THE ORIOLE

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

VOLUME 37 DECEMBER, 1972 NO. 4

THE ORIOLE

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Regular $5.00	Library $3.00	Life ..... $ 80.00
Family $8.00	Sustaining $8.00	Patron $100.00
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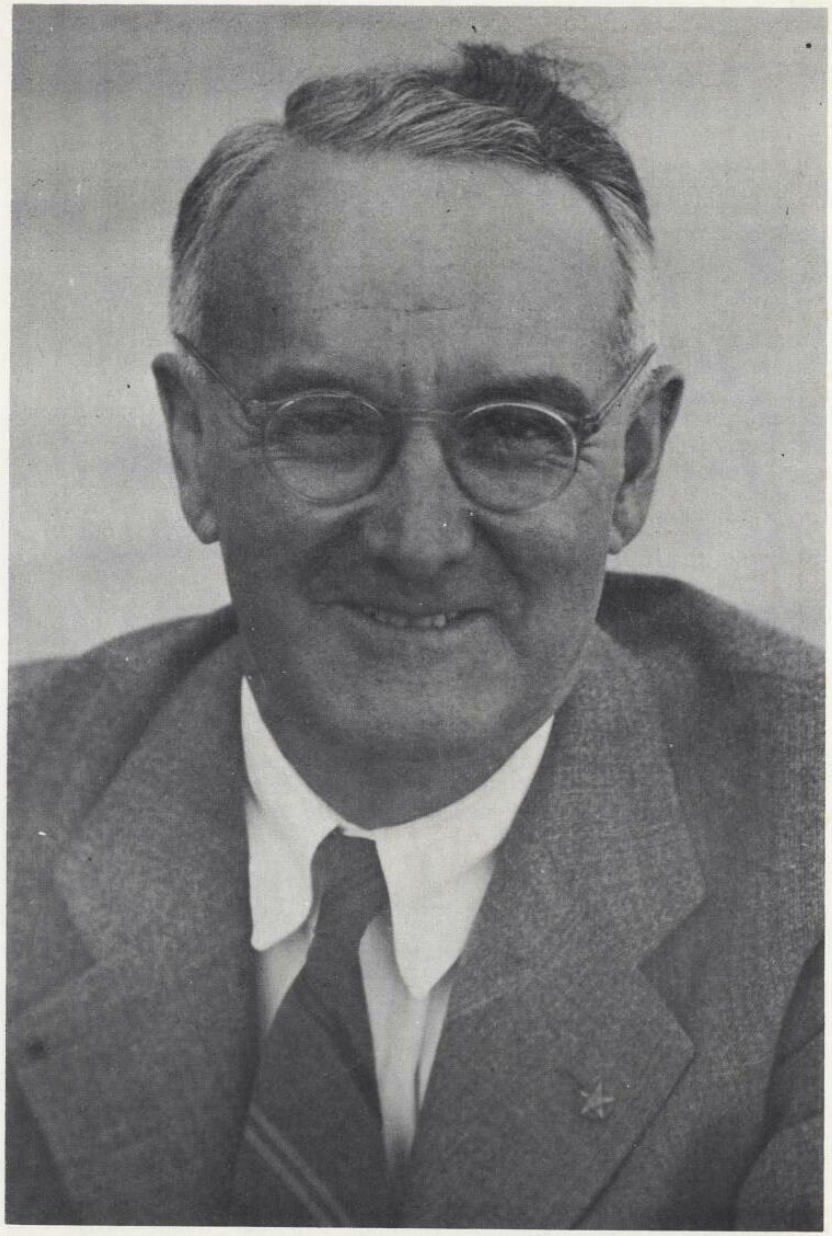

Photograph by Olin S. Pettingill, Jr., 1941

HERBERT L. STODDARD, SR.

1889-1970

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HERBERT L. STODDARD, SR.—"*The Wizard of Sherwood*"

E. V. Komarek, Sr.

Herb, as he was known affectionately by his many friends, had that spirit of dedication to nature, that indefatigable curiosity, that untiring devotion, and that great drive so inherent in all great naturalists. Time and hours were of no consequence and anyone that worked with him had to realize this or lose his respect. His only real problem was that there weren't enough hours in each day when he was in search of knowledge or an insight of the natural world around him. But diligence in itself does not make a naturalist. He was a keen observer and possessed an interpretive mind. "Nature likes to play tricks on man", he used to remark, and he was cautious in his interpretations. Herb also had that rare quality of inspiring all who came his way, young or old. In many an individual he lit the spark of devotion to natural history.

He used to delight in reminding me that he had seen me before I had ever met him. There was 20 years difference in our ages and he had left the museum world of Chicago and Milwaukee in 1924, whereas I had only entered it in 1927. In my young days I had come under the influence of Homer M. Schantz, President of the Illinois Audubon Society, and had organized a group of youth in Oak Park, Illinois, into a conservation organization of which I was president. We called our group The Roosevelt Conservation Council (after Theodore Roosevelt) and our slogan, which we had printed on our business cards, was "S.O.S.—Save Our Songsters." When I came to the Academy I joined the Chicago Ornithological Society. Herb always insisted that I had been pointed out to him at a dinner meeting as a "wild-eyed fanatic." Our group "knew" that the use of guns was the reason bird life was disappearing, not the change in habitat.

