atlanta Bird Club reports the following as being on the winter program: "The Bear River" on September 24, 1963, by Allan D. Cruickshank, "Awake to Nature" by Alfred G. Etter on October 31, 1963, "For Generations to Come", on January 23, 1964 by Howard Orians and "Nature's Plans and Puzzles" on March 31, 1964 by Chester P. Lyons.

## RUFUS B. GODWIN

Rufus B. Godwin died in an Atlanta hospital on May 17, 1963. The funeral was at Spring Hill and burial was in Arlington Cemetery. He was 61 years old.

Rufus was a prominent Atlanta educator, having taught at several of the high schools there and at evening classes at Georgia Tech and Georgia State College.

Rufus had many interests and received honors in diverse fields. We knew him best as a bird lover and a willing worker in the G.O.S.



## RECENT LITERATURE

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK—by Arthur Stupka, 1963, The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 242 pp., \$3.00.

Mr. Stupka's observations and study of birds in the Smokies began in 1935 when he was appointed chief park naturalist there. These studies continued until 1960 when he was named to the newly-created position of park biologist. His observations are supplemented by many ornithologists who have collected and observed birds in the area. Many records made by members of the Tennessee Ornithological Society are also utilized.

The volume contains an introduction followed by a brief description of the area, its geology, climate, and flora. An acknowledgement of previous ornithological activity is made. The park area covers approximately 800 square miles and its heights above sea level range from a low of 857 feet to a high of 6643 feet.

An annotated list of over 200 species of birds found within the park is given in "The Notes" section. This information concerns the following: 1. status of the bird in the park. 2. altitudinal range, 3. dates of arrival and departure, 4. nesting data, 5. miscellaneous facts.

Subspecies are treated briefly in footnotes following species discussions. This is not a field guide to the birds of the region and descriptions and detailed accounts are not given, however it should prove invaluable to ornithologists in the surrounding area and to anyone interested in birds who might visit the park. Milton Hopkins, Jr.

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN GALLINACEOUS BIRDS—by Arthur Cleveland Bent, 1963, Dover Publications, 180 Varick Street, New York 14, New York, 490 pp., paperbound, \$2.75.

This volume is an unabridged republication of the 1st edition published originally in Feb. 1932 as Bulletin No. 162 of the Smithsonian Institution.

It contains very detailed and interestingly written accounts of all information available to Arthur Cleveland Bent on each of the species treated. A total of 88 different gallinaceous birds of North America are covered in as complete detail as possible. Some of the best known

The 170 black and white photographs have been reproduced very effectively.

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN GULLS AND TERNS—by Arthur Cleveland Bent, 1963, Dover Publications, 180 Varick Street, New York 14, New York, 337 pp., paperbound, \$2.75.

The present volume is an unabridged reproduction of the original 1921 edition which was No. 113 in the Smithsonian Institution series.

Over 50 species and subspecies of North American gulls and terns are discussed and pictured in 93 full page photographic plates. Plates 78 through 93, which were reproduced in color in the original edition, are reproduced in the Dover edition in black and white. These particular plates picture eggs of the species under treatment in this volume.

These excellent republications of the Bent series continue to be, in my opinion, some of the best buys in the ornithological literature field today. Milton Hopkins, Jr.



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