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RANGE EXTENSION OF THE BARN SWALLOW IN GEORGIA

by

RICHARD H. PEAKE AND W. WILSON BAKER

Recent records of the Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) nesting in Georgia indicate that this species is rapidly expanding its range throughout north Georgia. Observations in the Carolinas and Georgia suggest that Barn Swallow range extension is part of a general eastward and southward expansion of this species' breeding range.

In 1957 a Barn Swallow nest was found on Lookout Mountain by Henry M. Stevenson and Mr. and Mrs. Eugene West (Stevenson, 1957). Bell (1959) observed a nest in Union County in 1958. Barn Swallows nested in Murray County in 1963; the swallows had nested at this spot for at least three years (Hamilton, 1963a). In 1963 Barn Swallows also nested in Rabun County (Mellinger, 1963), White County (Cooke, 1963), and Whitfield County (Hamilton, 1963b). All of these records are from the mountain area or the Upper Piedmont. However, Barn Swallows had appeared in Harris County in the Lower Piedmont during late June of 1961; conclusive evidence of Barn Swallow nesting in Harris County was found in 1963 (Whiteman, 1963).

Taken as a group, these records offer strong evidence of a rapid expansion of Barn Swallow breeding range in Georgia. Since the Barn Swallow is a familiar and easily detected species, it is unlikely that the species had long been present but unnoticed in these areas.

Observations in northeast Georgia during the summer of 1966 by Baker, William Dopson, and Peake offer additional evidence that the Barn Swallow's breeding range is rapidly expanding. On 4 June Dopson and Peake saw one adult Barn Swallow at Hartwell Dam, Hart County; and on 18 June Baker and Dopson watched two adult Barn Swallows at the same locality. One of these adults fed an immature which was perched on a small sumac (*Rhus* sp.). Although the young swallow could fly well, it lacked the forked tail of the adults.

On 3 July 1966 Peake saw Barn Swallows feeding over Oconee River on Ga. Highway 15, near the Oconee Recreation Area in Greene County. Making a quick check, the observer saw that Barn Swallows were nesting under the bridge on the north side of the river. At least one nest was active; it contained two young. On 8 July Baker and Dopson checked the southern end of the bridge, but found no nest; however, the observers saw as many as six swallows in the air at one time. On 9 July Baker went to the bridge to photograph the nest. He did not find the nest that Peake observed, but saw and photographed another active nest. Baker also observed four nests under the section of the bridge extending over the river and saw as many as nine swallows in the air at one time. On 20 July Peake found the first nest empty, but found another active nest containing three young almost ready to fly. Four fully-fledged young also were flying about the bridge. Apparently the majority of the nests located in Greene County were built in 1966, but several of the nests might well have been built earlier. Nevertheless, this swallow colony appears to have been established recently.

In addition to these definite breeding records, Baker and Peake observed Barn Swallows in three other places in northeast Georgia during the summer of 1966. On 21 June Baker saw one adult Barn Swallow along Ga. Highway 197 about one mile north of Mount Airy, Habersham County. Peake sighted a Barn Swallow flying on the Georgia side of Lake Hartwell, where I-85 crosses the lake, on 2 July. On 17 July Baker observed two Barn Swallows flying over Clark Hill Reservoir at Bobby Brown State Park, Lincoln County.

When one considers the extension of the Barn Swallow's range in Georgia in connection with recent records from the Carolinas, one concludes that this swallow might soon spread into the Coastal Plain of Georgia. In fact the Barn Swallow may well establish itself on the Georgia coast either by expansion from the Georgia Piedmont or from the South Carolina coast. In 1961 Barn Swallows were reported from Clemson, South Carolina (Gage, 1961); Gage found nesting Barn Swallows at Clemson again in 1962 and 1964. By 1966 Adair Tedards had found them at Anderson, South Carolina (Parnell, 1966). Evidently the Barn Swallow is moving southward and eastward in South Carolina in an extension of range similar to that occurring in Georgia. Range expansion is also apparent in North Carolina. Having appeared at Raleigh (Wake County) in 1961, the Barn Swallow has now appeared in Johnston County, 20 miles east of the original Wake County site (Daniels, 1966).

On the South Carolina coast populations of Barn Swallows have also shown a tendency to range expansion. E. Milby Burton discovered a colony

at Cape Romain Lighthouse in 1946. Since this time breeding records have been reported from McClellanville, Folly Island, Edisto Beach, and Garden City Beach, South Carolina (Gage, 1961; Chamberlain, 1964; 1965). A colony of Barn Swallows existed on Wassaw Island, Georgia, prior to 1904 (Burleigh, 1958); therefore this species might well reestablish itself on Wassaw Island.

SUMMARY

In north Georgia the Barn Swallow has become a breeding species in many areas scattered from the mountains to the Fall Line. If this range expansion continues, the Barn Swallow might soon appear again as a breeding species in coastal Georgia.

