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# THE ORIOLE

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## BIRDS OF THOMAS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Robert L. Crawford and D. Jack Dozier

Though many bird records from Thomas County have been published, no complete listing of the birds of the county has been made. This paper is an attempt to compile such a list drawn from both published and unpublished sources.

Thomas County lies in the Southwestern portion of Georgia bordering Florida to its south. Its area is 345,728 acres or approximately 540 square miles (Bennet and Mann, 1909). The major physiographic regions which occur in the county are described by Norris in Burleigh (1958).

Only a small portion of the county has been adequately covered by field observers. In fact, since 1958 the majority of observations have been made in the fifteen mile diameter circle used for the annual Christmas bird count (Cruikshank, 1962).

In the list below, indications of relative abundance and status are based on Mengel's system (1965), though we have modified this system somewhat to fit our own situation. Unless otherwise noted, a bird listed as a permanent or summer resident is considered one that breeds also. In some cases nesting data are included. Migration dates are extremes. The letters TTRSM followed by a number indicate a specimen in the Tall Timbers Research Station Museum.

There are several species whose status in the county is not completely known at present. A few of these cases are noted and will be discussed separately below.

The following list is made primarily from the field notes of the authors. Other sources are cited. Common and scientific names follow the fifth edition of the A.O.U. Checklist (1957).

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*). One record: 3-7 May 1960.  
Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*). One record: 30 December 1962.



- Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*). A common permanent resident, though less frequently seen during the summer months.
- Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*). Four records: August 1958; 18 and 23 April 1960; 18 November 1961.
- Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*). A not uncommon permanent resident. Nests with eggs found on 16 March 1972.
- Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*). A common permanent resident. Nests with young found on 26 April 1972.
- Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*). A common summer resident. 30 March 1960 — 24 October 1959.
- Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerulea*). A common permanent resident found most frequently during the summer. Nests with young found on 27 April 1972.
- Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*). A permanent resident, abundant in the summer and uncommon in the winter. First seen in the county in May of 1959. First known nesting was in 1960 when three nests were found. Nests in construction and some completed with a few eggs laid on 27 April 1972.
- Common Egret (*Casmerodius albus*). A common permanent resident. Nests with eggs found on 26 April 1972.
- Snowy Egret (*Leucophoyx thula*). An uncommon summer resident thought to breed. 14 April 1962 — 12 September 1959.
- Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor*). Four records: 13 November 1959; 18 June 1960; 30 August 1962; 13 June 1967.
- Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). Four records: 17 March 1960; 31 March 1962; 22 December 1963; 11 April 1972.
- Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*). Two records: 26 April 1960; 11 April 1972.
- American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*). An uncommon winter resident. 2 September 1960 — 5 May 1945 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Wood Ibis (*Mycteria americana*). A not uncommon summer resident, not known to breed. 10 April 1960 — 31 October 1959.
- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). Two records: 18 and 30 June 1960.
- White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*). A common summer resident. 26 March 1960 — 11 October 1964. Seen frequently in large numbers in heronries, but no nests have been found.
- Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*). One record: March 1958.
- Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*). An uncommon winter resident. 16 October 1962 — 7 May 1959.
- Snow Goose (*Chen hyperborea*). One record: "a large flock" in October 1924 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Blue Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). One record: 5 December 1959.
- Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). A winter resident of uncertain abun-

