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# THE ORIOLE

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## ADDITIONAL BIRD RECORDS FOR HIAWASSEE AND VICINITY

Robert W. Loftin and Arthur Green

In 1977 Joseph Meyers published his *Birds of the Hiawassee Plateau and Surrounding Slopes: A Preliminary List* (Oriole 42: 46-59). This paper summarized ornithological knowledge of the northeast Georgia mountains on the Tennessee Valley slope, and provided a strong stimulus for further work in the region. Since then, data have continued to accumulate. The purpose of this paper is to add to Meyers' preliminary list and provide a more complete summary of the status of birds in this area.

Meyers' work concentrated on the land birds. Comparatively little attention was given to the water birds, particularly on Lake Chatuge. Chatuge is a TVA impoundment, constructed on the Hiawassee River in 1941-1942. The dam is in North Carolina, but the lake backs up into Georgia. Chatuge, together with Lake Nottley and Lake Blue Ridge, also artificial impoundments, provides habitat that did not exist in the mountain region of Georgia before the 1940's. This means that several species of waterfowl, shorebirds, and other water loving birds now can be found with some regularity where they were probably not present historically.

Chatuge has a water level that fluctuates in a more or less regular way, depending on local rainfall and the policy of TVA in a particular year. Generally, the water is high in late winter and spring when TVA stores water from spring rains for flood control and power generation. The maximum possible level for the surface of the lake is 1933 feet above sea level, but this maximum is almost never reached. A more realistic level in late spring is about 1920 feet. The water is released slowly through the summer, so the lake falls gradually until a low point is reached in the late fall or early winter, depending on rainfall. At full pool elevation, the water covers about 3,700 acres in North Carolina and 3,500 acres in Georgia.

The number and kind of waterbirds present on Chatuge depends on the hydrological regime in a given year. If the water is very high or very low in a given fall, few shorebirds are recorded in migration. The birds probably pass through or over the mountains, but unless water levels are favorable and suitable habitat is available, they fly over the area without stopping. If water levels are favorable at the right time of year, more waders and waterbirds are seen. The number of water birds seen at any time in the Georgia mountains is



never large compared to coastal regions. If one sees 10 herons and 20 sandpipers in a day in this area, that is a very good day indeed.

Arthur Green lives year-round on the shores of Chatuge at Friendship, Towns County, Georgia. He has continually observed the birds present on the lake and at his feeders and houses since coming to Towns County with a background of 60 years of birding in New England, chiefly in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Loftin lives in Jacksonville, Florida, and is in the area only sporadically. He has concentrated on the early fall migration of waterbirds in favorable habitat. These efforts have resulted in the following additions to clarifications of the Towns County list. For this paper, the geographical area covered is all of Towns County, which is slightly different from the area defined by Meyers. Records of Loftin are indicated (L), those of Green (G).

Records are included through 1984. All dates are abbreviated with standard 3-letter codes for the months and are to be understood as in the 20th century, e.g., 1 Jan 84 means 1 January 1984. Extremes are given with the early extreme (day, month and year) followed by the late extreme (day, month and year), thus "1 May 83-9 Oct 84", means that the earliest we have recorded the species was the first of May and that was in 1983, while the latest we have noted the species was 9 October in 1984. The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (1977, GOS, Occl. Pub. No. 6), published by the Georgia Ornithological Society is referred to as simply "the Georgia Checklist".

The terms of abundance used in this paper are a modification of those of the Georgia Checklist. The difference is that we have adopted a 20 year period rather than a 50 year period in defining terms such as "accidental". We have no data from this area over the past 50 years, but by looking at our data for the last 2 decades and reducing the numbers accordingly, we can come up with some attempt at a quantitative interpretation of these admittedly vague terms. Thus our categories of abundance are defined as follows:

Accidental: Has occurred 1 time in the past 20 years.

Occasional: Has occurred 2 to 5 times in the past 20 years.

Rare: Has occurred more than 5 times in the past 20 years, but not more than 2 or 3 times in any year and in very small numbers.

Uncommon: Occurs 35 or more times per year on the average, but not expected more than 30 times in a 10-day period in season and habitat.

Common: Considering its habits and conspicuousness, can be expected to occur 40 or more times in a 10-day period on the average in season and habitat.

Abundant: Considering its habits and conspicuousness, can be expected to occur in large numbers in season and habitat.

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*): common transient and rare winter visitor. One on 2 Jul 83 (L) may be the earliest for the state. Another early individual stayed from 16 Jul to 15 Aug and probably thereafter in 80. Most common in Oct and Apr (G). Spring late date 15 May 83 (G). Winter maximum 3 on 22 Dec 83 (L).

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*): common transient and winter visitor. From 8 Oct 83-5 May 78 (G).

Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*): uncommon transient and winter visitor.

From 16 Oct 83-4 Apr 83 (G).

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*): occasional fall transient. We have only two records, 6 Nov 84 (G) and 15 Jul 79 (L), both on Lake Chatuge.

American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*): accidental (secretive?) fall transient. One record, at a pond near Young Harris 2-4 Aug 83 (L&G).

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*): uncommon transient and winter visitor. Earliest fall, 16 Jul 82 (L). Rare but regular in winter.

Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*): rare late summer visitor. A few may reach the area in post-breeding dispersal in some years. Always scarcer than the Little Blue Heron. Earliest 13 Jul 74 (L) (*American Birds* 28: 902).

Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*): uncommon visitor in late summer and early fall. A few reach the area in post-breeding dispersal every year. Earliest 2 Jul 79 (G). Most are white first-year birds, but 2 adults were seen 10 Aug 80 (L). Accidental in spring, 1 adult on 7 Apr 83 (L).

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): occasional transient. One fall record, 8 Aug 80 (L), and two spring records, 23 Apr 81 (G) and 15 May 84 (G). This species ranges up to elevations of 5000 feet in parts of its range in China, so it may yet invade the region.

Green-backed Heron (*Butorides striatus*): common summer resident. From 8 Apr 83 (L) - 13 Sep 84 (G). A nest on a pond near Young Harris contained 4 eggs on 7 July '83, young fledged about 4 Aug.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax violaceus*): accidental (secretive?) in late summer (post-breeding dispersal?). An immature seen on the Hiwassee River 13 Jul 74 (L) (*American Birds* 28: 903).

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*): rare visitor in late summer and early fall. A few immatures reach the area in some years in post-breeding dispersal. 1 seen on 31 Aug 73 near Young Harris by Steve Sutton (*American Birds* 28: 52). Four present on Chatuge 11-14 Aug 80 (L).

Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*): occasional transient. Six on Chatuge 8 Mar 80 (Frank Stahlkuppe).