I had heard a great deal about Herb, for some of his friends such as Bill Lyon, President of the Inland Bird Banding Association; Ed Ford, at the Academy; Sandy Sanborn, at Field Museum; etc.; had also become friends of mine. These mutual friends, and others, used to remark about his collecting and devotion to bird studies and I was often kiddingly called "another d--- fool like

Stoddard." I had heard a great deal about him and his work, so was most eager to meet him.

My first direct association with Herb, however, came in early 1933. My brother Roy and I had just about completed our field work on the Mammals of the Great Smokies and were planning another collecting trip to Florida and the Gulf states. He had come to Illinois to visit his mother at Rockford and usually stopped over at Chicago. The Academy had acquired a new director a few years back, Alfred M. Bailey, who was a friend of Herb's. When Herb came by, I was asked to have lunch with him and Bailey, during the course of which our planned Florida trip came up for discussion. Herb, even then, had that quality to inspire young people and he did me, and insisted that Roy and I use Sherwood for a collecting base. In due course of time we left the Smokies, some few weeks later than originally planned, and headed for Sherwood. We had already received several notes from Bailey pointing out that Herb was awaiting us. After driving a good share of the night we arrived at old Beachton and the red clay, rural road called "Meridian" and inquired about directions to Stoddard's. We stopped a young fellow on a bike and he proved to be Herb's son, "Sonny." He held on to our heavily loaded pickup truck and directed us to Sherwood—we plastering him with red clay along the way. Herb was not at home, but Mrs. Stoddard made us most welcome, remarking that he had been awaiting us anxiously, but had to leave on a South Carolina quail preserve inspection trip. Roy and I had had some doubts about collecting when we passed by several of the hunting plantations along the way from Thomasville. These were not allayed very much when we drove up to the long house and well kept large lawn at Sherwood. However, when Mrs. Stoddard showed us Herb's lab, which we were to use, we felt right at home, for it was very typical of a field collector's work-shop. She insisted we use the western end room for our quarters and so we were fixed up very comfortably. We had several days of field work before Herb got back. All this time Mrs. Stoddard was afraid that we weren't comfortable or that we didn't have enough to eat. She would apologize every night that all she had, and it had to be used up, was some ring-necked ducks that Stoddard had shot just before he left. So each night we were served up individual roast duck while Roy and I prayed that would continue.

When Herb returned just before Christmas, we planned our trip into northwest Florida. Roy and I had always looked upon the road maps as an excellent source of where to collect. When we would see a large blank space without roads we would head for that area knowing that people did live there and they did have what sometimes could be called roads, but usually only two wheel-ruts in the sand. Herb said he would catch up with us when we camped near Rock Bluff on the Ochlocknee River above

Sopchoppy. Several days later Herb found us encamped in the piney woods and remarked that the first person he asked knew exactly where we were. I only realized sometime later that Herb had visited simply "to size us up." Some weeks later the bank failures caused me to go up to Sherwood to get a check cashed. As I was pulling away he asked if I would like to work with him in the relatively newly formed Cooperative Quail Study Association. This was not only to continue the research of his original Quail Investigation, but further to act as a consulting organization to quail preserves in the south. He remarked he didn't know whether it would continue because of the depression and that he couldn't pay me very much. I then told him the Academy was giving Roy and me only $55.00 a month for salary and all expenses for the two of us together. He laughed and said he could do better than that and that as long as funds continued he would pay me $55.00 a month. I readily accepted with instructions to report for work on July 1, 1934. Roy and I had made commitments to the National Park Service to visit both the Everglades, which was being considered for a national park, and the Shenandoah National Park, which had recently been acquired. We also had to close out our Smokey Mountain cabin and studies, etc. Roy took my place at the Academy, so we came out of the deal with $55.00 a month each—a 100% increase, thanks to Herb.

On July 1 I arrived at Sherwood, made arrangements with Mrs. Stoddard for board, and literally became a member of the family and lived in the "long house" with them. Throughout Herb's life he had a constant stream of visitors coming by who were interested in various phases of natural history. The first winter I was at Sherwood, Dr. Herman Kurz, a friend and botanist at Florida State College for Women (now Florida State University) came by with a botany class of women. Among them was Betty Barker and some few months later, July 19, 1935, Betty and I were married under a large Tulip Poplar on Sherwood. Herb was my "best man" and Dr. Kurz gave Betty away. In spite of rain, red clay, and slippery plantation roads, Herb and Ada carried on the wedding reception in great style and Dr. Bellamy, who was present, made the remark "from the sublime to the ridiculous"—for we had all gotten wet and Herb and I had to share all of our various field clothes with the men present. We fixed up "the shack" on Sherwood and though Betty and I started a series of cotton rat experiments, Herb immediately started to indoctrinate her into the pleasures of bird study, which developed into a continued interest; small mammals have remained quite secondary. But such was Herb's ability to inspire others, not only to an interest in birds, but all phases of natural history; nothing was ever insignificant or uninteresting.

The Cooperative Quail Study Association, with Stoddard as Director and Henry L. Beadel, owner of Tall Timbers Plantation,

as Secretary, was an inspiring organization. The experimental studies among which we lived and also the experience of being "Quail Doctors" to about a hundred hunting plantations in the South, from North Carolina to Stuttgart, Arkansas, broadened our perspective. No plantation owner ever called us in unless difficulty was being experienced in maintaining hunting, particularly quail hunting, so in truth we were "doctors" and a large share of time had to be spent in diagnosing the "illness." Most of the time, in fact I would say fully 75% of the time or more, the trouble diagnosed related to the use of fire.

