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ADDITIONS TO THE BIRDS OF SCREVEN COUNTY, GEORGIA

Grace P. Boddiford and Laura R. Boddiford

Several more species have been observed in Screven County, Georgia, since the publication of "Notes on the Birds of Screven County, Georgia," by Anne P. Hamilton (*The Oriole*, Vol. 29, No. 1 March, 1964). This paper adds several more species to the list and presents additional observations on some species listed by Mrs. Hamilton.

Most of the observations were made on Millhaven Plantation located in the northern part of Screven County. Charlie, Baker, Railroad Bed, Ski, and Abel are names used by Millhaven residents to designate certain artificial fresh-water ponds on the farm.

Common and scientific names of the birds were taken from the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist, 5th edition, 1957.

Additions

Anhinga: *Anhinga anhinga*. Three Anhingas (male, female, and immature) were seen on August 14, 1967, by Grace and Laura Boddiford, two on December 27-29, 1967, by Anne and R. E. Hamilton and Laura Boddiford, and two on August 20, 1969, by Grace and Laura Boddiford. Each time they were seen perching in tall, bare trees at the Railroad Bed Pond.

Louisiana Heron: *Hydranassa tricolor*. One bird was observed on Hermann Hagan's pond about five miles from the Savannah River on September 9, 1967, by Grace and Laura Boddiford.

Canada Goose: *Branta canadensis*. Four geese were seen on Baker and Abel Ponds January 16-24, 1969, by Grace Boddiford.

Blue-winged Teal: *Anas discors*. Observations of this species on Baker and Ski Ponds are as follows: five, August 24, 1969;

three, August 29, 1969; seventeen, August 30, 1969; ten, September 3, 1969; 30-35, September 4 and 8, 1969.

American Widgeon: *Mareca americana*. A few were seen on Charlie and Baker Ponds on December 27-29, 1967, and on December 24, 1968.

Redhead: *Aythya americana*. Two were seen on Charlie Pond on December 27-29, 1967.

Lesses Scaup: *Aythya affinis*. Three of this species were observed on December 27-29, 1967, at Charlie Pond, and one was seen on December 26, 1968, on Baker Pond.

Ruddy Duck: *Oxyura jamaicensis*. Two were observed on December 27-28, 1967, on Charlie and Baker Ponds.

Common Gallinule: *Gallinula chloropus*. Common Gallinules have been seen on several farm ponds in the county. Grace and Laura Boddiford believe that the gallinules breed in the area, because one adult and two chicks were seen on August 2, 1967, and later on Baker Pond; and two adults and five chicks were seen on August 24, 1969, and later on Ski Pond. Several were seen on December 24, 1968, on Louis Pfeiffer's pond in northern Screven County.

American Coot: *Fulica americana*. Coots have been observed on the same ponds as the gallinules, singly or in groups. They have also been seen in summer and winter: August 2, 1967, at Baker; December 27, 1967, at Baker and Charlie.

Common Snipe: *Capella gallinago*. Twelve to fifteen birds were seen on December 27-29, 1967, on the edge of a very shallow water-hole on Millhaven. Single individuals were seen on December 26, 1968; August 14, 1969; November 15, 1969.

Willet: *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*. One bird was seen on Baker Pond on August 29, 1969, by Grace Boddiford.

Lesser Yellowlegs: *Totanus flavipes*. Grace and Laura Boddiford observed a single bird on a grassy patch at the edge of Baker Pond on September 3, 1969.

Least Tern: *Sterna albifrons*. Eleven birds were seen flying over the Ski Pond on August 17, 1969, by Grace and Laura Boddiford.

Red-eyed Vireo: *Vireo olivaceus*. Common.

Magnolia Warbler: *Dendroica magnolia*. Grace and Laura Boddiford saw one bird on August 14, 1967, at the Railroad Bed Pond.

Additional Observations

Pie-billed Grebe: *Podilymbus podiceps*. Grace and Laura Boddiford believe that grebes breed in Screven County because four young grebes and four adults were seen on August 30, 1969, and later at Ski Pond.

Wood Duck: *Aix sponsa*. Julius Ariail and Laura Boddiford saw one bird on December 27 and 29, 1967, at the Railroad Bed Pond, and one on Louis Pfeiffer's pond on December 24, 1968. Grace and Laura Boddiford saw a pair on Brier Creek in March, 1969. One was seen on the Railroad Bed Pond in April, 1968, by Grace Boddiford.