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*): common introduced resident. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources released 21 wing-clipped, banded birds in 80 on Chatuge, hoping to establish a breeding population. In early spring of 81, Mr. C. C. Exum of Wood's Grove, who had been feeding the geese, saw 6 wild birds of a darker subspecies stop in migration and mingle with the introduced birds before flying on. Later that spring, a much larger flock of about 100 wild birds stopped and stayed for about 3 days. When they flew on, 14 of the introduced birds went with them, leaving 15 behind. In the summer of 81, more were released, so 43 were present in the winter of 81-82. Breeding first took place in the spring of 82, when the first gosling was seen on 20 May (G). A very accurate count showed 45 present on 25 Dec 82 (L). Pairs were on territories all around the lake on 4-9 April 83, and one pair was seen copulating on 8 April. The population doubled during that season, so that on 21 Dec 83, there were 79 present on the lake (L).

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*): common summer and rare winter visitor. The Georgia Checklist states that this species does not breed in the mountains, but on 25 Jul 80, Loftin saw a hen with 2 downy young at the upper reaches of



Chatuge. By 30 Jul, one of the young had vanished, and the fate of the other is unknown. In the spring of 81 the Department of Natural Resources put up 5 nest boxes in the upper reaches of Chatuge. At least 4 broods were reared. On 7 Jul 81 a maximum of 5 adults and 19 young were located (L). In August, the local birds are augmented by transients, so it is not unusual to see groups of up to 10 on quiet backwaters of the lake. The species is rare in winter, 1 seen on 21 Dec 82 (L); a common transient in April when they are already paired.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*): uncommon winter visitor. Tends to associate with Mallards, but much less common. Earliest 24 Oct 81 (G). Maximum, 40 on 21 Dec 83 (L).

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*): common winter visitor. The most common wintering waterfowl. Wild birds tend to associate with domestic birds in several places on Chatuge, especially where they are fed. Maximum, flock of about 100, 10 Jan 81 (G).

Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*): rare winter visitor. One with Mallards at Wood's Grove 6 Jan 82, a pair with Am. Black Ducks 23-24 Dec 82, 2 males near Lakeview 29 Dec 83 (G).

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*): common spring and fall transient. Early fall, 8 Aug 80 (L); in spring from 29 Mar 84-24 Apr 81 (G). Maximum, 12 on 4 Apr 83 (L).

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*): uncommon spring transient. Maximum, 11 on 7 Apr 83 (L).

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*): occasional winter visitor. A pair was located in the Bell Creek area 21-23 Dec 83, but left when the cove froze over (L).

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*): fairly common spring transient and uncommon winter visitor. Maximum, 20 on 6 Apr 83 (L).

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*): occasional transient and winter visitor. One male on Chatuge, 31 Jan 82 (G); one female 5 Nov 82 (G).

Redhead (*Aythya americana*): uncommon transient and winter visitor. A flock of 15 on 22-23 Dec 83 disappeared when their favorite cove froze over (L).

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*): common transient and uncommon winter visitor on Chatuge and nearby small ponds. An early male appeared on 24 Jul and stayed until at least 16 Aug 83 (L).

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*): uncommon transient and rare winter visitor. Maximum 20 on 6 April 83 (L). Three were on Chatuge 12 Dec 83 (G).

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*): rare transient and winter visitor. Maximum 4 on 16 Feb 82 (Frank Stahlkuppe).

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*): uncommon transient and winter visitor. The majority of our records are from December. Maximum 3 on 21 Dec 82 (L).

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*): common transient and winter visitor on Chatuge. From 9 Aug 80 (L) to 6 Mar 82 (G). Maximum, 11 on 23 Dec 81. A bird seen 6-7 Jul 83 on a farm pond near Young Harris (L) was capable of flight, but very young.

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*): uncommon transient and occasional winter visitor. A maximum of 15 on 28 Apr 82 (G). One on 23 Dec 81

(L) is our only winter record.

Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*): uncommon transient. A maximum of 14 on 6 Apr 83 (L).

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*): occasional. Two records, both in summer, 9 June 84 (G) and 2 Jul 81 (L). The absence of this vulture is one of the most puzzling features of the bird life of the region. The species has been known to nest in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and is becoming more common there. Williams (*Migrant* 48: 11) found a ratio of 2.4 Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) to each Black Vulture in the Great Smokies. Here the ratio must be more like 200 to 1.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*): uncommon transient. More in the spring than the fall (G). From 19 Jul 81 (L)-31 Oct 83 (G) and from 3 Apr 83-5 May 82 (G).

American Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*): accidental. Terry Moore et. al. had one on Brasstown Bald 20 Jul 75 (Georgia Checklist).

Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*): accidental. According to the *Oriole* 27: 52-53, one was seen on Brasstown Bald on 10 Oct 62 by Ellison A. Williams. The Georgia Checklist places this record on the Hypothetical List.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*): rare winter visitor. According to the Hiawassee newspaper, *The Towns County Herald*, a fisheries biologist named Reggie Weaver saw a Bald Eagle on Chatuge in Nov 82. One or more were reported by local residents to have wintered on the lake in 82-83. Loftin saw an adult in Georgia, flying toward North Carolina, on 26 Dec 83. He chased the bird and found it again perched near the dam. He called Green who came and was able to confirm the record.

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*): uncommon winter visitor. From 24 Oct to 1 Apr 81 (G). Regular in most winters. There are only a few birds present, but they are conspicuous, so the species is seen almost daily from Nov to Mar.

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*): occasional fall transient. Green has one record of this species circling in a thermal in fall migration with Broad-winged Hawks, 20 Sep 84.

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*): accidental winter visitor. Green saw one near Cedarcliff on 25 Feb 82. "Very pale brown plumage and a white tail, I thought at first it was a Turkey Vulture its wings were so long." Green has extensive experience with this species from 60 years of birding in New England. See *Oriole* 48: 14.

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*): uncommon winter visitor. From 19 Oct 84 to 2 Apr 83 (G). Maximum, 3 on 23 Dec 81 (L).

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*): occasional transient. One on 22 Feb 82 (G), another killed a finch from a flock near Green's on 3 Mar 78 (G). Our only fall record is a bird seen 22 Sep 84 (G).

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*): accidental. One seen from Brasstown Bald 15 May 82 by Joe Greenberg (*American Birds* 36: 852).

American Coot (*Fulica americana*): common transient. One summer record, a single bird near Friendship 4 Jul 80 (L); one winter record, a single bird 22-24 Dec 83 disappeared when its favorite cove froze over (L). Maxi-



mum 350 during a stormy period, 25-26 Oct 81 (G).

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*): uncommon transient. Three on 27 Sep 80; 18 on 17 Mar 81; 39 on 8 Nov 81; all migrating above Chatuge (G).

Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*): rare fall transient. Two on 23 Jul 80 (L), and 3 on 6 Aug 81 (L).

Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*): accidental. We have one record, 29 Jul 83 (L).