Herb had placed in his classic Bobwhite Quail (in spite of having to re-write the fire chapter five times) the following statement in his remarks on "Relation of burning to the quail supply". He wrote in 1931:

> ". . . fire may well be the most important single factor in determining what animal and vegetable life will thrive in many areas."

I have been most fortunate to have come under the tutelage of several great teachers, but for sheer knowledge and understanding of what goes on in nature none could surpass Herb Stoddard. I had been taught the experimental scientific method of plots and transects and the more or less artificial basis for natural experiments. It was Herb that showed me the innumerable ways that nature is always experimenting. He used to remark that if one is smart enough, he can find not only many comparable experiments being conducted naturally, but also what could be termed natural controls. His basic understanding of what we now call Fire Ecology was certainly profound and he was an adept "woods burner" as well.

We closed out the Cooperative Quail Study Association on May 1, 1943, with Herb becoming a registered consulting forester. The proper selective cutting of forest lands, with due regard to the wildlife, had become nearly an all-consuming passion. I carried on with part of the Association membership as "Farm and Game Service" until 1945. Although he and I no longer were working together in the same unit, we still retained very close association, which meant seeing each other and discussing matters at least once a week or more.

In 1945 I accepted the general management of Greenwood Plantation with Roy as my assistant and with the understanding that Stoddard would be Greenwood's consulting forester. We accepted the management of this 18,000 acre plantation as a place to try out ideas which we had developed previously as to the proper combination of wildlife, game, forestry, and agriculture. John Hay Whitney, the owner, and his representative, Major L. A. Beard, not only desired to do this, but also to assist southern agri-

culture as well. To all of us it was a challenge and Major was the kind of individual that could make such a challenge an inspiring experience.

Herb had developed certain ideas on the proper economical development of southern pine forests with a long range view of maintaining not only productivity of timber, but the esthetic quality of the forest and its game and other wildlife as well. A long range plan, including periodic timber cruises and certain cutting standards as well as selective methods, was mapped out. He certainly deserves to be called the "pioneer" of multiple-use forestry as it applies to the Thomasville-Tallahassee hunting plantation region. He put into practice high standards of selective cutting during a period when plantation owners were reluctant to harvest their timber because of previous unhappy experiences.

A common practice of lumbering was known to foresters as "high-grading" the forest, a practice that selected the highest quality, straighest, and best trees, leaving a forest of inferior quality. Herb reversed this practice and marked out the "cull" trees first and for several years at Greenwood most of our operations dealt mainly with such timber. The present condition and excellence (and I am tempted to say world renown, for the forests are visited by people not only from America, but from Europe, Australia, and Africa as well) of the Greenwood Plantation forests are due primarily to Herb Stoddard's excellence as both forester and game manager. He can most properly be called the "Dean of Forest and Game Management." These forests are still being managed under the same plans and conditions laid down by Stoddard and under the immediate direction of his former assistant, Leon Neel.

Herb certainly deserves to be called a "pioneer" in the multiple-use concept, and not only because of his emphasis on a combination of both forestry and game management. He, from my earliest association with him, recognized that the forest was the home of many interesting and valuable birds and other animals, as well as trees. Due to his foresightedness on both Greenwood and Tall Timbers we perhaps maintain as high a concentration, if not higher, than anywhere else of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, an endangered species. He recognized the value of certain kinds of older trees as necessary for the maintenance of many species of birds and mammals; that here in the southeast the forest understory must consist of more than just pine needles, if both forest and wildlife were to remain; and that what was essential was not only good forest cutting practices, but good forest understory management. Much of our southeastern wildlife, animals and plants, is essentially of a prairie type that can only grow in a

well managed multiple-use forest. The *natural* way to maintain this is by fire, not herbicides, mechanical equipment, or pine plantations.

Herb had recognized from the beginning of his studies on quail in the Thomasville-Tallahassee region that wildlife was greatly in need of an "experiment station", in particular to investigate its relation to fire. In his book the Bobwhite Quail he called attention to this need:

> ". . . burning upon the vegetation of an area, and its indirect effect upon the animal life, present a complex problem, one that would require years of careful research on the part of the personnel of a well-equipped experimentation station to work out . . ."

However, that he also recognized the need of such an experiment station for quail and other wildlife management is apparent in the early correspondence setting up the original Quail Investigation in 1924. Col. L. S. Thompson loaned the biological survey the 1,000 acre plantation, then known as "The Hall", which he renamed "Sherwood", and in the earliest prospectus of the "Quail Club", which was an interim group before the Cooperative Quail Association was set up, it was emphasized that "Sherwood" would be the *experiment* station for the group. Throughout the history of the Cooperative Quail Study Association, a great many experiments were conducted on Sherwood, on adjoining Birdsong, and a few on Tall Timbers Plantation. I have emphasized experimentation in biological studies, for Stoddard recognized this basic need. Most biological stations only study or observe what goes on. They do not set up formal experimentation and *manipulate* the environment to show or learn what goes on in the way of basic principles. The growth of agriculture and forestry has been based to a great extent on such experiment stations.

Herb lived to realize the kind of experiment station he had envisioned some 35 years or more ago, for in 1958 Henry L. Beadel suggested the development and organization of the Tall Timbers Research Station on Tall Timbers Plantation. Tall Timbers Research, Inc., was organized on March 15, 1958, with the express purpose of the development of a biological experiment station. Henry L. Beadel was President and Director; Herbert L. Stoddard was Vice-President and Director; E. V. Komarek, Sr., was Secretary-Treasurer and Director. Upon Mr. Beadel's death, Tall Timbers Research, Inc., inherited the property known as Tall Timbers Plantation as well as the annual income from a trust fund set up in Mr. Beadel's will. Herb then became President and Roy Komarek was elected Vice-President and Director.

