

THE ORIOLE

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



VOL. XXXIV

DECEMBER, 1969

NO. 4

THE ORIOLE

EDITOR

Leslie B. Davenport, Jr., Biology Department, Armstrong State College, Savannah, Ga. 31406

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

J. Fred Denton; George A. Dorsey; Milton N. Hopkins, Jr.; Harold C. Jones; Richard H. Peake, Jr.

THE ORIOLE is mailed to all members of the Georgia Ornithological Society not in arrears for dues. Classes of membership are as follows:

Regular — \$3.00 Library — \$2.00 Sustaining, Garden Club — \$5.00; Life — \$50.00;
Patron — \$100.00

Inquiries concerning back issues of THE ORIOLE or OCCASIONAL PAPERS OF THE G. O. S. should be directed to the Business Manager.

All dues should be remitted to the Treasurer of the Society: Robert Overing, Rt. 2, Chapin, S. C. 29036.

CONTENTS

HISTORY OF EVENING GROSBEAK SIGHTINGS IN GEORGIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO 1968-1969 SEASON

W. Wilson Baker and Leon Neel61

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN GEORGIA, 1967-1969

Willet T. Van Velzen71

GENERAL NOTES77

NEWS AND COMMENTS82

GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY Founded December 13, 1936

L. A. Wells, President

T. M. Kiel, 1st Vice-President

C. William Dapson } 2nd Vice-Presidents

Louis W. Schweizer }

Mrs. Norene Boring, Secretary

Robert Overing, Treasurer

W. F. Kellam, Librarian

Business Manager: T. McRae Williams, 755 Ellsworth Drive, N. W. Atlanta, Georgia 30318.

THE ORIOLE

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

VOL. XXXIV

DECEMBER, 1969

NO. 4

HISTORY OF EVENING GROSBEAK SIGHTINGS IN GEORGIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO 1968-1969 SEASON

W. WILSON BAKER AND LEON NEEL

During the winter season of 1968-1969 the Southeast experienced the greatest "invasion" of Evening Grosbeaks ever recorded for this region. To put this movement in Georgia into perspective, we thought the past history of Evening Grosbeak sightings should be summarized. Our sources of information were Burleigh (1958), The Oriole, 1955 (Vol. 20) to present; and Audubon Field Notes, 1955 (Vol. 9) to present. For the recent information we have relied on letters, personal communication, and journal notes. In subsequent paragraphs the two years for each heading indicate the season for the movement into the Southeast. In Georgia this stay has been from mid to late November to early May, with most reports from December to April. Figure 1 shows the distribution of Evening Grosbeak sightings in Georgia.

1954-1955

Burleigh (1958) lists a record of six Evening Grosbeaks being seen on 5 February 1955 in Atlanta. G. L. Hight, Jr. (1956) gave the first detailed account of Evening Grosbeaks in Georgia. He observed a small flock on Berry School campus, Rome, on 18 February 1955. One male was collected on 21 February and deposited in the University of Georgia collection.

Other reports in 1955 came from Atlanta (Snow, 1956) and Macon (Johnston, 1956). The latest record reported by these accounts was 7 April (Johnston); however, Hight's report says the birds were seen "throughout February, March, and April."

1955-1956; 1956-1957

We have found no reports for these two migration periods.

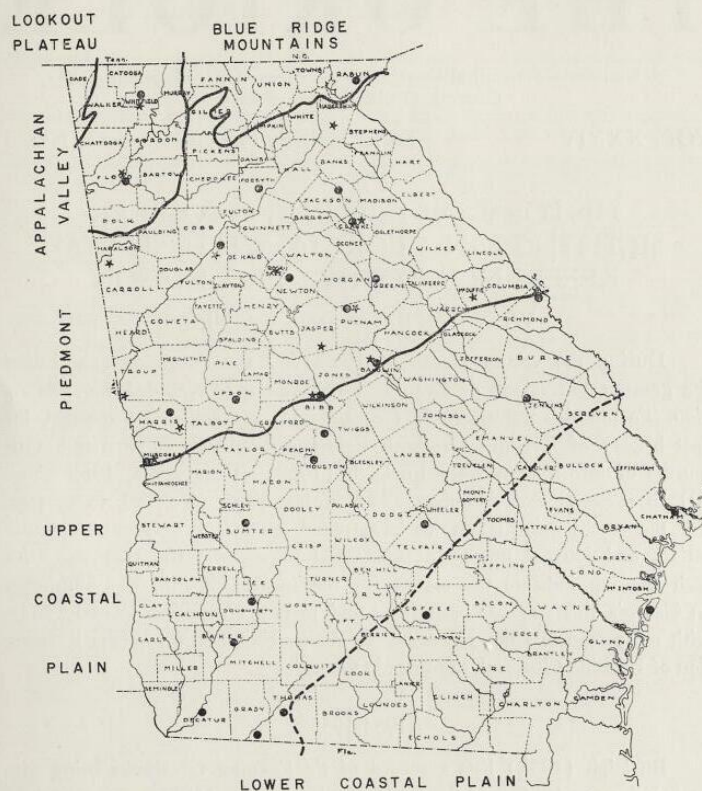


Figure 1. Distribution of Evening Grosbeak sightings in Georgia. ★ = sighting location previous to 1968-1969 season; ● = sighting location during 1968-1969 season.

1957-1958

After two years of no reports, Evening Grosbeaks were reported in scattered localities. These were: Rome (Hight, 1958); Rock Eagle 4-H Club Center, Eatonton (Fitch, 1958); and Thomson (Denton 1958). The earliest record was 31 January (Fitch) and latest record was at least through 26 February—the time Fitch's note was written.

1958-1959

No reports were written, but Fitch, during the 1959-1960 season, said they were at Rock Eagle 4-H Club Center, Eatonton, "the winter before" (Ambrosen, 1960).