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*): common permanent resident. Meyers reported this species as an uncommon resident based on one bird seen near Chatuge in June. They do breed, at least 3 broods were reared near the lake in 81 when the water level remained low in spring and early summer. They become common in fall when transients pass through, maximum 15 on 22 Jul 81 (L). The winter maximum is 10 on 22 Dec 82 in the Bell Creek area. In spring they usually start moving in late Feb and flocks pass through in Mar (G).

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*): uncommon transient. Fall extremes, 9 Aug 82 (L)-1 Nov 81 (G). Spring early date 1 Apr 81 (G).

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*): uncommon transient. Three seen on fall early date of 16 Jul 81 (L). A pair on 8 Apr 83 (L) is the early date for spring.

Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*): uncommon transient. Fall early, 30 Jul 83 (L) near Young Harris; spring early 8 Apr 83 (L).

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*): common transient. Meyers regarded this species as uncommon, but more thorough coverage of favorable habitat at the right time of year has shown the Spotted Sandpiper to be rather common and regular, exceeded in numbers only by the Killdeer among shorebirds in this region. From 13 Jul 81 (L)-26 Oct 84 (G) and 18 Apr 80-15 May 83 (G). Maximum 12 on 23 Jul 80 (L).

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*): accidental transient. One record, 21 Jul 81 on Chatuge (L).

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*): common transient. Very local, but can be found in suitable habitat at the right season if the water level is favorable. Fall maximum 7 on 23 Jul 80 (L), spring maximum 20+ on 11 May 82 (G).

Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*): rare transient. The small sandpipers of this genus are notoriously difficult to identify, but 2 seen on 6 August 82 in the Bell Creek area were quite long-billed and retained enough rusty color on the scapulars to provide a certain identification. Another pair was seen 29 Jul 83 at Wood's Grove (L).

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*): uncommon transient. Numbers fluctuate from year to year depending on water levels. Earliest fall record 17 Jul 81 (L).

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*): uncommon transient. Numbers vary from year to year. A maximum of 18 was located on 7 Aug 80 (L), but none could be found in early Aug of 83. Early fall date 21 Jul 80 (L). We have spring records of 9-10 May and 17 May (G).

Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*): uncommon transient and rare winter visitor. One flushed from a small seep in the Bell Creek area 22 Dec 82 (L)

was the only one that could be located, despite diligent search of suitable habitat in a quest for this species. Three were at exactly this same place a year and a day later, 23 Dec 83 (L). Early fall date is 21 Nov 84 (G), from 7 Mar (78) - 19 Apr 79 (G).

American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*): common resident. Green has heard the species calling as early as 14 Feb 84.

Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*): accidental. Three on Chatuge 5 Aug 70 and for several days thereafter (L) (*American Birds* 25: 59).

Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*): accidental. On 4 May 84 Arthur and Dot Green saw one in a flooded pasture near Lake Chatuge. The bird was with Ring-billed Gulls and had a black head. It was clearly too large to be Bonaparte's. The bird had a rosy breast and the spotted primaries were visible even when walking. The spectacles were very large. Green was able to secure some excellent photographs which clearly show the wing pattern characteristic of the species. The bird was still present on 5 May. This is apparently the fourth record for Georgia (*Oriole* 49:75).

Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*): rare transient and irregular winter visitor. One spring record 7 Apr 83 (L), 15 present on 21 Dec 83 (L).

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*): common transient and irregular winter visitor. 12 on Chatuge 24 Dec 83 (L).

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*): uncommon spring transient. Two on Chatuge 8 Apr 83 (L).

Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*): uncommon transient. A few pass through in fall almost every year. (*Oriole* 43: 66-67).

Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*): rare transient. A maximum of five seen on Chatuge 22 July 80 (L).

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*): locally common permanent resident. This introduced species frequents downtown Hiawasse and the Highway 76 bridge over Chatuge. Maximum 29 on 23 Dec 82 (L).

Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*): Uncommon transient and summer resident. We have many records from April through August but no evidence of nesting.

Eastern Screech-Owl (*Otus asio*): common permanent resident. Breeds.

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*): uncommon permanent resident. The records we have are distributed fairly uniformly throughout the year (Mar, May, Aug(2), Sep, Dec). Apparently somewhat more common than the Barred Owl.

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*): rare permanent resident. We have only 2 records; one heard 9 Nov 80 (G), one seen 11 Dec 78 (G).

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*): uncommon summer resident. Heard singing as early as 11 Apr 81 (G), and as late as mid-Jul 84 (G).

Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*): scarce and irregular winter visitor. From 29 Sep - 25 Apr 80 (G).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*): uncommon winter visitor. Only 1 located in 4 days of search, 20-24 Dec 82 (L). The early date in the fall is 5 Oct 82 (G). To judge from the characteristic feeding holes this species makes, it is scarce and local.

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*): uncommon permanent resident.



Meyers regarded this species as a fairly common permanent resident, but he was unable to find it in winter. Only one individual could be found in 4 days of search, 20-24 Dec 82 (L). In winter the species seems to be uncommon at best.

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus borealis*): occasional. We have only one record, a bird calling near Friendship 15 May 82 (G). One was seen on Brasstown Bald 19 Aug 73 by John Paget, Terry Moore, and others on an Atlanta Audubon trip (*Oriole* 48: 9).

Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*): transient. A female was collected by Burleigh at Young Harris 12 Sep 45 (USNM 380,989) and subsequently identified as this species by John W. Aldrich when the taxon was split (*Oriole* 42: 3). We do not have enough data on this species to comment on its abundance.

Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*): common summer and uncommon winter visitor. Meyers lists this species as a "common summer resident". Further work has shown that the species is also present in the winter. In 4 days of search, 20-24 Dec 82, at least 10 individuals were located, sprinkled fairly evenly over the county at lower elevations in the valleys and around the lake.

Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*): common migrant and uncommon summer resident. The first breeding record for Georgia was obtained when a pair tried to nest in Green's Purple Martin house in May 80 (*Oriole* 45: 40-41). They have tried to nest there every year since, and at a few other places in the county. This swallow has been expanding its breeding range south and into the Coastal Plain for several years (*American Birds* 22: 608), and we predict that it will continue to expand south in Georgia in the future. Spring early date is 6 Mar 83 (G).

Cliff Swallow (*Hirundo pyrrhonota*): uncommon fall migrant. We recorded a juvenile with a large flock of Barn Swallows on the very early date of 31 Jul 83.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*): rare resident at the higher elevations. According to the *Oriole* 48: 17, Joe Greenberg noted 3 birds at Brasstown Bald on 15 May 82.