- dance. We have very little information on the wintering duck population in the county. This problem will be discussed below. 22 November 1959 — 26 April 1959.
- Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*). One record: 26 April 1972.
- Gadwall (*Anas strepera*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance.
- Pintail (*Anas acuta*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance. We have several December records plus one early sighting on 2 September 1958.
- Green-winged Teal (*Anas carolinensis*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance. 24 December 1960 and 1967; 28 December 1969.
- Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*). A winter resident or visitant of uncertain abundance. Probably more common in migration though we have found it in all the winter months. 9 September 1965 — 10 April 1960.
- American Widgeon (*Mareca americana*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance. 29 December 1964 — 7 March 1959.
- Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*). A winter resident, apparently most common in November and December.
- Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*). A common permanent resident. Adults seen with swimming young on 27 April 1972.
- Redhead (*Aythya americana*). Four records: March 1958; February 1962; 29 December 1964; 30 November 1969.
- Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*). A common winter resident. 21 November 1959 — 20 May 1952 (Burleigh, 1958). One bird, possibly a cripple, was seen as late as 30 June in 1960.
- Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance though probably not very common. 24 December 1967 — 7 March 1960.
- Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*). Apparently a not uncommon winter resident. 24 October 1959 — 28 April 1962.
- Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). One record: 30 December 1969 (specimen, TTRSM No. 2581).
- Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*). Evidently a not uncommon winter resident. 16 December 1964 — March 1958.
- Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance. December 1966 — March 1968.
- Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*). A winter resident of uncertain abundance. 20 October 1959 — 16 May 1959.
- Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*). One record: 6 May 1959.
- Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*). A common permanent resident.
- Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*). A common permanent resident.
- Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*). An uncommon spring tran-



- sient. 27 April 1962 — 26 June 1960. The June record suggests a possible summering population.
- Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*). A not uncommon winter resident with occasional individuals found in the summer.
- Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*). A not uncommon permanent resident.
- Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). A common permanent resident. A Krider's Red-tail (*B. j. kriderii*) was collected by Zelyn Reeves on 14 January 1969 (TTRSM No. 2354).
- Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). A common permanent resident.
- Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*). A not uncommon summer resident. 7 April 1960 — 11 October 1959.
- Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*). One record: February 1925 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Two records of collected birds: 27 December 1939 (Burleigh, 1958); 31 March 1963 (TTRSM No. 116).
- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Three records, all of young birds: 2 September 1958; 2 August 1959; 31 October 1959.
- Marsh Hawk (*Circus cyaneus*). A not uncommon winter resident. 20 August 1959 — 31 May 1958.
- Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). Four records: 31 October 1959; 21 November 1959; 20 April 1960; 13 December 1962.
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). Three records: 20 January 1957; 16 January 1960; 29 November 1964.
- Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius*). An uncommon winter resident. 7 October 1961 — 18 April 1960.
- Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*). A permanent resident, common in winter but less frequently seen in summer.
- Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*). A not uncommon permanent resident.
- King Rail (*Rallus elegans*). An uncommon permanent resident. No evidence of breeding.
- Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*). An uncommon winter resident. 21 November 1959 — 3 May 1964.
- Sora (*Porzana carolina*). An uncommon winter resident. 19 September 1949 — 9 May 1940 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryula martinica*). An uncommon summer resident, thought to breed.
- Common Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus*). A not uncommon permanent resident. Adults seen with downy young on 9 September 1964.

- American Coot (*Fulica americana*). An uncommon permanent resident not known to breed.
- Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*). A common permanent resident.
- American Woodcock (*Philohela minor*). A not uncommon permanent resident which undoubtedly breeds in low numbers.
- Common Snipe (*Capella gallinago*). A common winter resident. 7 November 1959 — 3 May 1960.
- Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). A common spring transient, uncommon at other times. 14 April 1962 — 16 May 1959; 15 September 1959; 30 December 1962.
- Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*). A not uncommon transient. 18 April 1960 — 3 May 1964; 12 August 1959 — 16 September 1961.
- Greater Yellowlegs (*Totanus melanoleucus*). One record: 25 November 1971. (specimen, TTRSM No. 2643).
- Pectoral Sandpiper (*Erolia melanotos*). One record: 9 April 1960.
- Least Sandpiper (*Erolia minutilla*). One record: 10-12 May 1958.
- Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*). Three records: 7 and 23 December 1958; 23 February 1965.
- Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*). Two records: March 1958; 24 November 1964 (specimen, TTRSM No. 2685).
- Rock Dove (*Columba livia*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Ground Dove (*Columbigallina passerina*). A common permanent resident.
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*). A common summer resident. 21 March 1959 — 1 November 1958. Next earliest spring date is 24 March 1960.
- Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*). An uncommon fall transient. 14 August 1959 — 24 October 1959.
- Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). An uncommon permanent resident.
- Screech Owl (*Otus asio*). A common permanent resident. Nest with downy young found on 3 May 1943 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*). A common permanent resident.
- Barred Owl (*Strix varia*). A common permanent resident. Nest with one egg found on 13 February 1972. Young seen out of this nest on 6 April 1972.
- Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*). A common summer resident. 27 March 1959 — 6 September 1965.
- Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*). An uncommon winter resident. 16 October 1959 — 14 April 1960.



- Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*). A common summer resident. 22 March 1963 — 3 November 1961.
- Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). A common summer resident. 12 March 1965 — 14 November 1959. See Burleigh (1958) for a discussion of a possible Vaux's Swift (*C. vauxi*).
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*). A common summer resident. 19 March 1960 — 25 November 1958. A female was found incubating on 23 April 1964.
- Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*). A common permanent resident, though direct evidence of breeding is lacking.
- Yellow-shafted Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*). A common permanent resident.
- Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*). A common permanent resident.
- Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Centurus carolinus*). A common permanent resident.
- Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). A common permanent resident, though less frequently seen in winter.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*). A common winter resident. 8 October 1958 — 7 April 1960.
- Hairy Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos villosus*). An uncommon permanent resident.
- Downy Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos pubescens*). A common permanent resident.
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos borealis*). A not uncommon permanent resident.
- Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*). A common summer resident. 25 March 1962 — 12 September 1959.
- Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*). One record: 6-11 November 1971, found by Leon Neel. One other record by Neel from November 1955 (?). Unfortunately, the exact date has been misplaced.
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscivora forficata*). One record: 11 October 1962, collected by Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr. and Leon Neel. (TTRSM No. 554).
- Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*). An abundant summer resident. 21 March 1959 — 26 September 1959.
- Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*). A common winter resident. 27 September 1964 — 1 April 1959.
- Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*). A common summer resident. 10 April 1960 — 24 October 1959.
- Trail's Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*). One record: 19 September 1964.

- Eastern Wood Pewee (*Contopus virens*). A common summer resident. 7 April 1960 — 14 November 1959. A nest with eggs found on 13 June 1960.
- Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*). One record: a male, seen by Mrs. Bolling Jones on 6 January 1960.
- Tree Swallow (*Iridoprocne bicolor*). An uncommon winter resident which becomes quite common in migration. 12 November 1971 — 10 March 1962.
- Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*). An uncommon fall transient. 1 August 1964 — 17 October 1959. One spring record: 30 April 1960.
- Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*). An uncommon summer resident. No evidence of breeding. 19 March 1960 — 31 October 1959.
- Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). A common transient. 2 March 1963 — 6 June 1960; 1 August 1964 — 24 October 1959.
- Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonata*). A not uncommon fall transient. 1 August 1964 — 19 October 1958.
- Purple Martin (*Progne subis*). A common summer resident. 19 February 1965 — 16 October 1958.
- Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*). A not uncommon permanent resident.
- Carolina Chickadee (*Parus carolinensis*). A common permanent resident.
- Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*). An abundant permanent resident.
- White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*). A common permanent resident.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*). Formerly, a rare winter visitant. However, since 1963, it has occurred more frequently and is now thought to be uncommon. November 1963 — 14 May 1964.
- Brown-headed Nuthatch (*Sitta pusilla*). A common permanent resident.
- Brown Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*). A not uncommon winter resident. 14 October 1961 — 1 April 1960.
- House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*). A common winter resident. 5 October 1958 — 28 April 1962.
- Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). A not uncommon winter resident. 25 October 1961 — 12 March 1960.
- Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*). An uncommon to rare winter resident. 14 November 1959 — 19 March 1960.



- Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Long-billed Marsh Wren (*Telmatodytes palustris*). Thought to be an uncommon winter resident. See discussion below.
- Short-billed Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*). An uncommon winter resident, becoming more frequent during spring migration. 1 December 1958 — 29 April 1964.
- Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*). A common winter resident. 6 September 1969 — 15 May 1964.
- Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Robin (*Turdus migratorius*). A permanent resident, abundant in winter and uncommon in summer. The first nest of this species was found on 2 June 1969 (Neel, 1969).
- Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*). A common summer resident. 24 March 1959 and 1960 — 31 October 1959. A nest with eggs in incubation was found on 25 April 1949 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata*). A common winter resident. 14 November 1959 — 27 April 1962.
- Swainson's Thrush (*Hylocichla ustulata*). A not uncommon transient. 19 April 1958 — 16 May 1960; 17 September 1959 — 21 October 1959.
- Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Hylocichia minima*). A not uncommon fall transient. 17 September 1959 — 17 October 1959. One spring record: 20 April 1958.
- Veery (*Hylocichla fuscescens*). A not uncommon fall transient. 30 August 1959 — 17 October 1959. One spring record: 11 May 1960.
- Eastern Blue bird (*Sialia sialis*). A common permanent resident.
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea*). A permanent resident, not uncommon in summer, uncommon in winter. A nest with young found on 10 April 1960.
- Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*). A not uncommon winter resident. 21 October 1964 — 3 April 1960.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*). A common winter resident. 6 October 1958 — 25 April 1960.
- Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*). A common winter resident. 2 November 1937 (Burleigh, 1958) — 9 April 1960.
- Cedar Waxwing (*Bombicilla cedrorum*). A common winter resident. 25 October 1961 — 19 May 1962.
- Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*). A common permanent resident.
- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). A common permanent resident.

- White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). A permanent resident, common in summer and uncommon in winter.
- Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*). A common summer resident. 14 March 1965 — 31 October 1959.
- Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*). A not uncommon winter resident. 8 November 1958 — 18 April 1960.
- Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*). A common summer resident. 26 March 1960 — 31 October 1959.
- Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*). Three records: 17 and 31 October 1959; 12 October 1969.
- Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). An uncommon winter resident; more frequent in migration. 9 July 1959 — 9 May 1958. See discussion below.
- Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*). A common summer resident. 31 March 1962 — 4 October 1959.
- Worm-eating Warbler (*helmitheros vermivorus*). A not uncommon fall transient. 24 August 1959 — 8 October 1959. One spring record: 3 May 1964.
- Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). A not uncommon fall transient. 15 August 1959 — 27 September 1959.
- Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*). A not uncommon fall transient. 3 August 1960 — 20 September 1959. Two spring records: 16 and 17 April 1959.
- Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*). A not uncommon fall transient. 12 September 1958 — 1 November 1964.
- Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*). A not uncommon winter resident. 21 November 1959 — 12 April 1959.
- Parula Warbler (*Parula americana*). A common summer resident. 27 February 1962 — 8 November 1958.
- Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*). A not uncommon spring transient. 26 April 1960 — 15 May 1959. One fall record: 30 August 1958.
- Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*). A not uncommon fall transient. 3 September 1958 — 1 November 1959.
- Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*). A common spring transient. 16 April 1960 — 15 May 1962.
- Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*). An uncommon transient. 13 April 1960 — 9 May 1960; 30 September 1961 — 16 October 1943 (Burleigh, 1958).
- Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*). An abundant winter resident. 11 October 1964 — 9 May 1964. One late spring record on 13 June 1967.
- Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*). An uncommon fall



- transient. 13 October 1963 — 31 October 1959. One spring record: March 1958.
- Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*). A not uncommon fall transient. 6 August 1959 — 14 September 1961.
- Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*). An uncommon spring and common fall transient. 28 April 1962 — 9 May 1960; 10 September 1958 — 26 October 1959.
- Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*). A common permanent resident.
- Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*). A common fall transient. 25 August 1959 — 27 October 1959. One spring record: 18 April 1960.
- Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*). A not uncommon fall transient. 15 October 1958 — 14 November 1959.
- Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*). A common spring transient. 11 April 1965 — 15 May 1962.
- Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*). A common permanent resident.
- Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*). A not uncommon summer resident which becomes common in migration. 7 March 1959 — 31 October 1958.
- Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*). A common winter resident. 17 September 1959 — 12 May 1962.
- Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*). An uncommon winter resident, more frequent in migration. 16 August 1959 — 6 May 1959.
- Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*). A not uncommon transient. 12 April 1964 — 3 May 1964; 27 August 1959 — 17 October 1959.
- Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*). An uncommon summer resident; more frequent in migration. 26 March 1960 — 22 September 1959. A nest with eggs found on 30 April 1960.
- Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*). A not uncommon summer resident. 13 April 1962 — 10 October 1959. Young seen flying on 9 July 1959.
- Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*). One record: 25 April 1964.
- Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*). A common permanent resident.
- Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*). A common summer resident. 12 April 1959 — 19 September 1958. One late fall record from the first week in October, 1959.
- Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*). A common summer resident. 25 March 1962 — 28 October 1959.
- Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*). One record: 14 April 1962.
- Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*). Two records: 17 September 1958; 9 May 1959.