1959-1960

This was the major invasion of Evening Grosbeaks into Georgia. Besides having small flocks, many people reported larger flocks from 50 to 100 birds. See Fink (1960) for a compilation of a number of records. The following records are from Fink (1960) unless otherwise listed:

North Georgia

Athens: First time for Athens. First seen 10 February 1960 and stayed at least through March (Odum 1960).

Atlanta: Widespread, numerous reports from "week before Christmas" through 15 May.

Dalton: First report from the Dalton area: 14 February 1960. Last seen on 25 April.

Demorest: Two reports during the winter season, 1 December-31 March of A.F.N.—E.G. Nichols, A.F.N. 14(3)310.

Eatonton: Rock Eagle 4-H Club Center, March, 1960 (Ambrosen, 1960).

Hillsboro: March, 1960.

Rome: (A.F.N. Vol. 14 No. 2): This was the first year an Evening Grosbeak was reported on an annual Christmas Bird Count (60th). Rome reported 12 on 27 December 1959. They were seen on Berry School campus late November through the first week of December (see Hamilton in Fink, 1960).

Tallapoosa: March (Jones, 1960).

West Point: March, 1960.

Fall Line Area

Augusta: Small flocks March-April. First records for Richmond County. "However, a single bird visited a feeding shelf on December 27 and 28, 1954, in North Augusta, just across the river in South Carolina" (Denton, 1960).

Columbus: First report for Columbus area. Seen from 4-23 April. Most seen at one time was seven (Wells, letter in 1969).

Milledgeville: 15 March-25 April.

1960-1961

No records found in the literature.

1961-1962

Atlanta had some early reports: 18 and 23 November 1961 (Fink, 1961). This year was also the first year Atlanta had Evening Grosbeaks on a Christmas Count—29 counted on 30 December 1961.

Columbus had them in larger numbers than in 1960, from 3 February-30 April (Wells, letter). Evening Grosbeaks were also seen at Waverly Hall, Georgia, on 11 and 27 January and still there on 5 February (Wells, 1962). At Conyers 10 to 15 birds were seen on 3 March (Martin, 1962).

1962-1963

Atlanta listed eight birds on 30 December 1962 for the Annual Christmas Bird Count. Milledgeville and Rome both recorded Evening Grosbeaks as being seen during the count period of the Annual Bird Count.

1963-1964

Only a few reports for this winter: Rome, on Berry School campus (Dorsey, 1964); Conyers (Martin, 1964); Dalton (Anne Hamilton A.F.N. 18 (3) 355). Atlanta listed two on their 29 December 1963 Bird Count.

1964-1965

No records found in the literature.

1965-1966

Atlanta and Rome both had Evening Grosbeaks again on Christmas Bird Counts. Columbus had reports on 13 January and 22 March (Wells, letter). Denton (1966) lists an early data of 2 December 1965 for Richmond County records. Tramer (1965) mentions a 22 November record for Athens. Peake (A.F.N. 20 (4) 495), said Evening Grosbeaks were still at Athens on 9 May.

1966-1967

No records found in the literature.

1967-1968

Tramer (1968) lists an early date of 29 September 1967 for the Athens area. This is an unusually early date even for areas far to the north of Georgia.

1968-1969

This year was an unprecedented "invasion" year for the Evening Grosbeaks throughout the Southeast. They went as far south as Gainesville, Florida (A.F.N. 23(2) p. vi) with large numbers in northern Florida. As Fink mentioned on his compilation of the winter invasion of 1959-1960, many people besides bird watchers were noticing these conspicuously colored birds and wondering what they were. This was the first year they really penetrated the Coastal Plain of Georgia. The following compilation for the most part is based on letters we have received after a request to G.O.S. members. These contributors are listed after the respective area of their information.

North Georgia

Athens: The earliest record we have is 21 November and the latest during the last of April. Twenty-one were listed for the 31 December Christmas Bird Count. J. Kilgo, H. P. Weeks, Jr.

Atlanta and Vicinity: We have received reports from Atlanta (Verdun Drive, N.W.), Marjorie Humhen; Decatur, C. A. Reiner; and Smyrna, J. B. Gibson. These reports listed birds from "November through May." On the Christmas Bird Count 147 Evening Grosbeaks were seen on 29 December.

Covington: "Understood to be quite numerous." Mrs. W. H. Hancock.

Cumming: Reports from "Thanksgiving through the first of May." Mrs. M. Mashburn, Jr., and T. L. Mullen.

Commerce: "Three large flocks" were seen near here on 23 February. Mr. and Mrs. E. O. Mellinger.

Dalton: Reports from 3 December through 10 May. "More than ever before." At least nineteen people had them in their yards and/or feeders. Forty-five were listed on the 21 December Christmas Bird Count. Mrs. R. E. Hamilton.

Eatonton: Rock Eagle 4-H Center. Flocks seen all winter and through April. F. W. Fitch.

Greensboro: One seen in town on 20 March 1969. N. K. Mabry.

Greene County: One small flock (8) at Oconee Recreation Area on 17 March. J. Kilgo.

Pine Mountain: Evening Grosbeaks were listed as being seen in the count period of the Christmas Bird Count.

Rabun County: (Tiger) Small flocks were seen sporadically between 25 December and 30 April. Mr. and Mrs. E. O. Mellinger.

Rome: On 27 December, 89 Evening Grosbeaks were counted for the Christmas Bird Count.

Thomaston: At least 10 people mentioned having small flocks and a few had large (100+ birds) flocks. They were first seen on 10 December and last seen (one female) on 7 May. Mrs. S. J. Carswell.

Fall Line Area

Augusta: "Evening Grosbeaks were reported more frequently and in greater numbers this past winter than ever before. They were observed in every section of the city." The 21 December Christmas Count listed 261 Evening Grosbeaks. J. F. Denton. In the Gracewood area, Evening Grosbeaks were seen from 12 December through 26 April, varying in number from a few to 200. Louis Schweizer.