Brown-headed Nuthatch (*Sitta pusilla*): uncommon permanent resident. The Georgia Checklist states that this species is absent from the mountain region except southern Rabun County. On 21 Dec 82 Loftin found one working on enlarging a cavity in a dead pine behind Wood's Grove Church in Towns County. A few hours later he returned with Green and a pair was located. Loftin found a nest with 5 eggs in a fence post 1 mile east of Wood's Grove on 6 Apr 83. Despite a late cold snap (25 degrees F. on 21 Apr) Green saw a pair feeding young on 27 Apr and 4 and 6 May. By 13 May the nest was empty. The species has nested to the north of here in Buncombe County, North Carolina in 73 (*American Birds* 27: 774).

Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*): uncommon winter visitor. This species has been expanding its breeding range south and to lower elevations for several years. It may nest in the county in the near future. Late date in spring is 6 Apr 83 (L).

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*): rare summer resident. Green had a pair with young in a gourd in his yard 12 May 81.

Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*): uncommon winter visitor. Meyers did not find this species because it prefers dense tangles at the lower elevations.

American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*): common summer resident, rare and irregular in winter. Meyers reported this species to be a common resident. Further work has shown that almost all withdraw to the south in winter.

Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*): common summer resident, rare in winter. Meyers regarded this species as an uncommon resident, which it is on the slopes of the mountains where he worked. It is much more abundant as a breeding bird at the lower elevations, but most withdraw in the winter when it is quite scarce.

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*): uncommon and erratic permanent resident. Burleigh (1958) found the species to be a summer resident and found a nest. There are some present in the winter, but they are highly erratic.

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*): accidental. One very probably 7 Sep 81 near Friendship (G). The virtual absence of this bird is one of the most puzzling aspects of the natural history of this region. Since the species has almost disappeared from the entire Appalachian region (*American Birds* 34: 273, 36: 178, 37: 181) this interesting bird will probably not be seen here in the future, even as a straggler.

Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*): accidental. A male on 1 Oct 83 near Friendship was part of a good warbler flight (G).

Northern Parula (*Parula americana*): uncommon summer resident. From 7 Mar 80 (Arthur Green, Jr.) - 29 Sep 83 (G).

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*): common spring and fall transient.

Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*): uncommon resident. Howell reported this species as resident in 1909, and it still is today. Meyers did not find it because it frequents pine woods at lower elevations.

Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*): rare summer resident. Nested near Green's in 78, but has not tried since then. Early spring record 10 Apr 81 (G).

Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*): abundant transient. Green has found this to be the most common warbler in spring and fall. Apparently it is confined to the lower elevations, since Meyers did not find it at all.

Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*): accidental. We have only one record, 12 Oct 78 (G), and Meyers did not find the species at all. Why is this species so scarce here when it is common elsewhere?

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnethlypis swainsonii*): status undetermined. One near Friendship 1 Oct 83 was part of a heavy flight of warblers (G). We have no breeding records, but one was reported singing in June 49 on Tray Mountain by Mrs. Neal (*Audubon Field Notes* 3: 235). This mountain is on the county line.

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*): accidental. One male 12 Oct 81 near Friendship (G).

Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*): occasional transient. The two records we have are 12 Oct 81 (G) and 18 May 80 (G).

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*): uncommon summer resident. The Georgia Checklist (1977) states that this species is absent from the mountain region. Since 77 it has expanded northward. Loftin saw a female carrying a



fecal sac on 23 Jul 82 and found presumably the same bird building a nest in the same territory on 28 Jul 82. This nest had 3 eggs on 2 Aug, and despite a week of heavy rains, the female was still on the nest with 3 eggs on 12 Aug.

American Tree Sparrow (*Spizella arborea*): accidental. One record, 1 Feb 78 (G). A very common bird for Green for 60 years in New England, so he is quite familiar with the species.

Vesper Sparrow (*Poocetes gramineus*): occasional transient. The two records we have are 10 Nov 78 (G) and 5 birds 4-6 Apr 83 (L).

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*): Occasional fall transient. We have two records on 7 Aug 83 (L&G) and 7 Sep 79 (G).

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*): common transient and uncommon winter visitor. Two were seen on the very early date of 16 Jul 81, which is an early record for the state, but no evidence of breeding has been found (L).

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*): occasional winter visitor. From 18 Dec 80 (Ruth Cochran) to 1 Mar 84 (G).

Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*): uncommon transient and local winter visitor. From 21 Dec 83 (L) to 18 Apr 80 (G).

White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*): common winter visitor. Meyers listed this species as an uncommon winter visitor and transient. Further work has shown that the species is common in dense tangles at lower elevations in winter. During 4 days of search, 20-24 Dec 82, this was the fourth most common Emberizine, exceeded only by the Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco in order of abundance (L).

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*): rare transient and winter visitor. 20 Oct 78-5 May 79 (G).

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*): occasional spring transient. No large flocks have been recorded. The 3 records we have are on 26 Apr 84 (G), and 9 May, 1 male, 78 and 2 males, 80 (G).

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*): common summer resident, scarce or absent in winter. Meyers listed this species as common permanent resident. Further work has shown that few if any can be found in winter. Green noted first returning birds on 15 Feb in 82.

Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*): accidental. One seen 24 Mar 79 (G).

Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*): common summer resident, scarce or absent in winter. This is another species that Meyers listed as a common resident. A lone female that was present at Green's feeder 14 Jan 82, first returning birds were noted 12 Feb.

House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*): rare visitor in the late fall and winter. Since this species has been increasing in the East, it has been expected here for some time. Single individuals finally showed up at feeders 23 Nov 83-7 Dec 83. At least one male and one female were involved (G).

Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*): irregular winter visitor. Common to abundant in the winter of 83-84 when flocks of 50+, mixed with Goldfinches, were all over the county. A maximum of 200 birds was counted on 28 Dec 83. A few were present in the winters of 77-78 and 81-82. None could be found in 79-80.

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*): irregular winter visitor. A small flock was at Green's feeder in Jan 81, but no large flocks have been recorded from this area. Most records are of single birds. From 27 Dec 83 - 1 May 82.

## DISCUSSION

We here report 95 species of birds not mentioned by Joseph Meyers in his comprehensive paper on the birds of the Hiawassee plateau (1977). Meyers recorded 91 species in his study (he mistakenly reported 92). He also lists, in an appendix, 27 species which he did not find, that were previously recorded in Towns County, for a total list of 118 species. This study reports an additional 95 species which brings the list to 213. Of the 95 new species reported here, 53 (55%) are water oriented birds (including Osprey and Bald Eagle). 28 are Passeriformes (29%). The others are land birds of other orders. We have also clarified the seasonal status of several species which largely or entirely leave the area in the winter (Am. Robin, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown Thrasher, Common Grackle), and refined the status of several species where our experience differs from his (Spotted Sandpiper, Killdeer, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, White-throated Sparrow).