- American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*). A common transient. 7 April 1960 — 15 May 1962; 2 August 1959 — 30 October 1959. One late spring record on 12 June 1967.
- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*). A common, though erratic, spring transient. 23 April 1960 — 16 May 1959.
- Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*). A common permanent resident.
- Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*). One record: 28 December 1969.
- Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*). A common summer resident. 21 March 1962 — 3 September 1961.
- Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*). At feeders, a common winter resident. 27 August 1969 — 15 May 1969.
- Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*). A rare but regular winter visitant. 26 December 1965 — 29 March 1971.
- Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*). A not uncommon winter resident. 29 November 1958 — 5 March 1959. One late spring record from the second week in April, 1959.
- Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). One record: March 1956. This bird, a specimen, was identified by Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr. Unfortunately, the specimen has since been misplaced. (E.V. Komarek, pers. comm.). See discussion below.
- Boat-tailed Grackle (*Cassidix mexicanus*). Three records: 15 August 1959; 14 December 1964; 26 December 1971.
- Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). A common permanent resident.
- Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). A common winter resident. 2 August 1963 — 17 April 1962. Thought possibly to summer.
- Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*). Three records, all from feeders: 20-21 March 1965; 9 January 1966; 13 February — 24 April 1972.
- Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*). A not uncommon transient. 23 April 1959 — 10 May 1960; 25 September 1964 — 11 October 1958.
- Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*). A common summer resident. 28 March 1962 — 25 October 1958. A nest found completed on 26 April 1959.
- Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*). An abundant permanent resident.
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*). An uncommon



spring and common fall transient. 11 April 1965 — 3 May 1964; 16 September 1961 — 19 October 1959. A dead male of this species was found in early January of 1965 by Dozier. Dr. Robert A. Norris, then at Tall Timbers Research Station, examined the bird and thought that December of 1964 was the earliest it could have died. Occasional mid-winter appearances of this species in the southeastern United States have been noted before (Stevenson, 1950; Fink, 1972).

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*). Two records, both from feeders: 12 April 1963 (specimen, TTRSM No. 2638); 8 February 1964. The latter identified by Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr.

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*). A common summer resident. 3 February 1960 — 31 October 1959.

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*). A common summer resident. 12 February 1960 — 1 November 1958.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*). A rare to uncommon winter resident. 2 October 1963 — 23 April 1958.

Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*). An uncommon transient. 27 March 1964 — 2 April 1964; 22 October 1959 — 24 October 1959. One winter record: 26 December 1968.

Evening Grosbeak (*Hesperiphona vespertina*). A rare to abundant, extremely erratic winter visitant. Two records of single birds prior to the "invasion" of 1968-69: 18 March 1966; 13 December 1966. The "invasion" year dates: 18 December 1968 — 30 May 1969 (Baker and Neel, 1969). Probably most common during this time around the weekend of 9 February 1969 when they numbered in the tens of thousands. Only a few were seen the next winter, including two on 28 December 1969.

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*). A not uncommon winter resident. 1 December 1964 — 11 April 1962.

Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*). An uncommon winter resident, though its numbers vary quite a bit from year to year. 20 December 1960 — 13 May 1969.

American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*). A common winter resident. 17 October 1959 — 12 May 1960 and 1964.

Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*). An abundant permanent resident.

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*). A common winter resident. 15 October 1961 — 9 May 1959.

Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*). Two records: 14 December and 22 December 1963.

Henslow's Sparrow (*Passerherbulus henslowii*). Two records: 9 January 1960; 22 December 1963.

Vesper Sparrow (*Poocetes gramineus*). A common winter resident. 31 October 1959 — 18 April 1964.

Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*). A not uncommon resident. Two young seen on 5 June 1960.

Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis*). A common winter resident. 14 November 1959 — 18 April 1960.