Columbus: There were widespread reports in the Columbus area varying from a few birds to 80 birds in one flock. Florence Lynn had both extreme dates: 24 November—7 May. On the 28 December Christmas Bird Count, 15 Evening Grosbeaks were seen. Florence Lynn, L. A. Wells.

Macon: F. W. Fitch said that Dr. Thomas Hall had flocks of Evening Grosbeaks in Macon.

Milledgeville: Small to medium sized (50 birds) flocks were seen in all parts of town and around Lake Sinclair. The extreme dates were 1 January-16 April. Miss Katherine Weaver.

Coastal Plain (South Georgia)

Albany: On 25 January we received reports of Grosbeaks being in the Albany area.

Americus: On 23 February, Neel saw a small flock at J. Greene's farm near Americus. He also had reports of other people seeing Evening Grosbeaks in this area (Sumter County).

Bainbridge: A flock of approximately 25 was seen from 30 March-9 April on the Southlands Experiment Forest. These were seen on a "fresh burn" of a mixed pine-hardwood area. Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Perkins.

Douglas: Several reports of Evening Grosbeaks in town "in good numbers" from Christmas-16 January. Mrs. C. Bishop via M. N. Hopkins, Jr.

Herndon: Jenkins County. 12-15 birds seen on 29 January. J. F. Denton.

McRae: Milton Hopkins said that he had a report of some Evening Grosbeaks being seen in McRae.

Newton: Neel saw a flock of approximately 20 on Pineland Plantation in Baker County on 5 March.

Perry: Neel had reports of Evening Grosbeaks at feeders in this area during January and they stayed throughout the winter.

Sapelo Island: On 28 December (Christmas Bird Count) Baker saw a flock of four fly over the duck ponds on the north end. He also heard at least two more just north of "Chocolate." On 29 December Mrs. R. E. Hamilton saw a couple of Evening Grosbeaks by the dormitory.

Savannah: A few birds reported from 12 March-16 April. The most seen at one time was 9. L. B. Davenport, Jr.

Warner Robins: 941 Evening Grosbeaks were banded in this area by P. Murton. H. Cater.

Grady County: The Grady County information was gathered by Neel. The first sighting of Evening Grosbeaks was on 5 December when a flock of 15 was seen on Sherwood Plantation. On 10 and 11 December a larger flock was seen in the "river flat" near the Ochlocknee River on Mistletoe Plantation.

On 27 February the following was recorded by Neel: "Found a flock of about 40 feeding on a fresh burn. The overstory was a mixture of large Loblolly and Shortleaf Pine and with some scattered Dogwood trees. The ground was clean after the burn and the birds would fly down in small groups and then back into the Dogwood trees. They were very noisy." On 24 April 1969 another interesting observation was made on Sherwood Plantation while observing a flock of about 50 Evening Grosbeaks: "They were feeding around the new growth to find what appeared to be the larva of some insect and eat it." The last date that Evening Grosbeaks were seen in Grady County was on 2 May by Mrs. E. V. Komarek.

Thomas County: Neel first heard and saw several small flocks on Melrose Plantation, south of Thomasville on 18 December. Independently, Bobby Crawford and Jack Dozier saw 10 in Thomasville on 25 December and on the 26th (Christmas Bird Count) saw two flocks totaling 35 birds.

Many Thomasville residents feed birds. We know of at least 60 bird feeding stations in the Thomasville area. It is not surprising when "everyone" in town was wondering what kind of bird had invaded their feeders. Toward the end of the Evening Grosbeaks' stay, the talk among these people was not about what kind of bird, how many did they have, etc., but "I wish they would leave, I'm going broke buying sunflower seeds." The first report at feeders we have was on 27 December and the latest reports were 7 and 8 May. The Crawfords had two (one crippled) stay until 13 May. The one cripple stayed until 30 May.

The general trend among the feeders was as follows: A gradual build up during January, and large flocks by late January (commonly 200-300 birds, depending on the amount of sunflower seeds). This situation remained unchanged until a noticeable decline around the 25th of April. After this there was a lessening in numbers to a few left during the first week of May.

The Crawfords had the extreme dates and their records show this general trend. They also had a consistent large flock. To get an idea of the extent of Grosbeak invasion into the Thomasville area, notes from this feeder are interesting. Once the birds arrived in numbers one could count 300+ birds at the feeder area at any one time in the early A.M. They were consistently in and out so how many individuals were present is unknown. The Crawfords fed an average of 10 pounds of sunflower seeds per week before the Grosbeaks arrived. When the Grosbeaks began to come daily in larger numbers, they were feeding 150 pounds per week. During the period January-April they put out 1700 pounds of sunflower seed, most of which was devoured by Grosbeaks. Their records were as follows: 27 December, Grosbeaks first noticed—four or five; by the first week of January, 200-300 individuals at one time. This stayed the same with birds coming every morning soon after daybreak. On 17 March they noticed a decline, on 25 April an even more noticeable decline. By 2 May they had 12; by 8 May, two. One of the two was the above mentioned cripple which appeared daily until 30 May.

Dr. and Mrs. E. Christensen also observed a major decline in numbers on 25 April and their last record was on 7 May (two birds).

In the Thomasville area alone we could conservatively estimate 3,000 were associated with the feeding stations. Besides the feeder areas, birds were seen regularly in the pineland areas of the southern half of the county.

OBSERVATIONS ON FOOD

Previous reports of food eaten (other than sunflower seeds) by Evening Grosbeaks in Georgia are as follows: The seeds of Pine, Cedar, Yellow Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Box Elder (*Acer negundo*), Dogwood (*Cornus florida*), Sugarberry (*Celtis*), and the buds of Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) and Elm (*Ulmus*). Food utilized during the latest invasion, other than the above, were: Seeds of American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), American Holly (*Ilex opaca*), Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*), and American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*). Mrs. Mellinger noticed that they "prefer seeds of *Acer saccharinum* to those of *Acer rubrum*".