Meyers hoped that his work would be a strong stimulus for other work in the region. It certainly has been for us. With his work as a base to build on, ours is another step toward a better understanding of the birds of this region. He pointed out that the Georgia mountains are an important area for monitoring range expansions. This study reports first nestings for 5 species (Blue Grosbeak, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Wood Duck, House Wren, Canada Goose). This is an equally important area to monitor range shrinkage. We have been able to locate the following birds that were listed in Meyers' appendix as previously recorded, but not located by him: Green Heron, American Woodcock, Willet, Black Tern, Great Horned Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Parula, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Canada Warbler, Summer Tanager and White-crowned Sparrow. The birds we cannot find which were listed in Meyers' appendix are the Willow Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Bewick's Wren, and Louisiana Waterthrush, which we have not seen at all, and the Common Nighthawk, which is a common enough transient, but is not today a summer resident as reported by Howell in 1909. Howell listed the American Redstart as a summer resident but Meyers did not find it, which is highly significant given the amount of time he spent in suitable habitat. We have seen it only as a migrant, and it may not be present as a breeding bird here, which is amazing. Nor can be locate any Whip-poor-wills which are all but extirpated from the entire Appalachian region (*American Birds* 37: 988). The others are accidental or scarce transients not to be expected: Black-bellied Plover, Parasitic Jaeger, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and Red Crossbill.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank Terry Moore for helpful comments on this paper and for calling certain records to our attention.

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## GENERAL NOTES

RING-NECKED DUCK BREEDS IN AUGUSTA — on 18 August 1984 a female ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) accompanied by a smaller immature was seen by Clarence Belger, Anne and Vernon Waters, and Steven Guy in a large shallow pond off the Augusta levee. When first spotted, the ducks were approximately 150 m away but we were able to approach them by slowly walking parallel to the pond, then approaching from another vantage point. From approximately 60 m the ring was observed on the female's bill and the young duck could be studied through 7X binoculars. The immature was approximately 2/3 the size of the female and had a very dark brown back. The back of the neck and top of the head were also dark brown seeming to form a wide stripe across the top of the head. Face and throat were beige and the bill was dark.

As we continued to approach to within approximately 40 m, they both spooked and skittered across the water, apparently unable to fly. They swam into a cove and we did not disturb them any further.

The cypress pond where the ducks were discovered is on private property which is leased out to duck hunters in the fall and winter but remains relatively undisturbed in summer. Both Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*) and Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) are known to nest here.

In Augusta the Ring-necked Duck is seen primarily in the winter when large flocks congregate on the Merry Ponds. Occasionally single Ring-necks have been seen in Augusta in summer but these have usually proven to be injured birds or have been suspected non-breeders. Until this sighting, there has not been any evidence to suggest breeding. It would appear from the size of the young and from the flightless state of both birds that this is an instance of breeding and is, as far as I know, a first Georgia nesting record.

Anne Waters, 1621 Apple Valley Drive, Augusta, Georgia 30906.

IMMATURE SURF SCOTER AT SWEETWATER CREEK STATE PARK — What started out as a routine check of Sweetwater Creek State Park (about 20 miles west of Atlanta) for ducks on 19 January 1985 ended with an unusual sighting of a Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*) and a life bird for many birders who don't visit the coast very often.

Immediately upon arriving in the parking lot near the office and bait store, I saw a bird in the water. With binoculars the most striking feature of the bird was its gibbous beak, so that even at a distance the silhouette suggested scoter. We set up a 20X spotting scope and watched the bird for 20 minutes including views from two different angles: one from the parking lot and the other from the road that crosses the lake. A small amount of white was periodically visible on the nape of the neck with the large black spot on the beak being the most obvious field mark. As the bird turned, the sun would catch the colors on the beak showing a tip of reddish-orange with more orange at the base and partially around the black spot. No white could be seen on the forehead. The bird was more light charcoal-black than brown, indicating it to be an immature male Surf Scoter.

The scoter was viewed by many birders during the next few weeks. The last known sighting was on 17 February 1985. The only previous record for the Atlanta area was one by Dennie and Pam McClure, also at Sweetwater Creek State Park, from 19 March - 12 April 1983 (*American Birds* 37: 858). That particular bird was identified as an immature female.

Georgann Schmalz, Fernbank Science Center, 156 Heaton Park Drive, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30307.

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD IN DULUTH, GEORGIA — On 25 November 1984, in conversation with Terry Moore, I was apprised of the presence of a "brown hummingbird" at a feeder in Duluth and Terry asked if I would take the time to verify the description. The time was well past for the presence of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) in which there was no brown coloration whatever.

After a telephone call to Mrs. Barbara Dixon of Duluth, I was assured the bird was there with regularity and might be expected the following day. Mrs. Dixon resides at 3874 Howell Ferry Rd. in Duluth where new openings are regularly made in predominantly oak woods for residential development. The home crests a small hill and its rear faces a thin line of trees behind an adjacent garage. A back breakfast room window faced a four-flowered hummingbird feeder. I arrived in late morning and within an hour was shooting 35



Figure 1. — Rufous Hummingbird at Duluth, Georgia, 20 October 1984 to 11 January 1985. Photo by Robert Manns.





Figure 2. — Rufous Hummingbird at Duluth, Georgia, 20 October 1984 to 11 January 1985. Photo by Robert Manns.

mm prints of what appeared to be a young male Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) who, although he came without deliberation or warning, disappeared after the briefest visits. The bird, a species I have seen in California, appeared already, if tentatively, identified by Mrs. Dixon as a Rufous rather than an Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*). There was no disagreeing with her finding. The whole breast and belly were buff colored with a well defined white band on the upper breast below the gorget. The gorget itself was defined mostly in black spots, some of which were noticed to flash red iridescence when the bird moved in proper light. The back and crown might be best described as mottled green and brown, with neither color dominating. Green appeared to be the "top" or resigning color, brown the "bottom" or emerging one. That is, rufous seemed to be coming through a field of green, not vice-versa. Further, the rufous was emerging throughout the entire back. No place revealed room for an all green saddle as in *Selasphorus sasin*. Figures 1 and 2 show the white band of the upper breast along with the mottled back. In the figures the green coloration on the back appears as the darker areas while the brown appears as the lighter.

I was startled to hear from Mrs. Dixon that she had had the bird at her feeder since about 20 October, or about one week after the departure of two summering Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Repeated calls to what normally would have been the proper repository for such information received no attention, and she next called the offices of Fernbank Science Center. It is

impossible to point out too often the importance of such calls and to hope for renewed attention to them.

But the bird held on, responding to the mixture of sugar water and red food coloring that Mrs. Dixon later realized could have been only sugar water in her red-flowered feeder. Color prints were originally taken with an Olympus OM-1 camera with a Zuiko variable 75 to 150 mm lens on 200-ASA film. Subsequent visits followed on 29 November, 1 and 8 December. On the final date the same camera with a Quester 700 mm lens was used with ASA 400 film.