Ring-necked Duck: *Aythya collaris*. Julius Ariail and Laura Boddiford saw a large group of this species on Louis Pfeiffer's pond on December 24, 1968. Flora Pfeiffer reported that she had seen them often during that month.

Hooded Merganser: *Lophodytes cucullatus*. Several birds were seen on December 27-29, 1967, on Charlie Pond, and on December 26, 1968, at Baker Pond by Julius Ariail and Laura Boddiford. Grace and Laura Boddiford saw six males and ten females on January 4, 1969, on Baker Pond.

Red-tailed Hawk: *Buteo jamaicensis*. Grace Boddiford observed Red-tailed Hawks nesting in a tall pine tree in the pasture behind the Boddiford house during the summers of 1968 and 1969. There were two young birds in 1968 and one in 1969; the second nest was built on top of the first.

Killdeer: *Charadrius vociferus*. Killdeer have been seen frequently in Screven County, usually around farm ponds.

Spotted Sandpiper: *Actitis macularia*. Several of this species have been seen on the shores of low ponds during August and early September, 1967-1969.

Solitary Sandpiper: *Tringa solitaria*. The first record of this bird at Millhaven is August 19, 1967. Since that time, individual

birds have been seen on several ponds on Millhaven during August 1967-1969.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: *Sitta canadensis*. Several birds were seen regularly between November 25, 1968, and January, 1969, in pine trees in the Boddiford yard. They were always seen with Brown-headed Nuthatches.

Brown Creeper. *Certhia familiaris*. One was seen on January 5, 1969, on the trunk of a pine tree by the Boddiford house.

Route 1, Box 355, Sylvania, Ga. 30467

General Notes

SIGHT RECORD OF GREATER SCAUP IN FORSYTH COUNTY, GEORGIA—On January 7, 1971, I noticed a pair of Scaup on a watershed reservoir in northern Forsyth County, Ga. Upon closer examination through a 30-power scope I saw that the male had a green head. I returned on the 9th and the birds were still there. On the 14th I was able to flush the birds and observed the presence of long white wing stripes, which indicated that they were Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*). On January 16 I returned with Jack Carusos in an attempt to have my observations verified, but the birds were not there. They returned on the 17th, but three subsequent visits by me on the 23rd, 24th, and 26th revealed no scaup. On January 30 the birds reappeared and were observed by me on the 31st, February 3 and 6. I returned February 10, but the birds were not there and were not seen again after the 6th.

Burleigh (1958, Georgia Birds, U. of Okla. Press, Norman) states that the Greater Scaup is "apparently a rare and rather local winter resident in the eastern edge of the state." The Pocket Checklist of Georgia Birds (Denton, J. F. and M. N. Hopkins, Jr., 1969. Published by the Georgia Ornithological Society) states that it is "considered a rare and local winter resident along the coast." Everyone seems to be in agreement that Greater Scaup are very difficult to identify positively in the field, but if they can be identified in the field at all there were two during the month of January, 1971, in Forsyth County over 200 miles from the coast.

J. M. Paget, Rt. 8, Pilgrim Mill Rd., Cumming, Georgia 30130

REDDISH EGRET IN OKEFENOKEE SWAMP—On June 25, 1971, I with John Gowan, our guide, saw a Reddish Egret (*Di-chromanassa rufescens*) perched alone in a bare tree in Chesser Prairie in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, Georgia. I observed the bristly chestnut neck, dark, slaty body, and black-tipped, flesh-colored bill. Mr. Gowan did not know the Reddish Egret, but confirmed my observations. We stopped the boat and watched him through binoculars for about 10 minutes (because we didn't believe it), which permitted us to get a good look at him until he flew away.

It is possible that drought conditions in south Florida may have caused this egret to move north out of its normal range.

Mary Beth Stowe, 3425 Sherman Court, Port Huron, Michigan 48060

AMERICAN AVOCET ON LAKE BLUE RIDGE, GA.—On Friday afternoon, August 13, 1971, about 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. I saw an American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) on Lake Blue Ridge in north Georgia. This bird, the only one of its kind seen, was at the Morganton Point Recreation Area just out of Morganton, Ga. He was walking at the shoreline when we drove out on the point of land where boats are launched, and he took flight, circled, and returned to where he was at first. There he remained, walking and standing and giving a peculiar little jerk of his neck now and then. He was within 35-40 feet of us and identification was unmistakable. He "posed" there until we left.