BANDED EVENING GROSBEAKS

Several people from different places in the state mentioned seeing banded Evening Grosbeaks. So far we have information on only two banded birds. These were two males captured at a Thomasville feeder. The information is as follows: 1) Banded 15 December 1967 at Pepperell, Massachusetts; 2) Banded 5 February 1964 at Gordonsville, Virginia.

SUMMARY

Evening Grosbeaks were first noticed in Georgia during the 1954-1955 winter season. In the fifteen years since then there have been reports of at least a few birds for eight years, no reports during five years, and two invasion years. The last invasion year, 1968-1969, was the greatest movement ever recorded for the eastern and southeastern United States.

The Georgia records, for the most part, agree well with the regional reports of Audubon Field Notes. For Georgia, the main significance of the latest invasion (1968-1969) is that this was the first year the Evening Grosbeaks roamed throughout the Coastal Plain. In many places in south Georgia they remained for three and four months often eating regularly at feeding stations.

Foods eaten by Evening Grosbeaks and two banding recoveries are mentioned.

LITERATURE CITED

- Ambrosen, Mrs. D. R., 1960. From the field. Oriole 25(3) :37
 Burleigh, T. D. 1958. Georgia Birds. U. of Okla. Press, Norman, Okla., 746 pp.

- Denton, J. F. 1958. The Evening Grosbeak at Thomson, McDuffie County, Georgia. *Oriole* 23(3):33.
- _____. 1960. The Evening Grosbeak at Augusta, Georgia. *Oriole* 25(1):8.
- _____. 1966. The migration and abundance of Blackbirds, Tanagers and Fringillids in Richmond County, Georgia. *Oriole* 31(4):43-46.
- Dorsey, G. 1964. From the field. *Oriole* 29(1):20.
- Fink, L. C. 1960. 1959-1960 Winter records in Georgia of the Evening Grosbeak. *Oriole* 25(3):29-33.
- _____. 1961. Evening Grosbeaks in Atlanta. *Oriole* 26(4):56-57.
- Fitch, F. W. Jr. 1958. Evening Grosbeaks at Rock Eagle. *Oriole* 23(1):4.
- Hight, G. L., Jr. 1956. Evening Grosbeaks in Floyd County, Georgia. *Oriole* 21(4):46.
- _____. 1958. From the field. *Oriole* 23(1):10.
- Johnston, D. W. 1956. Observations from Macon and vicinity. *Oriole* 21(1):7-8.
- Jones, B. 1960. From the field. *Oriole* 25(1):10.
- Martin, M. 1962. From the field. *Oriole* 27(2):20.
- _____. 1964. From the field. *Oriole* 29(1):20.
- Odum, E. P. 1960. Mass invasion of Evening Grosbeaks at Athens. *Oriole* 25(1):4-5.
- Snow, M. W. 1956. Evening Grosbeaks in the Atlanta area. *Oriole* 21(2):19.
- Tramer, E. J. 1965. Notes from Athens, Georgia. *Oriole* 30(4):112-113.
- _____. 1968. A revised list of the Birds of Athens, Georgia and vicinity. *Oriole* 33(1):2-17.
- Wells, L. A. 1962. From the field. *Oriole* 27(1):9.
- Tall Timbers Research Station, Rt. 1, Box 160, Tallahassee, Florida 32301.

THE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY IN GEORGIA, 1967-1969

WILLET T. VAN VELZEN

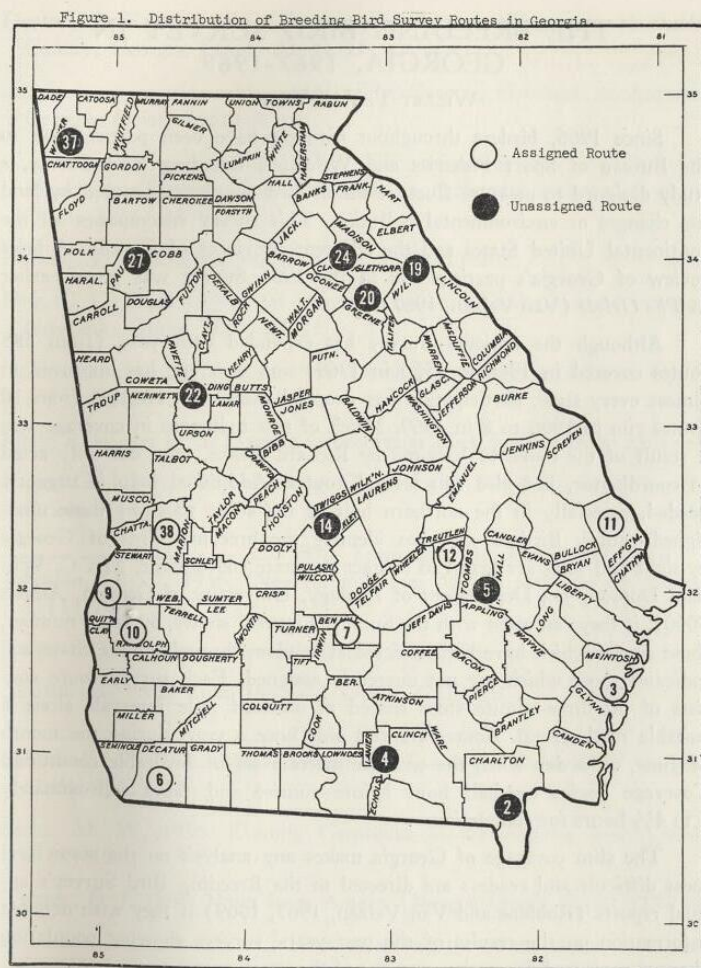
Since 1966, birders throughout Georgia have been participating in the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife's Breeding Bird Survey, a study designed to measure fluctuations in bird populations caused by land use changes or environmental pollution. This survey encompasses all the continental United States and the adjacent provinces of Canada. A brief review of Georgia's participation in the 1966 Survey was given earlier in *The Oriole* (Van Velzen, 1967).