In 1968 funds were raised to build the Herbert L. Stoddard Laboratories and Herb lived long enough to see this become an

actuality. Today Tall Timbers Reserach Station continues to expand, continues to hold firm to Stoddard's basic ideas on both experimentation and natural experiments, and has become a world renowned institution, not only in fire ecology, but in other ecological studies as well. The foundation that Herbert L. Stoddard began with his early work in ecology—The Bobwhite Quail—has now been completed. We hope that we can build upon that foundation the kind of ecological institution of science and education that, because of his contagious enthusiasm, we, too, now dream about. Our vision has expanded and it does seem that we have become "hitched to a star" so that Herb can always be with us.

Tall Timbers Research Station, Tallahassee, Florida

* * *

What can you write about a friend with whom you have had almost daily association for over tweny years and who is gone? There are so many experiences, places, trips, people, and projects, and they are all made more memorable by the character of the man.

In 1950, when Herbert L. Stoddard hired me as a fledgling forester, he was 61 years of age. Already very successful in every respect, he tackled life with enthusiasm that few people have ever known.

At that time he was working terribly hard as a wildlife manager and consulting forester and doing extensive ornithological work on the "Birds of Grady County," and also in the area he called the "Tallahassee Region." He particularly liked to work Alligator Point, south of Tallahassee, and we were there when only a few houses had been built and the Ospreys nested and fed their young in the group of old Slash Pines out toward the end, and the Willets nested wherever the grass was suitable.

There was a little marsh area close by the big pines, with a thicket of pine reproduction around the gulf side and a good stand of large sapling pines going out to the beach. This was his favorite collecting ground on the Coast. He got many records here, including some "firsts" for the State of Florida and the Southeast. And he missed some, too. Once we were looking over a group of sparrows that were feeding on the roadside where the road to Alligator Point turns off Highway 98 and he found a Rufous-Crowned Sparrow among them, the first he had ever seen east of the Mississippi. We tried very hard to collect this bird, but failed,

and he never submitted this as a record because he did not have the feathers. He firmly believed that all such rare observations should be backed up by the collected bird.

Of course there were birds that he would not collect because of their rarity. Anything prohibited on his federal or state collecting permits, or anything he felt needed every individual to survive as a species, was strictly honored by him. We were in a canoe on the Chipola River above the Dead Lakes doing the Ivory-Bill Woodpecker work for the National Audubon Society, and we stopped in the shade of a big overhanging Tupelo. Mr. Stoddard squeaked up a fine group of miscellaneous migrants, including several warblers. He always kept a bird list of every trip and notes of whatever interested him, so he looked this group of fussing, scolding birds over very carefully in the foliage above our heads. Suddenly he focused his glasses on a Bachman's Warbler. He excitedly pointed this bird out to me and then very quickly a Sharp-Shinned Hawk darted into the group, caught a bird, and disappeared into the swamp. We did not know which bird the hawk caught, and we did not see the Bachman's Warbler again. On another trip in that area, he showed me a Short-Tailed Hawk, but we never found the Ivory-Bill Woodpecker there.

For several years he worked all of the rivers from the Aucilla to the Appalachicola by canoe and in some cases part of the Gulf of Mexico as well. On one fine December day we launched our canoe at Shell Island landing at St. Marks an hour before daylight and worked out toward the gulf. He had listed the expected marsh birds, herons, and river birds by the time we reached the lighthouse a few hours later. It was a flat day on the gulf and we paddled out to the sand reef at the old bird roosts, stepped out of the canoe, set the telescope up on the reef, which was only covered by a few inches of water, and looked over the rafts of Red-Heads and Scaup further out. There were probably 20,000 ducks rafted in front of us that day and the flat water showed them up well.

Several years later we were to work further off shore, looking for the sea birds he knew should be out there. In an 18 foot, offshore boat, we found Phalaropes, Jaegers, and Gannets in the wide expanses south of St. Marks and Alligator Point. One particularly fine, flat day, we pushed further and further due south of Bouy 26, and there was nothing. Just the flat gulf that seemed to go on and on, with no birds, no fish, just the hum of the two motors as we pushed southward. About 35 miles offshore we found two Frigate Birds working a tightly compacted bait school in the still, clear water, the only sign of life we had seen that day. As we passed over the bait, it was surrounded by a loosely knit school of large Mackeral, and right below were several big Cobia. Deeper down, under all of the other fish, was a very large shark

circling lazily under the spectrum of life above. We shot one of the Frigate Birds for the Tall Timbers collection and went further south where we found a lost buoy in about 70 feet of water, and with a light westerly wind springing up, we caught several Dolphin around this lost buoy. It was one of his favorite trips that year.

On all of these ventures into the field he thoroughly enjoyed himself. He worked terribly hard on the goal of each trip, whether it was looking for Ivory-Bill Woodpeckers, searching for a particular bird, or making a general survey of the bird life, and I never saw his spirits or his enthusiasm dampened by hardships, discomfort, or inclement weather. His attitude was the best I have ever known.