Mrs. Dixon last saw the bird on the evening of 11 January 1985. That night a cold front entered from the northwest with temperatures well below freezing, and it is assumed the bird headed for the warmer areas of Florida or Louisiana for the remainder of the winter. Mrs. Dixon had viewed the bird for a period of almost 3 months during which time she felt she witnessed a continuing brightening in color (pers. comm.). This may have also been due to the juvenal loss of darker green and the gradual emergence of the lighter beige or rufous of the adult plumage. A large number of southeastern birders from Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia and even one visitor from France saw the bird during its stay at the feeder. Photographs have been sent for recording to the University of Georgia Records Department in Athens. The Rufous Hummingbird does not occur in *Georgia Birds* (Burleigh, T. D., 1958, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma) or in the *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (GOS, Occl. Publ. No. 6, 1977). One record exists of a dead female found by Branch Howe on 6 November 1978 (University of Georgia specimen No. 682) and reported in the *Oriole* (49: 7-8). This, therefore, is only the second verifiable occurrence of the species in the state of Georgia and the first male.

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FOOD HABITS OF THE PINE SISKIN — On the morning of 7 March 1985, I noticed several Pine Siskins (*Carduelis pinus*) apparently digging in the ground. On closer examination, I found they were eating the new leaves of the Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and sprouted wild bird seed.

A check of the major ornithological sources revealed two publications that mention young leaves as a food source. Pough (*Audubon Bird Guide of Eastern Land Birds*, Doubleday & Co., 1946, Garden City, N. Y.) says the summer foods include buds and tender leaves. Degraff (*Forest Habitat for Birds in the Northeast*, undated US Forest Service publication) indicated summer food includes tender leaves.

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## FROM THE FIELD

Oct. - Dec. 1984

- RED-THROATED LOON — Outstanding for an inland location were the six loons found by Joe Greenberg and his class during a trip to Peachtree City Lake (PCL) on 3 November. This is the fourth record for the Atlanta area.
- BLACK-CAPPED PETREL — On 8-10 November, 29-30 November and 11-14 December, Chris Haney took trips 80 to 100 miles offshore. The following numbers were sighted: 2 on 8 November, 40 on 9 November, 21 on 10 November, 5 on 30 November and 5 on 12 December.
- SOFT-PLUMAGED PETREL — One bird was seen by Chris Haney and Craig Faanes on 9 November about 90 miles east of St. Catherine's Island. This would be only the second record for all of North America and needless to say a first for Georgia.
- CORY'S SHEARWATER — Chris Haney reported good numbers, a few weeks later than usual, during his 8-10 November trip: 16 were seen on 8 Nov., 93 on the 9th and 70 on the 10th.
- GREATER SHEARWATER — Just a few were noted by Chris Haney during the fall, 7 on 9 Nov. and another one on the 10th. Chris also reported a very late individual on 13 Dec. for probably the first Georgia winter record.
- MANX SHEARWATER — Georgia's sixth record was a single individual found by Chris Haney on 12 Dec. As with some of the other seabirds, the species was unknown off Georgia before the winter of 1982/1983 when Chris started studying pelagic birds.
- AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER — Thirty-one birds were seen far offshore on 8-10 Nov., 4 on 30 Nov. and 12 as late as 11-14 Dec. (Chris Haney). This is the second year that Audubon's have been found well into the winter season.
- NORTHERN GANNET — The first ones were reported 5-10 miles off Ossabaw Island on 15 Nov. (Chris Haney).
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN — One bird was noted circling with vultures over Cumberland Island on 14 Oct. for a rare Georgia sighting (Chris Haney). It is interesting to note that although the Carolinas, Virginia and other eastern states are reporting annual sightings of White Pelicans, the species is rarely seen (or reported) in Georgia.
- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT — As usual a few were found inland. Tom Patterson reported 2 in Laurens County off and on between 21 Oct. and 28 Nov. In Augusta, Anne Waters reported singles from Merry Brothers Brickyard ponds on 5 Oct. and 3 Nov., 3 birds there on 7 Nov. and 6 on the 10th. In Atlanta one was at Sweetwater Creek State Park (SCSP) on 13 Oct. (Paul Raney) and 4 more were at Peachtree City Lake on 3 Nov. (Joe Greenberg). A last one was noted during the Columbus CBC on 15 Dec. (fide Sam Pate). Worth mentioning even though not all the birds were in Georgia, were the 140 counted during the Eufaula NWR CBC on 16 Dec.
- ANHINGA — Although extremely rare in the Piedmont, one was seen by John Paget in Forsyth County on 2 Dec. More expected, though still uncommon, were singles seen in Augusta on 27 Nov. by Clarence Belger and on 8 Dec. by Anne Waters.
- AMERICAN BITTERN — Seldom seen in the winter in the Piedmont, an individual was in Forsyth County on 24 Dec. as reported by John Paget.
- GREAT EGRET — A lone bird near Tyrone was rather late for the Atlanta area on 13 Oct. (Patrick Brisse).
- REDDISH EGRET — For the second straight year and only the 7th and 8th records for the state, this species was found along the coast. An immature was first found by George Cheeseman, Peggy and Terry Moore on 11 Oct. at the south end of Cumberland Island. The bird was later seen by Chris Haney on 14 Oct. The second sighting was a more mature bird found by Mary Ann Vernocy and Anne Wyand along the Jekyll Island Causeway on 13 Oct.
- CATTLE EGRET — Between 16 and 22 Dec. late migrating birds were noted at Eufaula NWR, Dublin and Augusta. The species is normally gone by early Dec. from these inland locations.