Addendum: Since this article was prepared for publication, the authors have found additional colonies of nesting Barn Swallows in north Georgia, and Bill Griffin has reported a colony nesting at Clark's Bridge, Lake Lanier, for several years.

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THE 1966 BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN GEORGIA

WILLET T. VAN VELZEN

During the summer of 1966 birders assisted throughout Georgia in the continental Breeding Bird Survey conducted by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. This survey was established to provide much needed information on the distribution and abundance of North American birds and specifically to measure differences that might result from land use changes and the widespread application of pesticides.

Each survey route is laid out along a 25-mile section of road starting at a point selected at random within the State. Each route is driven *one* time during the breeding season. Fifty 3-minute stops are made, spaced at half-mile intervals, and all birds heard or seen are recorded on special forms.

These data are later transferred to machine punch cards so that comparisons can be made, as the same routes are run during future years.

Eighteen survey routes were run by 14 observers, representing all the major degree blocks. The routes are selected on a degree-block basis and assigned so as to obtain uniform coverage throughout the State.

Over one-half million birds of 374 species were recorded for the entire survey area, representing 585 routes in the States east of the Mississippi River and 4 eastern Canadian Provinces. A total of 13,944 individual birds, representing 105 species, was recorded in Georgia.

Table 1 shows the 10 most conspicuous species recorded in Georgia with a comparison of the most conspicuous species for the entire survey. The total individuals of each species recorded in the State ranges between 556 for the Common Crow and 964 for the Bobwhite. Species recorded on every route were: Bobwhite, Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Red-winged Blackbird, Rufous-sided Towhee, Cardinal, House Sparrow, Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, and Carolina Wren.

Special thanks are extended to the following individuals who ran the 1966 survey routes: A. S. Chambliss, Tom Collum, Leslie Davenport, Jr. (2 routes), William Dopson, Jr., E. M. Einhorn, Ted Ellis, Louis Fink, W. W. Griffin, Milton Hopkins, Jr., James Miller, Richard Peake (2 routes), Tulley Pennington, Adair Tedards, Ted Van Velzen (2 routes), and B. F. Young. The assistance of Maurice Baker in organizing the western routes is gratefully acknowledged.

Plans are now underway to conduct the 1967 Breeding Bird Survey. Anyone interested in assisting with this project, who can identify the

breeding birds of Georgia by sight and song, are invited to contact the State Coordinator Richard H. Peake, Department of English, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30601.

Table 1. Ten Most Conspicuous Breeding Bird Species, 1966

<i>Georgia</i>	<i>All Eastern States Combined</i>
1. Bobwhite	Common Grackle
2. Common Grackle	Starling
3. Mockingbird	House Sparrow
4. Red-winged Blackbird	Red-winged Blackbird
5. Cardinal	Robin
6. Starling	Common Crow
7. House Sparrow	Bobwhite
8. Blue Jay	E. Meadowlark
9. Rufous-sided Towhee	Cardinal
10. Common Crow	Mourning Dove

Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife
Fish and Wildlife Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Laurel, Maryland 20810

GENERAL NOTES

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER IN WHITFIELD COUNTY, GEORGIA — The White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta deglandi*) was observed in Whitfield County on 12 and 13 February 1967. A dozen members of the Cherokee Audubon Society of Dalton, including the writer, saw a male on Lake Kathy, two miles west of Varnell, and watched it for half an hour on 12 February. At a distance of about 30 yards with 15X zoom binoculars they observed a chunky black duck with long bill pointed downward in the manner of a Shoveller. They noted some orange-red on the bill and a small dark knob at the base of the upper mandible. A white wing patch was visible and the small white eye patch was clearly seen.

On 13 February when Dr. Ed Mobley, Mourine King, and the writer returned to the lake, the male did not appear, but a female of the same species was discovered in the water at the same spot near a grassy island where the male had been seen the preceding day. Use of a 60X telescope enabled the observers to see the whitish spots on the lores and auriculars, though the white wing patch was not visible except for a brief time when the duck stretched its wings.

Dr. Mobley, who was present on both days, photographed the ducks with 400 mm. telescopic lens. An enlarged print of the female was sent to Dr. J. Fred Denton, who wrote (pers. comm.), "The duck is unquestionably a scoter and if it had a white wing patch (not visible in photograph) it is a White-winged Scoter".

Burleigh (1958) placed this duck on the hypothetical list of Georgia birds, since no specimen had been collected. On May 7, 1959, Ivan Tomkins (1959) collected a male on Tybee Island, thereby adding the bird to the state list. The few other occurrences in Georgia include: two reported from Augusta by Denton (1954 and 1958); a female noted by Tomkins (1962) on Tybee Island; six seen at Sapelo Island during Christmas count in 1964 (Audubon Field Notes, 1965); and four seen by L. A. Wells (1965) at Columbus.