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*). A common winter resident. 21 October 1964 — 10 May 1958 and 1959. One summer record: 31 July 1921 (Burleigh, 1958).

Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*). A common permanent resident. Young seen on 1 July 1961 (Henry M. Stevenson, pers. comm.).

White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). An abundant winter resident. 15 October 1959 — 14 May 1958.

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*). An uncommon winter resident. 3 December 1965 — 20 March 1966.

Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*). A common winter resident. 31 October 1959 — 9 May 1959.

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*). A common winter resident. 23 October 1959 — 3 April 1960.

Hypothetical: Mandarin Duck (*Aix galericulata*). One record: 15 December 1968 (Post, 1969). This was undoubtedly an escaped bird.

The above lists 223 species plus one hypothetical that have been found in the county. There are a few cases of records published as being from "Thomasville" which are not actually from Thomas County. These are as follows: Pine Siskin on 18 December 1955 (Chamberlain, 1956); Chuck-will's-widow on 17 March 1957, Ruby-throated Hummingbird on 20 March 1957, Purple Martin on 15 February 1957, Yellow-throated Vireo on 19 March 1957, and Orchard Oriole on 27 March 1957 (Chamberlain, 1957). These are all Grady County records (E.V. Komarek, pers. comm.). In addition, the Ruby-crowned Kinglet on 5 October 1939 and the Whip-poor-will dates reported by Stoddard (1939) are also Grady County records.

There are several species the authors felt should be discussed further as their status in the county is uncertain or changing. These are as follows:

Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*). There are no records for the county though Burleigh (1958) and Norris (1951) both give evidence that this species should occur in the area.

Anatidae. Since most of Thomas County's wintering duck



population is found on large private hunting ponds which are completely closed to the public, very little direct information is available on this family. Hopefully, in the future, owners and managers can be persuaded to allow investigators to visit these ponds on non-hunting days.

Sora. On 28 December 1969 and again on 26 December 1971, Soras were heard in a large cat-tail (*Typha sp.*) marsh near Dawes Silica Mining Company. This, in addition to Stevenson's remarks (1948) has led us to suspect a regular wintering population.

Long-billed Marsh Wren. On the dates given immediately above for the Soras, several of these wrens were seen and heard in a similar cat-tail marsh near Dawes. Again, we suspect a regular wintering population.

Black-and-white Warbler. On 13 June 1962 a singing male of this species was found by Dozier. There are several July and August records. The foregoing has led us to suspect that limited numbers of this species could possibly summer in the county.

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnithlypis swainsonii*). There are no county records for this species though it has been found breeding in adjacent Grady County (Burleigh, 1958).

Brewer's Blackbird. The one record for this bird probably does not do its status justice. Searching large flocks of Icterids would possibly turn up more.

Many people have given much time and effort to help the authors in gathering these data. Without intentionally slighting anyone we would particularly like to thank the following: Julius Ariail, Miss Agnes Ball, Eugene Driver, Mrs. Bolling Jones, Dr. Charles Watt, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Williamson, and Mrs. Ann Wise.

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 Tall Timbers Research Station, Route 1, Box 160, Tallahassee, Florida 32303 and 2-G Chatfield Drive, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083.

#### IN MEMORY OF FRANCIS HARPER

Milton N. Hopkins, Jr.

Dr. Francis Harper, zoologist, author and editor, died 22 November 1972 at his home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He was 86.

His sense of integrity in all his endeavors was unassailable. His painstaking research left little unturned when he pursued a subject. He was not merely satisfied with putting a name on a biological specimen, but wished to find all its interrelationships with its coinhabitants including vegetative surroundings and its place in the ecosystem.

Truly he was a naturalist of the old school with an intense interest in nature and life. His writings concerning our Okefenokee Swamp, which he first visited in 1912, are classics in biological reporting and have left us impressions of the almost primeval conditions existing there at that time.

Dr. Harper and I had corresponded since the early 1940's. At that time, in my early teens, I began sending to him small collections of herpetological and ichthyological specimens from south Georgia. He promptly acknowledged receipt of each shipment with detailed descriptions and identifications of its contents, telling me where else similar specimens had been found and in what habitats to expect them.