## ORIOLE

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- GREEN-BACKED HERON — Lingered individuals were found around Atlanta on 29 Oct. (Paul Raney) and near Conyers on 3 Dec. (Francis Michael).
- FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK — Once again, this species was found only at the Altamaha Wildlife Management Area near Darien. Jeff Petit noted 8 on 20 Nov. and Chris Haney had 11 on 23 Nov.
- TUNDRA SWAN — Dennie and Pam McClure noted 15 swans flying above the Altamaha WMA on 23 Nov. for an unusual sighting. Three more were noted during the Albany CBC on 30 Dec.
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE — Two birds were seen during the 30 Dec. Albany CBC which was a rare sighting outside of the more regular wintering ground of Eufaula NWR.
- SNOW GOOSE — A few birds were reported around the state. A blue morph was in Atlanta on 31 Oct. (Francis Michael), another was at Harris Neck NWR on 20 Nov. (Jeff Petit) and the last one was a white phase noted during the Albany CBC on 30 Dec.
- AMERICAN WIGEON — A good count for the PCL, was 17 on 22 Nov. (Patrick Brisse).
- REDHEAD — Two were early at PCL on 21 Oct. (Patrick Brisse) and 7 was a good count there on 15 Dec. during the CBC.
- GREATER SCAUP — Although it undoubtedly occurs in with the numerous Lesser Scaup, the species is not reported that often in Georgia. One was at Jekyll Island on 7 Dec. (Donna and Patrick Brisse) and 4 were at Blackbeard Island NWR on 31 Dec. (Hugh Garrett, Bill Pulliam, Peggy and Terry Moore).
- KING EIDER — Noteworthy was a first winter male found by Hugh Garrett, Bill Pulliam and Peggy and Terry Moore on 30 December off Cumberland Island. This appears to be the 7th record for the state.
- OLDSQUAW — Only one report was received this season: a single bird was seen off Jekyll Island on 8 Dec. by Patrick Brisse.
- WHITE-WINGED SCOTER — A male was seen on 3 Nov. at PCL by Joe Greenberg and his class for only Atlanta's second record ever. It was observed the same morning as the Red-throated Loons and Purple Sandpiper and was probably pushed inland by the same storm.
- COMMON GOLDENEYE — Only single birds were reported during the period. A female plumaged bird was at Jekyll Island on 7 Dec. (Patrick Brisse), another was at Thundering Spring Lake in Laurens County on 23 Dec. (Tom Patterson) and the last was at Blackbeard Island on 31 Dec. (Terry Moore and others). The numbers were down from the previous year's report.
- BUFFLEHEAD — Hugh and Liz Garrett had an early arrival at PCL on 3 Nov.
- COMMON MERGANSER — For the first time in 12 years this species was reported in Atlanta with two records for the period. Hugh Garrett found a female plumaged bird at PCL on 1 Dec. and Joel Volpi had a male near Lawrenceville on 10 Dec.
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER — This species was reported inland only on 9 Dec. when Dennie and Pam McClure had 15 at SCSP in west Atlanta and when Tom Patterson saw 2 in Laurens County.
- OSPREY — The only inland fall migrants were singles reported from SCSP on 12 Oct. (Dennie and Pam McClure) and from the Clayton County Water Treatment Plant (CCWTP) in south Atlanta on 3 Nov. (Patrick Brisse). Of note was one reported on 16 Dec. during the Eufaula NWR CBC (fide Sam Pate).
- BALD EAGLE — Outside of Eufaula NWR only two were reported. One was near Columbus on 3-4 Nov. as mentioned by Jim Graham and 2 adults were seen near Darien as reported by Jeff Petit on 20 Nov.
- MERLIN — In addition to a few coastal reports in early Oct., Tom Patterson saw single individuals in Laurens County on 17 Nov., 9 and 24 Dec. Anne Waters also had one in Augusta on 8 Dec. and another on Sapelo Island on 29-30 Dec.
- PEREGRINE FALCON — The banding group on Jekyll Island (Terry Moore et. al.) sighted 25+ during the 5-14 Oct. period, half the number noted during the previous year. Inland, Hugh Garrett and Patrick Brisse had a single bird near Tyrone in south Atlanta on 17 Nov.
- SORA — For a rare Piedmont record, the Amersons sighted a lone bird on 6 Oct. from Lake Tobesofkee near Macon.



- COMMON MOORHEN — Unusual for the Augusta area were 2 found by Anne Waters on 10 Nov. at the Merry Brothers Brickyard ponds.
- AMERICAN COOT — Of note were the 1000+ seen on 4 Nov. at Carter's Lake during a Cherokee AS field trip.
- SANDHILL CRANE — As usual the migration above Atlanta totaled over 1000 birds. The earliest were seen on 3 Nov. near Conyers (Francis Michael) and the last ones on 3 Dec. in north Atlanta (Dan and Ann Forster). Elsewhere, 40 were noted on 3 Nov. near Columbus by Sue Chambliss and 100+ on 13 Nov. and 140+ on the 19th were sighted over Lake Tobesofkee near Macon (fide Ken Clark).
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS — A late migrant was at SCSP on 11 Nov. (Patrick Brisse, Peggy and Terry Moore); another found on 16 Dec. during the Atlanta CBC provided the area with the first winter record (Dennis Lacoss).
- LESSER YELLOWLEGS — Late for the Piedmont was an individual at CCWTP on 4 Nov. (Patrick Brisse).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER — Wintering birds were found at PCL in Nov. and Dec. (fide Patrick Brisse) and on 15 and 16 Dec. during the Columbus and Eufaula NWR CBC's (fide Sam Pate).
- WHIMBREL — Always rare in mid-winter, 2 were sighted at the south end of Cumberland Island on 30 Dec. by Terry Moore and others.
- WESTERN SANDPIPER — Late inland individuals were found at CCWTP on 27 and 31 Oct. (Patrick Brisse, Hugh Garrett, Francis Michael) and in Augusta on 30 Oct. (Clarence Belger). Of note were the 6 found during the Albany CBC on 30 Dec.
- LEAST SANDPIPER — For the second year, the species was found wintering in Atlanta, at CCWTP (fide Patrick Brisse). It was also noted on 15 and 16 Dec. during the Columbus and Eufaula NWR CBC's and on 1 Dec. in the Augusta area (Anne Waters).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER — Patrick Brisse had a single bird as late as 10 Nov. at CCWTP in the Atlanta area.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER — The first inland record for Georgia was a single bird in winter plumage at CCWTP on 3 Nov. (Patrick Brisse).
- DUNLIN — On 30 Oct. a late migrant was at Augusta according to Clarence Belger. Even later were 4 birds at CCWTP on 3 Nov. (Patrick Brisse). Two of the birds stayed until 11 Nov. Another individual arrived in late Dec. and spent the winter at CCWTP for the first Atlanta winter record (Patrick Brisse).
- STILT SANDPIPER — Two rather late birds were noted by Patrick Brisse at CCWTP on 20 Oct.
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER — Atlanta's third record was a bird first seen at CCWTP on 4 Nov. (Patrick Brisse, Peggy and Terry Moore). The bird was quite lethargic at first and was seen by many observers until 2 Dec.
- POMARINE JAEGER — Chris Haney was the only one to report the species from his far offshore trips: in Nov. he noted 10 on the 9th, 4 on the 10th and 1 on the 30th; in Dec. he saw 1 on the 11th, 2 on the 13th and 5 on the 14th. More field work is showing that the species is not as rare off Georgia as previously reported.
- PARASITIC JAEGER — The only report received was a bird seen by Terry Moore and others from Cumberland Island on 30 Dec.
- SOUTH POLAR SKUA — Georgia's second record was an individual found 90 miles east off St. Catherine's Island on 9 Nov. by Craig Faanes.
- LAUGHING GULL — Always rare inland, a first winter bird was noted at CCWTP on 7 Oct. by Francis Michael.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL — For the first time in five years a bird was found in Laurens County by Tom Patterson on 21 Nov. In the Atlanta area a couple sightings were about normal: 2 were at SCSP on 12 Nov. (Dennie and Pam McClure) and a single bird was at PCL on 22 Nov. (Patrick Brisse).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL — The usual spot, the south beach of Jekyll Island, yielded up to 2 adults during the 5-14 Oct. period (fide Terry Moore). More unusual were the 5 birds seen on 31 Oct. on Little Egg Island near Wolf Island and NWR (Sohell Zende fide Chris Haney).
- BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE — A few were seen offshore for the third winter in a row. In Nov. Chris Haney saw 1 on the 8th, 3 on the 9th, and singles on the 29th