He did extensive work for the trans-gulf and night migration project of Lowery and Newman at L.S.U. and we set up lunar observation stations at several points along the Gulf Coast from Alligator Point to Cape San Blas. One favorite spot was the east end of St. George Island, reachable only by boat. We would leave Sherwood late in the afternoon after a full day's work, drive to Carrabelle, and with our equipment loaded in a 14 foot skiff we kept there, we would make the end of the island usually by nightfall. We would set up the telescope on the sand spit on the east end and watch the full moon for two nights, keeping the data on the birds that crossed the disc. During the day we would sleep a little, but mostly we would collect birds as a team, and then he would spend any remaining time skinning them at camp.

On one trip we made the island just as a terrible storm closed in. We secured the boat above the high tide mark and sat huddled in our ponchos. The weather never broke on this trip. It could have been a terrible waste, but we were fascinated by the spectacle of the stormy night, the sights of the storm itself illuminated by the lightning, and the sound of the surf and the winds and the driving rain when it fell. Through this all night would come the voices of the sea birds as they flew low over our little camp on that lonely island. When I hear Black Skimmers now, I think of that night on St. George Island and Herbert Stoddard huddled under a poncho, alert as ever in his life to life itself, and I know that he was as one with his God.

LEON NEEL, Tall Timbers Research Station, Tallahassee, Florida

* * *

It was in the early twenties that I had the privilege of meeting Herb Stoddard. In his studies of the Bob-white Quail he had come to the conclusion that light burning was essential to the proper management of this important game species, and as might be expected, foresters, both federal and state, were aghast at such

heresy. To allay their fears Herb suggested a demonstration of his technique on his plantation at Thomasville. I was then with the Forestry Department of the University of Georgia at Athens and an invitation to be present at this meeting was promptly accepted. So I saw Sherwood Plantation for the first time, met its then controversial owner, and a friendship began that lasted for almost half a century.

In the ensuing years it was only at infrequent intervals that I saw Herb, but we had a few short field trips together, met at the annual meetings of the A.O.U., and at rare intervals, since my work with the Fish and Wildlife Service took me rather far afield, I was his guest on Sherwood Plantation.

Those memories I cherish, for I never met a man I had more respect for, and liked as much, as Herb Stoddard. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, always considerate of those around him, and never critical of the failure of others. Thinking back over the years I can't remember ever hearing him make an unkind or unpleasant remark about anybody, although, life being what it is, there surely were individuals he must, with good reason, have disliked.

Although a busy man, for his interests were many and varied, he was never too busy to help anybody that needed his assistance. When the manuscript on the birds of Georgia was practically completed, difficulties developed in financing its publication. When he became aware of this situation Herb immediately gave much of his time and energy to securing the necessary funds and *Georgia Birds* stands today as a monument to his willingness to help his fellow man.

The world lost an outstanding citizen and humanitarian when Herb Stoddard died.

THOMAS D. BURLEIGH, 1242 Sylvan Road, Monterey, California

* * *

Before me is a copy of his last book, *Memoirs of a Naturalist*, with the photograph of him among the pine trees of south Georgia. I have one of the originals of this in an album which I treasure very much. He has written as follows in this book "With Best Wishes to Earle R. Greene—who is also a friend of the birds —Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr."

At the annual meeting of The American Ornithologists' Union in Charleston, South Carolina, in November, 1937, I had the pleasure of sitting next to Herbert and his wife Ada, which I believe is the first time I met them. At this annual banquet Dr. Eugene Edmund Murphey of Augusta presided as toastmaster. A photograph of the gathering hangs on my wall here. Herbert Stoddard joined The American Ornithologists' Union in 1912 and

became a Life Fellow in 1936. He rarely missed a meeting until a few years ago when his health began to fail. Even then at Sherwood Plantation he welcomed friends and talked of many interesting birds including his experiences with the Ivory-Bill Woodpecker.

In addition to his many projects he made Christmas Counts for the National Audubon Society of the birds in the area of his home for many years.

Stoddard became the First President of the Georgia Ornithological Society, giving it his time and experience to make it one of the leading state organizations in the nation. He was also a member of the Georgia Society of Naturalists, an organization of about twenty men who traveled about the state to its swamps and rivers and lakes and coastline to study the many forms of wildlife. Sherwood Plantation and the area about it was frequently visited by this group as Stoddard knew it so well. When I became Refuge Manager in the Okefenokee Swamp for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the information and encouragement Herbert gave me was of great value and I have never forgotten it. *BIRDS OF GEORGIA—A Preliminary Check-List and Bibliography of Georgia Ornithology* was compiled by Earle R. Greene, William W. Griffin, Eugene P. Odum, Herbert L. Stoddard, and Ivan R. Tomkins, with an Historical Narrative by Eugene E. Murphey. This was sponsored by the Georgia Ornithological Society as Occasional Publication No. 2. This book came off The University of Georgia Press in Athens in 1945. It was financed by Herbert Stoddard and was well received by leading ornithologists throughout the nation. A letter to me from Frank M. Chapman congratulates the authors for the first book written on the birds of this state. I have that letter.

Herbert L. Stoddard, a great ornithologist and a man of sterling character, has gone to his reward. We will miss him but we will always remember the many things he did for people and for the conservation of wildlife.

EARLE R. GREENE, P.O. Box 1058, St. Simons Island, Georgia

* * *

Herbert L. Stoddard may, in many ways, be compared with John Abbot in his deep understanding and knowledge of his environment and the wildlife related to it.

His interest in nature began at an early age when the family moved from Rockford, Illinois, to Chuluota, Florida, in 1893. Chuluota is located approximately 20 miles east of Orlando. Mr. Stoddard has given a vivid account of his early years in Florida in his *Memoirs of a Naturalist*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1969.