Although the national Survey has expanded each year (from 585 routes covered in 1966 to 1350 in 1969) and coverage has improved in almost every state, participation has dropped sharply in Georgia from 18 routes run in 1966 to 8 in 1969. Much of this reduction in coverage was a result of the move to Virginia by Richard Peake, who not only acted as coordinator, but also run several routes. Additional help is urgently needed, especially in the northern half of the state, to cover those unassigned routes. Birders who can identify the breeding birds of Georgia by sight and song are urged to contact the state coordinator, Mr. C. William Dopson, Jr., Department of Zoology, University of Georgia, Athens 30601, if they can assist with the Survey. Figure 1 shows, by route number, those routes which have been selected at random throughout the State and indicates those which are not currently assigned. Each survey route consists of 50 three-minute stops spaced at one-half mile intervals along a suitable road system. Routes are run only once a year, during the month of June, on a day when the weather meets a set of favorable conditions. Coverage begins one-half hour before sunrise and takes approximately 4 to 4½ hours for completion.

The slim coverage of Georgia makes any analysis on the state level most difficult and readers are directed to the Breeding Bird Survey's annual reports (Robbins and Van Velzen, 1967, 1969) if they wish detailed information on the results of the past years' surveys showing population changes measured for various regions of the continent.

The Survey is not intended to provide data that will give precise population figures, such as birds per acre, for the species recorded. The data simply gives an index to the population, and repeated coverage in future years will provide a comparison which would show significant changes should they occur.

From 1967 through 1969 the numbers of species recorded each year in Georgia ranged from 86 to 107. Of the 25 species that have been re-



recorded on every route, 9 were recorded on every route all three years (table 1).

It should be realized that a Survey of this type best measures the most conspicuous species and not necessarily those that occur in largest numbers. Birds that are quite secretive and less vocal are naturally recorded in much smaller numbers. The 10 most conspicuous species recorded in 1967 through 1969 are shown in table 2, listed in the order of decreasing abundance.

Table 1.—Species Recorded on Every Route in Georgia

No. of routes	1967	1968	1969	No. of routes	1967	1968	1969
Bobwhite	x	x	x	Loggerhead Shrike			
Mourning Dove	x	x	x	Starling			
Chimney Swift	x	x	x	White-eyed Vireo			
Yellow-shafted Flicker				House Sparrow			
Red-bellied Woodpecker		x		Eastern Meadowlark			
Gt. Crested Flycatcher		x	x	Red-winged Blackbird			
Eastern Kingbird		x		Common Grackle			
Blue Jay	x	x	x	Summer Tanager			
Carolina Wren	x	x	x	Cardinal			
Tufted Titmouse		x		Blue Grosbeak			
Mockingbird		x	x	Indigo Bunting			
Brown Thrasher	x	x	x	Rufous-sided Towhee			
Wood Thrush			x				

Table 2.—Ten Most Conspicuous Species in Georgia

Species	1967			1968			1969		
	Birds per rte.	% of Stops	Species	Birds per rte.	% of Stops	Species	Birds per rte.	% of Stops	Species
Cardinal	65	58	Red-winged Blackbird	105	21	Bobwhite	74	67	
Bobwhite	53	55	Bobwhite	67	63	Cardinal	68	58	
Blue Jay	48	43	Common Grackle	60	29	Mockingbird	62	57	
Mockingbird	45	49	Mockingbird	59	59	Blue Jay	57	49	
Common Grackle	45	28	Cardinal	56	55	Red-winged Blackbird	56	20	
Rufous-sided Towhee	43	44	Blue Jay	51	46	Common Grackle	51	24	
House Sparrow	42	16	House Sparrow	47	18	Mourning Dove	49	43	
Red-winged Blackbird	41	22	Mourning Dove	45	40	Rufous-sided Towhee	40	43	
Mourning Dove	33	31	Rufous-sided Towhee	42	47	House Sparrow	39	12	
Eastern Meadowlark	26	24	Common Crow	27	28	Common Crow	35	32	

The abundance of each species is shown as birds per route; since the number of routes decreased by more than half between 1967 and 1969 the total number observed would be meaningless for comparison. An accompanying column in the table shows the percentage of stops at which each species was recorded. These percentages frequently give a better picture of the distribution of a species, as high total numbers often reflect flocking or conspicuousness.

The list of the 10 most abundant species is nearly the same for all three years, but species change their positions in order of abundance. The Bobwhite was recorded in highest numbers as well as on the highest percentage of stops, followed by Cardinal, Mockingbird, and Blue Jay. The 6 next most numerous species, as shown in table 2, were recorded on varying numbers of stops. This list of species is quite smaller to that reported by Howell (1968) for East Tennessee during 1966 and 1967, except that Field Sparrow and Indigo Bunting, recorded on his list, are replaced by Mourning Dove and Rufous-sided Towhee. The order of the 10 species is different for the two states.