It is of interest that at Chickamauga Lake near Chattanooga, Tennessee, at a point 15 or 20 miles north of Lake Kathy, sometimes one and sometimes two White-winged Scoters were observed on nine different dates from 13 February until 25 March 1967. Observers who saw them on one or more days were Ken Dubke, Jon DeVore, and Maxine Crownover. This information was kindly relayed to the writer by Mrs. E. M. West, of Chattanooga (pers. comm.).

According to Bent (1925) this duck "lives largely on crawfish, slugs, snails, and mussels on inland lakes and ponds". One may speculate whether it was attracted to Lake Kathy because of this food preference. When the lake was drained in 1962, members of the Cherokee Audubon Society who visited it on 9 July of that year noted that crawfish and mussels were plentiful on the lake bottom.

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 Anne P. Hamilton, 704 Greenwood Drive, Dalton, Georgia 30720.

GOATSUCKER BREEDING RECORDS, NORTHEASTERN GEORGIA — Because of the paucity of published records of goatsucker breeding in Georgia, the following records are noteworthy:

1. WHIP-POOR-WILL (*Caprimulgus vociferus*), Stephens County: Mr. R. L. Russell of Athens, Georgia, reports having sighted an adult Whip-poor-will with a young bird on May 24, 1965, in the northern portion of Stephens County near Yonah Dam. While walking in the woods near his cabin, Russell sighted a partially feathered chick running up a gully in a lumber road. The bird cheeped loudly and ran about twenty feet before disappearing in a huckleberry tangle from which clucking sounds were being emitted. When Russell approached the clucking noises, an adult bird appeared and feigned injury. Staying about twenty-five feet ahead, the bird led the observer away from the huckleberry tangle. Russell followed for about one hundred feet, noting the bird's white throat patch and white on the sides of the bird's tail. Evidently this is the first actual breeding record for Stephens County.

2. CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*), Oglethorpe County: On June 29, 1966, Calvin S. Brown and the writer visited a goatsucker nest in the Falling Creek section of Oglethorpe County. The nest had been found two days earlier by Brown and his wife, Rene. As Brown and I approached the nest, a large brown bird flew off and lit on a stump nearby; this bird was a Chuck-will's-widow. When we came within twenty feet of the nest, the goatsucker flew away. Under a cedar, the nest itself was a shallow depression lined with pine straw and oak leaves; it contained two eggs. Two days later we revisited the nest but found it empty. Apparently the first nesting record of the species for Oglethorpe County, this record is a week later than any date listed by Burleigh (1958, *Georgia Birds*; U. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Okla.). — Richard H. Peake, 342 Milledge Terrace, Athens, Georgia 30601.

RECENT LITERATURE

ATTRACTING BIRDS: from the Prairies to the Atlantic, Verne E. Davison, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1967, 252 pages, 13 figures and 19 tables, \$6.95. The essence of this book is the encyclopedic listing of the nesting sites and preferred foods of 400 species of birds, plus another list of 700 plants and other foods, with an indication of the birds attracted to each. It is a valuable reference work for biologists, for professional nurserymen and for amateurs who want to attract birds to their home areas.

There is an interesting section on nests and bird houses, with detailed descriptions. The discussion of feeding by birds is absorbing; as the author points out, obtaining food is a full-time job for birds and most of their lives revolve around this activity.

Verne Davison is a biologist with the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, now living in Beavertown, Oregon. He devoted 30 years to the research for his book, and six of those years were spent in Athens, Georgia; he is well known to many members of the Georgia Ornithological Society. Most of his findings have been published in *Audubon Magazine* and other publications; it is good to have this mass of data between covers.

There are a few minor errors, such as mis-stating the names of two seed companies. Georgia's popular Burfordi holly is not included in his list of 700 plants, an omission which is puzzling.

There is also a wealth of fascinating material on the food preferences of birds, small details which brighten the mass of technical information. The orchard oriole, for example, "occasionally comes to feeders . . . for bread, especially with jelly."

Tidbits like that abound, and make the book a delight. Bird clubs should see that a copy is in their local public libraries. — Louis C. Fink.

THE WATCHER AT THE NEST, by Margaret Morse Nice, re-issued by Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick Street, New York, N.Y., 1967, 159 pp., paperbound, \$1.50.

Ever since it was published Nice's *Studies in the Life History of the Song Sparrow* has been a standard reference in North American field ornithology. The first ten chapters of *The Watcher at the Nest* present in very readable style a general summary of the life history of the Song Sparrow, based on the much more detailed *Studies*. The remaining nine chapters discuss aspects of the life histories of some other species, including the Cowbird,

Magnolia Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ovenbird, Bell's Vireo, Mourning Dove, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, and Bobwhite.

The Watcher at the Nest is very well written, contains much useful information, and will provide several hours of most interesting reading. This is another of the books which have been out of print for many years and are now being re-issued by the Dover Publishing Co. It is well worth the price. — L. B. D., Jr.

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