In Florida he was fortunate in meeting Mr. Barber, a retired government surveyor, who knew the names of birds, mammals, and other wildlife which inhabited this land with its virgin forests, lakes, streams, and prairies. He quickly became attuned to his surroundings and many things he observed became lasting memories. He enjoyed recalling his youthful adventures and observations and sharing them with friends. Later, he put to excellent use many of the things he learned. He watched the cattlemen of those early days burn certain areas of the prairie at the right time of year and under maximally favorable weather conditions to produce a burn that resulted in a new growth of fresh grass on the cattle range. Later, when he settled in south Georgia on Sherwood Plantation with its 1000 acres of woods and fields, he put his knowledge of controlled burning into practice. He became expert in the proper use of fire and its relation to the total environment long before ecology became a household word.

When I first visited Sherwood Plantation I wondered why there were more butterflies and moths to be seen there than in other areas. I also observed more quail and other birds as well as other forms of wildlife. All had found favorable habitats in which they could live and multiply. This was brought about by the wise methods employed to manage the land for maximum production of timber as well as wildlife.

Herbert Stoddard's scientific studies, in depth, of the Bobwhite Quail are reported in detail in his monumental work, *The Bob-white Quail*, Scribner, 1931. Although now out of print, it can be found in many public libraries.

At an early age Mr. Stoddard became interested in taxidermy and this led to positions with the Milwaukee Public Museum and the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. His skill as a taxidermist was put to good use throughout his life. This skill made it possible for him to preserve thousands of bird skins from the many species of birds which were killed annually during migration when they struck a tall television tower (1010 ft.) located only a few miles from his home. Daily visits were made at dawn to the TV tower for 11 consecutive years to pick up any birds that had been killed during the night. The largest kill occurred at the time he began his visits when over 1000 birds were picked up on the morning of October 9, 1955. This occurred during the peak of a migration when the tower was obscured by fog. During a 10-year period Mr. Stoddard and the Tall Timbers Research Station shared the specimens with a number of institutions. A summary of this study was published by the Tall Timbers Research Station.

Herbert Stoddard was active in various ornithological organizations. He was a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union and a Charter Member and President of the Georgia Ornithological Society. Also, he was a Charter Member of The Wildlife

Society and the Inland Bird Banding Society.

When the outstanding book *Georgia Birds* by Thomas D. Burleigh was published (University of Oklahoma Press), the profits from it were alloted to establish The Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr. Scholarship Fund at the University of Georgia. Most of the beautiful illustrations in the book were painted from life at Sherwood Plantation by George M. Sutton.

In August, 1929, I invited a group of men to an informal meeting at Emory University. Those attending and their specialties were: Dr. W. B. Baker, botany; Professor P. W. Fattig, entomology; Earle R. Greene, ornithology; Lucien Harris, Jr., entomology; Dr. H. Reid Hunter, dendrology; Dr. Wallace Rodgers, ornithology and nature photography; Dr. R. C. Rhodes, protozoology; and Dr. Ralph E. Wager, biology and ornithology. Someone suggested that we meet monthly and that we call our group The Naturalist Club. We soon began taking trips to explore such diverse areas as Stone Mountain and the Okefenokee Swamp. We began to publish bulletins and renamed our organization The Georgia Society of Naturalists. Herbert Stoddard became a member of the society in 1933. After several trips to the Okefenokee Swamp we agreed that this unique area should be made a National Wildlife Refuge and we all worked toward this objective. It was a never to be forgotten day when we received word that the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge had been designated as such in Washington. It was fitting that Earle R. Greene, a charter member of the Georgia Society of Naturalists, was named the first refuge manager.

In May, 1934, The Georgia Society of Naturalists received an invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Beadel, owners of Tall Timbers Plantation in Leon County, Florida, to explore the plantation and have dinner with them. The invitation resulted from Mr. Beadel's close friendship with Herbert Stoddard. In later years Mr. Beadel discussed privately with Stoddard, for whom he had great respect, the question of how Tall Timbers Plantation could best be used for scientific studies including controlled burning, selective cutting of timber, and other important projects. Mr. Beadel's will reflected the seriousness of their discussions together and enabled the founding of the Tall Timbers Research Station. Under the guidance of Herbert Stoddard as President until his death in 1970 and E. V. Komarek as Executive Secretary along with an excellent Board of Directors, the aims of the founder are being achieved. The results are made known to others through annual fire conferences and special fire conference bulletins. At the station a museum has been established to house the Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr., bird collection.

LUCIEN HARRIS, JR., Box 25, Avondale Estates, Georgia

GENERAL NOTES

NOTES ON SHORE BIRDS ON WASSAW ISLAND, GA — My wife and I spent a weekend during late spring of 1971 (May 21-23) on Wassaw Island in Chatham County. Shore birds, most of them in bright spring plumage, were moving northward in migration at the time, and it was our good fortune to observe wave after wave as they moved up the beach. Many species were seen, but the purpose of this brief note is to mention some that passed in what appeared to be extremely large numbers.

Several flights of Black-bellied Plover *(Squatarola squatarola)* were seen near the north end of the island. Each flock contained from 150 to 200 birds, all in full nuptial plumage. With them were several large flocks of Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus)*. We estimated more than 300 of these large birds (perhaps some of these were nonbreeding summer residents). Dunlins *(Erolia alpina)* were in full plumage as they moved past us constantly in great numbers, the large black patch on their bellies making them easy to recognize this time of the year.