This was the only time we saw this bird, although we spent a long time in the same place on Saturday morning and early afternoon. Boat activity and visitors had increased, and perhaps he was hidden on Saturday.

Florence (Mrs. J. R.) McDonald, 4175 Janice Dr., College Park, Ga. 30337

CLAPPER RAIL IN DOWNTOWN ATLANTA—During the fall of 1971 I continued for the fifth season to pick up birds that were killed during migration at the Equitable Building and the Trust Company of Georgia Building in downtown Atlanta (Fink, Oriole, Vol. XXXV, March, 1970). On September 1 a lone rail was found dead on the plaza or southeast side of the Equitable Building. The tentative identification of Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*) was verified by Mrs. Roxie C. Layborne of the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D. C. She further

stated that it was an immature bird that looked most like the race *waynei* in comparison to specimens in the National Collection. When found, this bird had no stomach contents and there was practically no fat on its body.

The prevailing winds for the night of August 31-September 1 were from the east at an average of 8.6 mph. These winds may have been responsible for blowing this bird from the coast. The almost emaciated state of this bird suggests that it was not in a normal migration flight when killed. The race *waynei* is a permanent resident on our coast and the race *crepitans* is probably the more likely race to be found migrating through the State.

The Clapper Rail is generally thought of as being restricted to salt marshes, probably because of its diet of crustaceans which are confined to salt water (Tomkins, *The Birdlife of the Savannah River Delta*, Gaviiformes through Charadriiformes, 1958). Specimens of this species have never been reported from the Atlanta area before. This specimen is now in the Georgia University Collection.

Tom French, Ga. State Univ., 33 Gilmer St., S.E., Atlanta, Ga.

DUNLINS IN ATLANTA—On October 17, 1971, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Freeborn and I saw two Dunlins (*Erolia alpina*) flying over a marshy area on the grounds of the State Regional Hospital on Panthersville Road in southeast DeKalb County. This is the same general area which has produced rarities before: Glossy Ibis, Western Kingbird, Ruff and others.

A fish pond is under construction and the area is now a tangle of reeds, broken trees, and piles of mud. The birds flew below us three times as we watched from the brow of a hill; they performed aerial maneuvers together as though well rehearsed.

The bills were curved downward so markedly that I hoped at first they might be Curlew Sandpipers. However, they lacked the white rumps of the latter, and published pictures of Dunlins disclose the wide variation in amount of curve in the bills.

Denton and Hopkins ("Pocket Checklist Georgia Birds," Georgia Ornithological Society, 1969) call the Dunlin "casual in the interior in the fall." I find no published records for Atlanta.

Louis C. Fink, Apt. 913, 620 Peachtree St., N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30308

GREATER YELLOWLEGS AND WESTERN KINGBIRD IN THOMAS COUNTY—On Thanksgiving Day, 25 November 1971, a Greater Yellowlegs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) was found dead on the road on the outskirts of Thomasville, Georgia. It had apparently been shot by hunters. This is the first known record for Thomas County.

Another record of interest was the presence of two Western Kingbirds (*Tyrannus verticalis*) in Thomas County from the sixth to the eleventh of November. This is only the second known occurrence of this species for the county.

Robert L. Crawford, Tall Timbers Research Station, Route 1, Box 160, Tallahassee, Florida 32301

LATE FALL RECORD OF ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK IN ATLANTA—Trusco Park is the 75-foot square planting of hollies and silver maples in the heart of downtown Atlanta; it has been under intense observation. On December 14, 1971, I was making my daily check of the two catbirds (*Dumetella carolinensis*) which have resided in the Park all fall. Six feet away at eye level I saw a rose-breasted grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) perched on a bare branch. A female and completely devoid of any red coloring, she stared back at me intently for two or three minutes.

I can find no records of this species in Georgia in December.

The large bill was a muddy, dirty shade of black, much darker than the illustrations in six books in my library. Every description I could find describes the bill as pale.

The bird made no sound nor could I ever see its wing-linings, but the heavy streakings and the breast pattern eliminated the blackheaded grosbeak as a possibility.