Each acknowledgement letter also included reprints of his on



diverse biological subjects. Probably the high point for me at this time was his telling one of the fishes would be described as a new species. To say it was a thrill to hear from this man and read his reports would be a gross understatement.

He was most generous with his time and encouragement in firing the latent interests of a would-be naturalist. Often I could hardly wait to get into the field to pursue some creature he had described, for he gave, at least to me, an importance to ordinary discoveries equaling that of some new found species.

Dr. Harper was a kind, versatile man, with far-ranging interests, a man who held strong convictions and one who stood up for them in face of conflict whether they concerned his fellow man or wildlife.

Finally, after thirty years' correspondence with him we met in North Carolina for several hours' conversation in 1971. The subject was weighed heavily with reminiscences of his beloved Okefenokee and even at that time he had much going in writing and research.

He remained indefatigable in his thinking relating to man and his endeavors to live with respect and harmony with nature.

RFD 5, Box 113, Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750

### GENERAL NOTES

**BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK AT ATLANTA, GEORGIA** — On April 10, 1973, I received a telephone call from Mrs. Molly Curlee of Atlanta, informing me of the presence of a Black-headed Grosbeak, *Pheucticus melanocephalus*, at her home.

On April 11 the bird returned and observations were made at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Curlee, 5342 Saffron Drive, Atlanta, Georgia.

The single, male grosbeak was observed by Mrs. Curlee, Ray Simons, photographer for Fernbank Science Center, Georgann Schmalz, Ginny Chatelain and myself, biologists at Fernbank Science Center. The grosbeak was viewed from Mrs. Curlee's kitchen window which was approximately 35 feet from the feeder.

This observation was made at 2:45 p.m. under clear skies; wind, 0 to 5 mph. The duration was one hour.

The bird flew from a near-by tulip poplar tree to one of Mrs. Curlee's feeders, aggressively running off Brown-headed Cowbirds, Pine Siskins, Goldfinches, Chipping Sparrows and Cardinals.

Ray Simons made photographs with a Nikon F, 35mm camera with 300mm lens on Kodachrome II film.

Black-headed Grosbeaks are fairly common west of the Rocky Mountains, rarer in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Louisiana. The species has been an accidental in New York State and Massachusetts according to Peterson's *A Field Guide to the Birds*.

(For additional records in Georgia see Crawford and Dozier, Birds of Thomas County, Georgia, in this issue and Einhorn, C. M. 1967. *The Oriole*, 32(3): 34.-Ed.)

Anita L. Parker, Fernbank Science Center, 156 Heaton Park Drive, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30307.

**BARRED OWL NESTING IN ATLANTA** — On April 15, 1973, a young Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) was seen in the forest within Fernbank Science Center, a DeKalb County teaching facility in Atlanta. The bird was observed by Bob Manns, Rosemary Smith, John Whitworth, and the writer. Mr. Manns and Mrs. Smith saw an adult bird in a nearby



tree. The young one was perched near the top of a leafless tree, about 50 feet from the ground. The bird's plumage was very light buff-colored and still very downy in appearance. By reference to Bent (1938, Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey, U. S. National Museum Bulletin, 170) we judged the young owl to be about six or seven weeks old. This would put the nesting date at approximately the first week of February, counting a three to four week incubation period and fledging at six weeks.

As pointed out by Burleigh (1958, Georgia Birds, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma), there seems to be little published about the Barred Owl or its breeding activities in Georgia. I can find no published record of its breeding in the Atlanta area.

Doris Cohrs, P. O. Box 90817, East Point, Georgia 30344.

**LAWRENCE'S WARBLER VISITS SAPELO ISLAND, GEORGIA** — The recessive hybrid of the Golden-wing and Blue-wing warbler, the Lawrence's Warbler (*Vermivora Lawrencei*), was seen and photographed at the south end of Sapelo Island, Georgia, 5 June 1973 at 1800 hours EDT.

Bent (1963) describes this bird only in the introductory remarks on the family Parulidae and does not consider it separately because as he states, it "is a very rare bird indeed." The Lawrence's Warbler is not included in Burleigh (1958) Georgia Birds, nor is it listed in the American Ornithologists Union (1957) check list of birds.