- and 30th. In Dec. he had 5 on the 12th and 2 on the 13th.
- FORSTER'S TERN — Six and 23 were good counts on the Columbus and Eufaula NWR CBC's on 15 and 16 Dec. (fide Sam Pate). Elsewhere, one was a late migrant on 22 Nov. at PCL in south Atlanta (Patrick Brisse).
- BRIDLED TERN — A few were seen by Chris Haney as late as 30 Nov., 11 and 13 Dec. All were reports of single birds and are some of the few winter records for the state.
- WHITE-WINGED DOVE — Tom Patterson sighted a single bird in Laurens County on 23 Dec. This represents only the sixth or seventh record for Georgia.
- COMMON GROUND-DOVE — Worth mentioning, since they are seldom seen in the Augusta area, were singles noted by Vernon Waters on 19 Oct. and by Anne Waters on 13 Nov.
- COMMON BARN-OWL — Georgann Schmalz noted that the Barn-Owls on the Georgia side of Eufaula NWR were raising 6 young on 1 Dec.
- SHORT-EARED OWL — Rarely reported, one was seen near Darien on 23 Nov. by Dennie and Pam McClure.
- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD — Georgia's second record was a sub-adult male coming to Barbara Dixon's feeder near Duluth from mid-Oct. through 11 Jan. 1985. Many observers saw the bird in late Nov. and early Dec. when the sighting became known and excellent photographs were taken by Robert Manns.
- LEAST FLYCATCHER — Rare in Atlanta, two singles were sighted. Jay Stolar saw and heard the first on 6 Oct. along the Chattahoochee River and Paul Raney heard the second one on 11 Oct.
- TREE SWALLOW — Two at Peachtree City Lake on 4 Nov. were rather late for the Piedmont (Peggy and Terry Moore, Mary Ann Vernocoy).
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH — One seen by Jim Shirah on 26 Nov. and another seen during the Peachtree City CBC on 15 Dec. were the only sightings received. This was definitely not an invasion year for the species.
- BEWICK'S WREN — John Paget once again reported the species from Pendergrass on 13 Oct.
- MARSH WREN — Mark Oberle reported one along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta on 20 Oct. and Anne Waters had one also on 17 Nov. for a rare sighting of this species in the Augusta area.
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER — Rare in the winter time away from the coast were 2 seen during the Dublin CBC on 22 Dec. (fide Tom Patterson) and one in Augusta on 1 and 22 Dec. (Anne Waters).
- VARIED THRUSH — A bird briefly visited Grady Horne's feeder in Bogart on 11 Dec. for only the second record ever for Georgia.
- WATER PIPIT — The first ones reported were in Douglas County on 12 Oct. (Dennie and Pam McClure).
- PHILADELPHIA VIREO — A few were still going through in Oct. One was near Columbus on 7 Oct. (Bob and Dorothy Potts, fide Sam Pate). Three sightings were received for the Atlanta area: 1 Oct. (Dennie and Pam McClure), 7 Oct. (Atlanta AS) and 21 Oct. (Nancy Iha). The species seemed to have been more common than usual, at least around Atlanta.
- TENNESSEE WARBLER — A rather late bird was at Peachtree City on 4 Nov. (Patrick Brisse).
- MAGNOLIA WARBLER — A well-described bird was noted on 1 Dec. in Augusta by Anne Waters. This represents probably the first winter record of the species for Georgia.
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER — Unusual away from the coast in the winter time was a lone bird found during the 22 Dec. Dublin CBC (fide Tom Patterson).
- PALM WARBLER — Good weather kept a few more birds inland this winter as the species was reported by the Atlanta, Peachtree City, Columbus, Eufaula NWR, Chattahoochee National Forest and Augusta CBC's. Up to 11 individuals were counted on the Peachtree City CBC on 15 Dec. (fide Terry Moore).
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER — Anne Waters noted a late bird in Augusta on 17 Nov.; additional sightings were on 1 and 22 Dec. Hugh Garrett reported one on 15 Dec. from Peachtree City for a rare winter sighting.



- HOODED WARBLER — Peggy Moore had a rather late individual along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta on 30 Oct.
- WILSON'S WARBLER — About a month late, a male was reported by John Paget from Gainesville up until 4 Dec. Very few winter records of the species exist in Georgia.
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT — One was sighted by David Glass and Vince Jackson during the 16 Dec. Atlanta CBC.
- SUMMER TANAGER — A rather late bird was near Gainesville on 24 Oct. according to John Paget.
- BLUE GROSBEAK — Chris Haney reported one from Jekyll Island on 18 Nov. for a late record.
- LARK SPARROW — Very rare but now regular the species was once again found during the fall. Chris Haney had one on 31 Oct. near Athens. The bird was previously seen by Craig Faanes.
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW — A singing juvenile was found by Tom Patterson on 23 Dec. in Laurens County where breeding occurred during the summer.
- HENSLOW'S SPARROW — Chris Haney sighted one on Hutchinson Island near Savannah on 13 Oct.
- SHARP-TAILED SPARROW — One of Atlanta's rarest sparrows was discovered at CCWTP on 2 Oct. by Francis Michael. This was only the area's fourth record.
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW — Anne Waters noted one bird in a small swamp in south Augusta on 21 Dec. for a rare Georgia winter sighting.
- NORTHERN (BULLOCH'S) ORIOLE — A female of this subspecies was noted by Anne Waters on 17 November at Merry Brothers Brickyard ponds in Augusta. This is the second year that Anne has found this subspecies.
- NORTHERN ORIOLE — Still unusual in the winter but more expected was the bird found during the Peachtree City CBC on 15 Dec. (fide Terry Moore).
- PINE SISKIN — Low numbers were reported from Atlanta during the month of Dec. (fide Terry Moore). The same is true for Purple Finches as for the first time House Finches outnumbered Purples during the Atlanta CBC on 16 Dec.
- CORRECTION — In the From the Field: July - September 1983 (*Oriole* 48: 70) the following correction has been noted: for the Golden-winged Warbler the date should be 14 August instead of 14 July.

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### *A Statement of Policy*

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