On Saturday morning we rode the beach in a jeep and quickly realized we were seeing the largest flight of Knots *(Calidris canutus)* we had ever seen. Wave after wave of these birds in their reddish-cinnamon colored plumage passed us. All were moving northward at a leisurely rate, stopping frequently to feed or rest. We rode the beach for several hours in an effort to estimate their numbers. I am confident we did not exaggerate when we concluded we had seen at least 12,000 birds. So numerous were they that perhaps we were many thousands short of the true number. However many were there, one thing is certain: it was by far the largest concentration of shore birds we had ever seen.

On Sunday morning we returned to the beach hoping to enjoy the spectacle again, but were disappointed. Hard searching the entire morning found about 150 Knots on the entire length of the beach. The flight had passed.

HERMAN W. COOLIDGE, 13 Bluff Drive, Isle of Hope, Savannah, Ga.

SUMMER RECORDS OF BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD IN COASTAL PLAIN — The Eastern Brown-headed Cowbird *(Molothrus ater ater)* is reputedly expanding its breeding range in Georgia above the fall line. With this in mind, summer records of the cowbird in coastal Georgia may be worthy of note. On July 4, 1971, two male adult birds visited my feeder at Isle of Hope in Chatham County. On June 17 of this year (1972) a male and female were seen on the approach to the Skidaway Bridge (Chatham County). This area is adjacent to the pasture lands at Bethesda Orphanage.

HERMAN W. COOLIDGE, 13 Bluff Drive, Isle of Hope, Savannah, Ga.

NORTHERN GRAY KINGBIRD AT SEA ISLAND — On June 25, 1972, I observed a Northern Gray Kingbird *(Tyrannus dominicensis)* feeding in typical kingbird style in the lower edge of the dunes at Sea Island. The bird was using a small pine tree as its vantage point, but at times would drop down to the upper edge of the beach to feed in the sea wrack cast ashore there. This record seems typical of all other Georgia records for this interesting bird.

HERMAN W. COOLIDGE, 13 Bluff Drive, Isle of Hope, Savannah, Ga.

AN "INVASION" (?) OF COMMON EGRETS IN ATLANTA— On Sunday, July 16, 1972, I took a look at the unnamed pond on Panthersville Road in south DeKalb County which has produced so many rarities for us in the past. The pond has been drained, the fish removed, and the adjoining hillside cleared for a 700-unit apartment complex. However, it had rained the week before, and there were pools of water in the pond.

I was pleased to see ten common egrets *(Casmerodius albus)* standing quietly in the shallows. Occasionally, one bird walked on the denuded bank, and the others eventually flew so that I could be sure of their identity.

A neighboring resident stopped his car to tell me that there had been 29 white birds present the preceding week; he had counted 29 on three different days. He said that at dusk they left the pond and roosted in trees behind his home. From his description, all 29 were common egrets except for one little blue heron *(Florida caerulea)* in adult plumage which liked to perch on a telephone wire.

The resident provided the good news that county authorities had prohibited construction on the pond site (since it is really a flood plain) and that the pond would be filled when the apartments had been built. A nature-study center has been announced for part of the adjoining land of the former federal prison farm, and the nearby State Regional Hospital has two ponds which are stocked with fish. Perhaps we shall still have some water birds in Atlanta.

LOUIS C. FINK, Apt. 913, 620 Peachtree St., NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30308

TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER NESTING IN ATLANTA AREA?— Both Bent's Life Histories of North American Fly-catchers, Larks, Swallows and Their Allies (Dover Edition, 1963) and Reilly's Audubon Illustrated Handbook of American Birds (McGraw-Hill, 1968) give the southern breeding limit of the Traill's Flycatcher *(Empidonax traillii)* as being considerably north of Georgia. In the December, 1971, issue of *The Oriole* it was reported that the Traill's Flycatcher was nesting in northeast Georgia. It would now seem the species continues to extend its range southward.

Mike Einhorn reported the presence of the species at two locations around Atlanta during the summer of 1971 and again during the spring of 1972. Since then, we have found yet another location, the three sites yielding a total of five singing males. The locations are: (1) on the Atlanta prison farm property along Constitution Road on the north side of the bridge over Entrenchment Creek (one singing male was seen and heard) and at the same location but on the south side of the bridge (2M); (2) on Panthersville Road at the bridge over South River (1M); and (3) on the Jackson property along the upper Flint River in Clayton County (1M). This last location is the southern-most, being about 10 miles south of the Atlanta airport.

No nests were found in any of the locations as the areas involved were not condusive to detailed canvassing. All are river bottom lands along streams used to carry off sewage treatment plant effluent. Typical vegetation along the streams consists of willows and alders.

As an alternative to locating nests, another method to establish breeding status was used. Using a portable tape player at two of the locations, we played the "fitzbew" call of the Traill's Flycatcher taken from the Peterson record. The dates on which this was done were May 14, 21, 28 and June 25 at the Constitution Road site and May 27 at the Clayton County site. In each instance, the singing at first was followed by an attempt to investigate the source of the call. The flights generally were toward the taped sound, approaching to within ten feet at times. The birds were quite agitated. Apparently the singing birds were trying to drive away "the intruder", a nesting territory defence. It is our opinion that these were nesting birds.

The Pocket Check-List of Georgia Birds (1969, Denton, J. Fred and Hopkins, Milton, Jr., Georgia Ornithological Society) states that the Traill's Flycatcher has nested in the Atlanta area in recent years, but does not suggest its relative abundance. From what we have observed during this spring of 1972, perhaps the Traill's is a more common nester than supposed. We eagerly await the 1973 season.