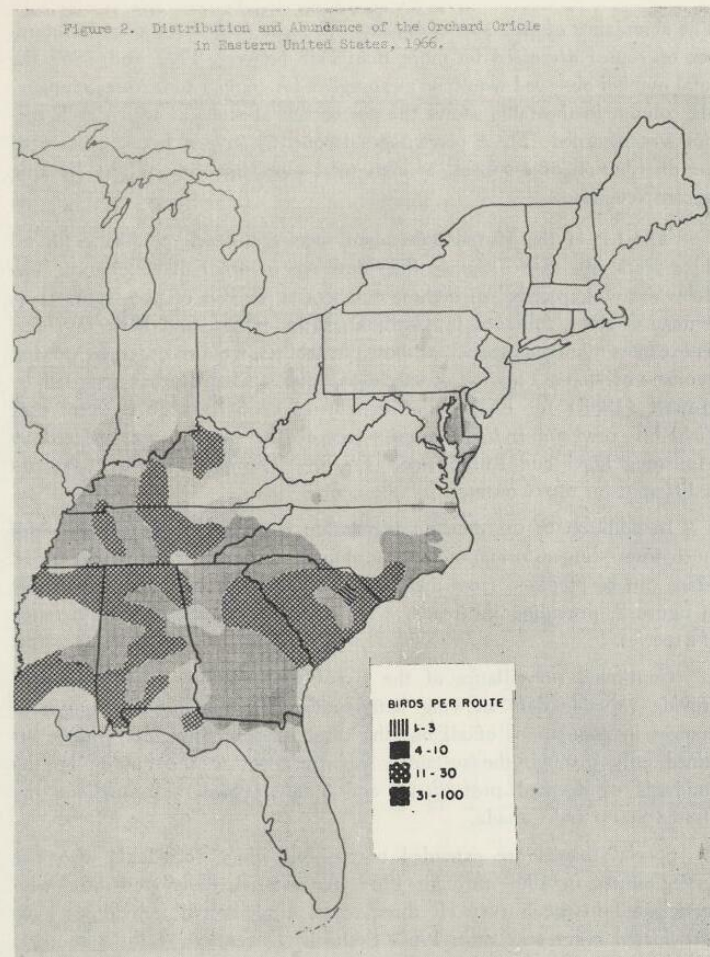
In addition to the data on population changes, the Survey provides much interesting information on the abundance and distribution of birds. Maps can be prepared from these data, as shown for the Orchard Oriole in figure 2, providing the reader with a graphic impression of the range of a species.

Continued surveillance of the Breeding Bird Survey routes should provide valuable data showing both sudden fluctuations and long-term changes in populations of all but the rarer species. This goal will be attained only through the sustained support given to the Survey by the hundreds of devoted professional and amateur birders throughout the United States and Canada.

Special thanks are extended to the following individuals who ran survey routes in 1967 through 1969. An asterisk designates those who participated in the Survey all three years. Underscored individuals have participated every year since 1966. Leslie B. Davenport, Jr.* (2 routes), W. Wilson Baker*, Milton N. Hopkins, Jr.* A. Sue Chambliss*, Florence Lynn*, Tully S. Pennington*, Margaret M. Spencer*, Richard H. Peake (5 routes), C. William Dopson, Jr., Ted Ellis, Adair M. Tedards, J. R. Fatora.

REFERENCES CITED

- Howell, J. C. 1968. The 1967 Breeding Bird Surveys. East Tennessee. Migrant 39(1):6-9.



Robbins, C. S. and W. T. Van Velzen. 1967. The Breeding Bird Survey, 1966. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Special Scientific Report—Wildlife No. 102. 43 pp.

Robbins, C. S. and W. T. Van Velzen. 1969. The Breeding Bird Survey, 1967 and 1968. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Special Scientific Report—Wildlife No. 124. 107 pp.

Van Velzen, W. T. 1967. The 1966 Breeding Bird Survey in Georgia. *Oriole* 32(1):4-5.

GENERAL NOTES

ROBINS NESTING IN THOMASVILLE—During the summer of 1968 and in late May, 1969, Howell Neel reported to this writer that he had seen Robins (*Turdus migratorius achrusterus*) feeding on the ground in MacIntyre Park in Thomasville, Georgia. No effort was made to locate a nest in 1968, but on June 2, 1969, Mr. Neel saw an adult bird flush from a nest on the limb of an ironwood tree (*Ostrya virginiana* K. Koch) about twenty feet above ground. On June 5th I visited the area with him and while we saw no activity at the nest, we did see three birds in the area including one juvenile in heavily spotted plumage. The next day I took Roy Komarek to the park and we saw six Robins at one time, including one juvenile, and found a second nest when a female flew into a sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua* L.) with an earthworm. The second nest was on the outer portion of a limb about twenty-five feet above ground. On June 11th Mr. Neel reported seven birds including two juveniles seen at one time. One or two birds have been seen regularly through August 25th in the park or immediate vicinity.

As Sprunt (1954, *Florida Bird Life*, National Audubon Society) lists nesting records for Pensacola, Florida, and Burleigh (1958, *Georgia Birds*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma) records a breeding record for Waycross, it is not surprising that Robins were found nesting in Thomasville. Herbert L. Stoddard (personal discussion) predicted to the writer in the early 1950's that Robins would someday nest in Thomasville. MacIntyre Park appears to be ideally suited ecologically for a nesting site as it comprises a full city block of a relatively open stand of tall loblolly pines (*Pinus taeda* L.) mixed with various hardwood trees. The ground cover is a close mowed stand of native lawn grasses and there is a small stream transversing the area with several lateral drains leading into it. Even in dry weather, when the earthworms may be more difficult to find, the area along the stream remains damp and profitable to the birds. We observed adult Robins finding several worms within the stream bed. Because of the many residential areas in the city with wide and well kept yard developments, and because of the interest in birds by many local people, Robins should become well established as a breeding bird in this area. Leon Neel—Tall Timbers Research Station, Rt. 3, Box 135 A, Thomasville, Georgia.

SNOW BUNTINGS ON STONE MOUNTAIN—On Saturday, November 15, 1969, and again on November 22, John O. Kirby found Snow Buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) on the top of Stone Mountain in DeKalb County, Georgia. In both cases, the sighting was around 8:30 A.M.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 27, the Atlanta Bird Club organized a party to confirm the record. Mr. Kirby was joined by William and Florence Griffin, Robert Manns, T. McRae Williams and the writer. We climbed the mountain on foot to the tower at the top. Here there are two or three acres of barren rock dotted with a few shallow pools of water and small pockets of grass no more than a few feet wide.