Louis C. Fink, Apt. 913, 620 Peachtree St., N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30308

NEWS AND COMMENTS

FRENCH HONORED BY ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Thomas French of Sharondale Drive in Atlanta has been awarded a scholarship for two weeks this summer at the Audubon Camp in Maine. The announcement was made by W. E. Freeborn, Chairman of the Wildlife Films Program of the Atlanta Audubon Society. Proceeds from the motion pictures shown by visiting naturalists provide funds for the scholarship.

Mr. French has been interested in natural history from his youth. He won a prize in the Science Fair in the sixth grade, and shortly thereafter joined a study group at Okefenokee Swamp at the invitation of Dr. Georgine Pindar, who is now President of the Atlanta Audubon Society.

As an Eagle Scout at the age of 16, he led a group of scouts on an 11-day, 50-mile hike through the Philmont Scout Reservation near Cimarron, New Mexico.

Mr. French is employed in the Biology Department at Georgia State University, where he expects to earn his degree of Bachelor of Science in biology this summer. He has applied for graduate work at two universities.

For three years, Tom French has collected birds killed at downtown skyscrapers in Atlanta. He has collected 1,298 identifiable birds of 87 species and has made study skins of 350 of them. All are in Georgia State's Collection, which contains 600 skins—500 of them prepared by Tom French.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: SANDERLING

For the past two years, the Long Point Bird Observatory has undertaken a study on the relationship between fat deposition and fall migration in the Sanderling. In conjunction with this study, a large number of birds have been colour-marked and sightings of these marked birds away from Long Point have indicated that most of the birds fly directly from the study area to the East Coast.

During 1972, the Observatory hopes to individually colour-mark and colour-code several hundred Sanderling in order to fur-

ther investigate this phenomenon. The colour-coding will involve three aspects: colour-marking with feather dye, wing-tagging and banding with the normal aluminum band.

Birds will be feather-dyed on the breast and abdomen with one of four colours: red, yellow, green, or white (no colour); according to the percent of the bird's total body weight attributable to fat.

The birds will be wing-tagged on *each* wing with semi-permanent wing tags of the following colours: black, blue, brown, green, red, orange, yellow and white. The wing-tagging will individually identify each bird.

The placement of the aluminum band will indicate the age of the bird. Birds banded on the right leg will be adults and those banded on the left leg will be immatures.

The Observatory would be pleased if anyone sighting these birds would report the following information to us:

Date of Sighting

Location (including nearest city or town)

Colour of feather-dye on the breast or abdomen

Colour of the wing-tag on the right wing

Colour of the wing-tag on the left wing

Leg on which the bird is banded

Co-operators will receive a short note explaining the project's application to the preservation of the Long Point peninsula in a natural state and the date on which the bird was last seen on Long Point. Reports of marked birds should be sent to:

Long Point Bird Observatory,

Long Point, Ontario,

CANADA.

RECENT LITERATURE

HOW TO TALK TO BIRDS, by Richard C. Davids, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, N.Y., 242 pages, \$6.95.

In this book, sub-titled "and other uncommon ways of enjoying nature the year round," the author not only describes unusual and little-known behavior traits of birds, but he raises many anthropomorphic questions regarding all sorts of wildlife.

Davids, a former editor of *Better Homes and Gardens*, has spent a lifetime enjoying nature. *How to Talk to Birds* is the result of his experiences, related in delightfully simple, yet scientifically accurate language. The book is especially valuable as an incentive for those not already addicted to bird-watching or moth-growing or plant culture to become avid enthusiasts in at least one phase of nature lore. Readers who consider themselves experts will find that there is still much to learn.

For instance, Davids reveals that many of the "Indian" mounds of the interior United States may have been built through the ages by, of all things, toads! In winter toads dig themselves into the soft soil of the mounds, descending as the frost level goes down, and ascending again as it rises in the spring.

Davids raises many questions which have no answer, such as why geese sometimes fly upside down, why crested flycatchers invariably include snakeskins in their nest-building, why certain mushrooms emerge the day before it rains, and why his pet owl seemed to prefer Westerns at television fare.

These and many more topics are enhanced by a dozen pages of excellent photographs, a number of which were taken by Jack Dermid, North Carolina's noted photographer of wildlife.

Robert Overing, Route 2, Box 139, Chapin, S.C. 29036

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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.

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