DON and DORIS COHRS, P. O. Box 90817, East Point, Ga. 30344

BARN SWALLOWS NESTING IN COLUMBUS — Additional evidence supporting the conclusion of Peake and Baker (Oriole, 32: 1-3, 1967) that the Barn Swallow *(Hirundo rustica)* might soon extend its breeding range into the Coastal Plain of Georgia has been found.

Having observed an adult swallow feeding over the Brookstone School campus in northwest Columbus as late as June 4, we strongly suspect that the species was breeding in the area. On July 13, 1972, we discovered four nests under the River Road

bridge that spans Roaring Branch Creek at the point where it empties into the Chattahoochee River. Only one nest was active and contained four young birds apparently mature enough to leave the nest. Upon being disturbed, three flew easily to safety while one remained in the nest.

One nest had almost completely deteriorated and appeared quite old; this led us to speculate that the Barn Swallow had been nesting here the previous season and perhaps even earlier. Another nest appeared to be a year old while the remaining one still retained a lining of feathers in its cup and was surrounded with droppings. This suggested to us that an earlier brood had been reared this season.

At the nest site we observed two adults flying excitedly about; two or three immatures, lacking the long outer tail feathers, were seen flying in the area, thus confirming our suspicion that an earlier brood had been reared successfully.

Although Denton (Oriole, 34: 58, 1969) had previously reported Barn Swallows breeding on the Fall Line at Augusta, we believe that the birds nesting at Columbus probably represent the most southward expansion of the Barn Swallow's range to this date, July 13, 1972.

L. A. WELLS, 322 Cascade Rd., Columbus, Ga. and WILLIAM D. MATHENY, Treas., Brookstone Schools, Bradley Park Dr., Columbus, Ga.

RECENT LITERATURE

BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA — A personal Selection, by Eliot Porter, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 144 pages including 80 pages of photography (64 pages in full color), $25.00.

Dr. Porter was a physician before he gave up medicine to devote himself to photography. He says that his purpose was "to raise bird photography above the level of reportage, to transform it into an art." The pages in this book—10½ by 12 inches —are large enough to give full scope to his work. I cannot agree that bird photographers before Dr. Porter were mere reporters, but certainly the pictures he has chosen for this book (from his work of 50 years) are magnificent. One appealing aspect is that he includes in his pictures of nesting birds a good view of the surrounding habitat. Many of the pictures show nesting species, and they include a good view of the area around the nest.

The color reproduction is superb. Printing was done in Italy.

The text included in the book is absorbing reading for birdwatchers and photographers, as Dr. Porter describes the difficulty of finding a nest he wanted, and then either building a tower or sometimes lowering the branch on which it rested, all without disturbing the feeding of the young. He thanks Crawford

Greenewalt for the "photoelectric control of camera equipment" and he speaks casually of spending a month in the field to photograph a particular species. The results are worth it, of course, but the process excites the rest of us with envy. The author includes a great amount of detailed information about the nest locations of the birds he photographed, and several references to songs or calls of birds heard at mating or nesting and no other time.

The text is set in type whose lines run over six inches or 90 characters, making it a little difficult for the eye to follow. The information Dr. Porter includes makes the effort worth-while. As the jacket says, "You'll savor this book and return to it again and again."

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WORDS FOR BIRDS — A Lexicon of North American Birds with Biographical Notes, by Edward S. Gruson, 305 pages, including 238 black and white illustrations by Alexander Wilson in the margins. Quadrangle Books, Inc., 330 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. $8.95.

Two distinguished ornithologists who are collaborating on a book about the birds of Mexico have engaged in a running dispute on whether or not to use the word "crissum" to replace "under tail coverts." The argument developed in Arizona, where the crissal thrasher is reasonably common. Does "crissal" refer to the area of the crissum, the region under the tail?

Here is a book to settle this and a thousand similar arguments. The author explains that *crissere* in Latin means "to move one's haunches," and leads to the word "crissum," which in the crissal thrasher is distinctively red.

Eight hundred North American birds are thus described in this book, which discusses the origins of common English names and scientific names.

Take Georgia's State bird, the brown thrasher. "Thrasher" is a variant of a dialect form of thrush, *thrusher*. The "brown" is obvious. The Latin name *Toxostoma* is form the Greek *toxon*, "bow," and *stoma*, "mouth," hence bow-mouthed, referring to the bird's mandible. *Rufum* is rusty red, the general color of the bird.

The Mockingbird is *polyglottos*, "many tongued."

When the nest of Traill's Flycatcher was first discovered in Atlanta some years ago, there was difficulty in pinning down the binomial, *Empidonax trailii*. Mr. Gruson makes it clear: *Empidonax* is Greek for "king of the gnats," and Thomas Stewart Traill was a Scottish professor of medical jurisprudence.

A few more examples from this fascinating book: "wren" is the modern form of an Old English word for "lascivious." A "flicker" is "one who strikes." "Nuthatch" is a corruption of "nuthack." "Gull" is derived from a Cornish word meaning "to weep." And "tern" is from a Norwegian word for "sea swallow."

When a bird is named after a person, the author includes a short but identifying biography.

Wilson's drawings add immeasurably to the interest of this volume. The author has included Hawaiian species in his list of North American birds; he explains that this is no more arbitrary than including species from Baja California in the 5th edition of *The Check-List of North American Birds* prepared by The American Ornithologists' Union.

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