Four buntings in various aspects of fall plumage were observed. Mr. Manns took photographs, and the birds allowed us to approach within 15 feet. They apparently found food both in the grass and on the exposed rock. We studied the birds from 8:30 to about 9:30 A.M.

I believe this to be the only record for the interior of Georgia. Louis C. Fink, Apt. 913, 620 Peachtree Street, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30308.

LARK SPARROW IN ATLANTA—Burleigh (Burleigh, T. D., *Georgia Birds*, U. of Okla. Press, Norman, Okla. 746 pp.) gives only two records in the state for the lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*). One was a specimen taken at St. Mary's in 1908, and the second was a sight record of "a few" at Chickamauga Park. On August 3, 1969, the lark sparrow was added to the Atlanta list by T. McRae Williams and the writer.

The occasion was eleven A.M. on a completely overcast day, following extremely heavy local showers the preceding two days. The place was Intrenchment Creek Water Pollution Control Plant in the southern part of Atlanta. Maintenance crews have bull-dozed an area of perhaps one acre, leaving a flat of red clay preparatory to lawn seeding this fall. A very few weeds have grown up. The sparrow was busy feeding in the clay. Both observers studied the bird carefully through eight-power binoculars for five minutes; trained a 30 power telescope on it; and had a second look a few minutes later. The sparrow would not let us approach closer than 100 feet before flying off.

All the field marks were visible: black breast spot, face pattern, striped crown, and white on the tail.

The books describe an ear-patch of chestnut, but this appeared gray to us. Early in the afternoon, C. M. Einhorn confirmed the identification and expressed the belief that the sparrow might have been an immature bird.

I believe this is the 240th bird on Atlanta's all-time list. Louis C. Fink, Apt. 913, 620 Peachtree Street, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30308.

UNUSUAL SHOREBIRDS IN THE MOUNTAINS—On August 14, 1969, I encountered a group of three Willet (*Catoptrophorus semi-*

palmarum) on the Georgia side of Lake Chatuge, Towns County, Georgia. I studied the birds for an hour in good light, noting the flashing black-and-white wing pattern and the distinctive "will-will-willet" call of this species. I am thoroughly familiar with this species from the coast of Florida. Burleigh (*Georgia Birds*, University of Oklahoma, 1958) lists only one other record of the Willet for the interior of Georgia and that many years ago in extreme south Georgia. The *Pocket Check-list of Georgia Birds* (Georgia Ornithological Society, 1969) lists this species as accidental in the interior.

The next day, August 15, I returned to the general area where I had left the three birds that evening and found a flock of seven! On the basis of these sightings, I hypothesize that these individuals probably represent the western subspecies, *C. s. inornatus*, which is known to migrate through the interior of the continent. I further hypothesize that the Willet is not accidental in the mountain region of the state, but rather a rare though regular transient, at least in the Fall, on its way to its known wintering grounds on the Georgia coast.

On August 16, 1969, again at Lake Chatuge, I encountered two Black-bellied Plovers (*Squatarola squatarola*). It was very late in the day and the light was poor, but the birds were still in breeding plumage and I got close enough to rule out the possibility that they were Golden Plovers by seeing the white rumps of both birds and the black axillars of one bird as they flushed. This bird has apparently never been recorded in the interior of the state except in the Atlanta area. Robert W. Loftin, Stetson University, DeLand, Florida 32720.

OBSERVATIONS FROM NORTHERN FORSYTH AND SOUTHERN DAWSON COUNTIES—For the past three years the author has done considerable field work in the vicinity of his home in Cumming, Georgia. This is a section of the state not previously explored to any appreciable extent. The following are accounts of some of his more interesting observations.

Black-Crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)—A single adult was flushed by the author April 22, 1969, in a marsh bordering Spot Lake, a watershed pond about three miles northwest of Cumming, Georgia, in Forsyth County.

Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*)—While visiting the mouth of Young Deer Creek on Lake Lanier in Forsyth County on November 9, 1967, I came upon a lone immature grazing at the water's edge. I got out of the car and was able to approach to within 15 feet of it on foot before the bird

flew out over the water. It flew about a thousand yards out, circled back, and lighted about one hundred yards down the shore from me.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)—On March 26, 1969, a male was observed by the author close to the dam on Lake Lanier in Forsyth County. It was accompanying 176 American Coots (*Fulica americana*), 35 American Widgeon (*Mareca americana*), and one male Blue-Winged Teal (*nas discors*). On April 15, 1969, I observed another male on the oxidation pond of the city of Cumming. It was swimming with a single male Blue-Winged Teal.

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*)—On March 29, 1968, I observed seven birds at the mouth of Young Deer Creek in Forsyth County with two Ring-Necked Ducks (*Aythya collaris*) and 42 Scaups (*Nyroca sp.*). It was difficult to make sex determinations because it was getting late in the day and the lighting was poor. The Canvasbacks were easily recognized, however, by their size and distinctive silhouettes.

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)—On March 9, 1968, I noticed a male among about 50 Ring-Necked Ducks on a watershed pond three miles northwest of Cumming, Forsyth County.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)—On November 12, 1968, as I stood on the bank of Spot Lake in Forsyth County watching ducks, I heard the whistling sound of wings over my head. I looked up to see a Mallard drake (*Anas platyrhynchos*) pass about 40 feet over my head, fly low over the water for a short distance, and pass into some Alders on the far side of the pond. Just behind the drake, but not close enough to catch it, was an immature Golden Eagle. The eagle pulled out of its dive about 20 feet from the water and slowly gained altitude until it was out of sight.