At Sapelo Island, the bird was observed flying and resting in a cedar tree and a yaupon holly tree. No feeding was observed. The bird stayed within the observation area at Shell Hammock nearly thirty minutes. Positive identification was made in the field and confirmed on resultant color photography according to field features listed in Peterson (1956).

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 Robert J. Reimold and Charles J. Durant, The University of Georgia Marine Institute, Sapelo Island, Georgia 31327

**LATE NESTING HERONS IN THOMAS COUNTY, GEORGIA** — Ardeids and Darters usually begin nesting in March and April in Thomas County, Georgia. Therefore, a later nesting found in the summer of 1973 seems noteworthy. The nesting site, used in 1972 and 1973, is a temporary rain pond surrounded by Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) with growths of Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) scattered throughout. In 1972 about 200 pairs of Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) and 25-30 pairs of Little Blue Herons (*Florida cerulea*) were found on 27 April. At that time, the heron nests contained eggs and a few young while the egrets were still building their nests.

This pond was checked periodically throughout the spring of 1973. On 10 April one Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) and one Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) were seen, but no nests or other Ardeids were found. This was the case as late as 3 June. However, on 1 July the pond was surveyed from a distance and many white herons were seen in what seemed to be the process of building nests. A more thorough check from inside the heronry was made on 6 July. At that time about 40 pairs of Cattle Egrets and 2-3 individual Little Blue Herons were found. The Cattle Egrets appeared to be still building nests, though a few had already laid eggs. One immature Cattle Egret was seen. On a later check (23 August) there were estimated to be 250 Little Blue Herons and 150 Cattle Egrets in advanced stages of nesting. Both species had young fully feathered though not yet ready to fly. In addition, Cattle Egret nests were found still in incubation and with recently hatched young. An Anhinga nest with downy young was also found.

The spring of 1973 was one of the wettest in recent years. Therefore, the late nesting observed would not seem to be attributable to a lack of suitable nesting sites. Rather, it seems most likely a result of a disturbance of an earlier nesting site, for the presence of the immature Cattle Egret on 6 July indicates nesting of at least this species elsewhere that spring.

Robert L. Crawford and Jochen H. Wiese, Tall Timbers Research Station, Route 1, Box 150, Tallahassee, Florida 32303.

#### NEWS AND COMMENTS

Dr. Brooke Meanley has about 50 copies of his monograph on the Swainson's Warbler (1971, U.S. Department of the Interior, 99 pp.) that he would be glad to give to interested members of the G.O.S. Much of the work was done in the canebrakes of the Ocmulgee River Bottoms, a few miles south of Macon. His address is: Dr. Brooke Meanley, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland 20810.



### RECENT LITERATURE

MASTER BUILDERS OF THE ANIMAL WORLD — by David Hancock, Illustrated (8 color plates) Harper & Row, New York. 144 Pages. \$8.95.

A Seattle architect, deploring the flight of his profession from truth, function and integrity for style, pomp and prestige, has turned to the alpha source for inspiration and guidance.

Believing that man learned his skills by first observing the work of his precursors, he sets out to examine the myriad forms of their elaborate structures that have protected them from the elements and their enemies for millions of years.

The result is this unique work, probably the first book under one cover for both architects and biologists.

It would be intellectually dishonest to attribute human sentiments to the activities of dumb animals, but it would be a mistake to belittle their techniques. Illustrated and indexed, the book fills the need for a reference work that examines the whole range of their building accomplishments.

The beavers' dam, the bees' honeycomb, the spiders' web, the weaverbirds' nest, and many other less known but equally sophisticated techniques are described and analyzed.

The author also discusses animal communities, partnerships, and relationships, and the snares and prisons that his animal subjects have to face to keep roofs over their heads. But the story has a happier ending with a description of the ways in which some animals - the Bower Bird in particular - build and decorate just for pleasure.

At a time when so much attention is being given to conserving animals both in the wild and in captivity, it is enlightening to discover how they set about housing themselves and how their methods relate to those of the human world.

L. A. Wells, 322 Cascade Road, Columbus, Georgia 31904.

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