The bird's large size, its broad white tail band, and the rectangular white areas underneath its wings made positive identification rather simple.

Golden Eagle records for Georgia number less than twenty and *The Oriole* lists only two in the last 17 years. This species must be regarded as a very rare transient and winter visitor in the mountains and piedmont sections of the state.

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*)—I observed a flight of 13 birds on March 9, 1969, while visiting a marsh in southern Dawson County about 10 miles north of Cumming on U. S. Highway 19. They came from the east and eventually disappeared almost directly west. They circled for about twenty minutes, however, before leaving.

Sora (*Porzana carolina*)—Two individuals were observed in the previously mentioned Dawson County marsh on April 30, 1969. I observed another bird in the same marsh two weeks later on May 14, 1969.

Common Terns (*Sterna hirunda*)—Birds of this species were observed on Lake Lanier, Forsyth County, Georgia, on the following occasions during 1969: On July 4, a single adult; August 25, nine adults and one immature; and October 16, two adults. The July 4 sighting seems to be a new early fall record for the interior, although the individual could have been a non-breeding summer resident.

Long-Billed Marsh Wren (*Telmatodytes palustris*)—Two pair were observed on opposite sides of the Dawson County marsh on April 30, 1969. A single individual was seen in the same marsh on May 14.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*)—On September 18, 1969, I observed a single individual in my yard in Cumming, Forsyth County. It was first seen in a small wild cherry tree about twelve feet from the ground in the edge of a short-leaf pine forest. It was feeding with a flock which included five Carolina Chickadees (*Parus carolinensis*), five Brown-Headed Nuthatches (*Sitta pusilla*), one Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), and one male Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*).

Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*)—I observed a spring male on top of Sawnee Mountain, Forsyth County, on May 17, 1969. The bird was feeding with a number of Blackpoll Warblers (*Dendroica striata*) and was noticeably smaller than the Blackpolls. The *Pocket Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Denton, J. F., and M. N. Hopkins, Jr., 1969. Published by the Georgia Ornithological Society) lists this warbler as an extremely scarce spring migrant although it is rather common in the fall.

Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*)—Two birds of this species were sighted in 1969: a female on May 14, 1969, at the Dawson County marsh and a male on September 25, 1969, at Spot Lake in Forsyth County.

White-Crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)—On November 12, 1968, I saw an immature and an adult perched in some alders beside Spot Lake.

I am grateful to William W. Griffin for a critical reading of this manuscript. John M. Paget, 525 Pilgrim Mill Road, Cumming, Georgia 30130.

NEWS AND COMMENTS

REQUEST FOR GULL REPORTS

During May through July of each year for a five year period, Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) from three Great Lakes colonies will be wing-marked with 1.5 inch-diameter "Saflag" tags. Each colony is represented by a specific color. An attempt is being made to determine the dispersal pattern, migration route, and winter range for each population. Anyone observing such wing-marked gulls is asked to notify DR. WILLIAM E. SOUTHERN, Department of Biological Sciences, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois 60115. Please report each observation of marked individuals even though the same bird may be sighted on different days. The following information is desired: *date, exact location, marker color, and the observer's name*. Your assistance in this aspect of the project will be greatly appreciated. Respondents will receive information pertaining to colony locations and the date of marking.

POCKET CHECK-LIST OF GEORGIA BIRDS

Published by the Georgia Ornithological Society; a discussion of the status of every bird in Georgia. No pictures, but ample space for notes and records. Sixty pages, four by six inches.

75 cents a copy, post paid. Order from:

Louis C. Fink
P. O. Drawer 4418
Atlanta, Georgia 30302

Please furnish complete
name and address,
including ZIP CODE.

A STATEMENT OF POLICY

Application for membership may be made to the Treasurer. *THE ORIOLE* is sent without charge to all classes of members not in arrears for dues. Send changes of address, claims for undelivered or defective copies and requests for information relative to advertising, subscriptions and back numbers to the business manager.

All articles and notes submitted for publication and all books and publications intended for review should be sent to the editor.

Original papers in the field of ornithology are published in *THE ORIOLE*. Papers are judged on their contribution of original data, ideas, or interpretations and on their conciseness, scientific accuracy, and clarity.

COPY—Type manuscripts *double spaced* throughout. Underscore scientific names only. Number pages in the upper right hand corner. Arrange contents in this sequence: title page, text, reference, tables, figure legends, and figures. Type your complete address and date of submitting manuscript.

STYLE—The guide for preparation of copy is the *STYLE MANUAL FOR BIOLOGICAL JOURNALS* available from American Institute of Biological Sciences, 2000 P Street NW, Washington 6, D.C., \$3.00. A copy of this manual is held by the editor for use by contributing authors. A postal card request and return postage by you is required for its use.

TITLE—The title should be concise, descriptive, and not more than 10 words in length. Avoid use of scientific names in titles if possible.

FOOTNOTES—Avoid footnotes by incorporating such material in the text.

NOMENCLATURE—Vernacular names should be capitalized in text. They are to be accompanied by appropriate scientific names the first time each species is mentioned. Show reference for long lists of scientific names (i.e., A.O.U. Checklist, 5th ed., 1957).

REFERENCES—When there are fewer than 3 references insert them in parentheses where needed in the text by author, journal, volume, pagination, and year of publication. Three or more references are grouped alphabetically by authors last names under "literature cited".

TABLES—Prepare tables in keeping with size of *THE ORIOLE*. A good table should be understandable without reference to the text.

ILLUSTRATIONS—Illustrations should be suitable for photographic reproduction without retouching. Colored plates will be charged to the author.

REPRINTS—Request for reprints must be sent with original manuscript and are to be paid for by the author.

The *author* is responsible for putting his manuscript in final form for production. Authors should consult colleagues and specialists for review of papers before submission, and check all literature available to him that might have a bearing on his paper.