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A FIRST RECORD OF ROSS' GOOSE FOR GEORGIA

Robert Manns

On 23 February 1989 Bruce Dralle and I left Atlanta at 0430 and arrived on the Alabama side of the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge at 0700, shortly after sunrise. We were hunting the newly reported Ross' Goose (*Chen rossii*) and drove immediately to the site called Houston Bottoms, consisting of open peanut fields, where the goose had been reported grazing. Of course, no goose. There was momentary excitement however, when a smaller white goose was sighted among the Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) but on inspection from the road with a telescope, the bird proved to be a Snow Goose (*C. caerulescens*).

We drove to the southern dike road which was closed. There we discovered another flock of Canada Geese, again attended by a smaller white goose. But before we could ascertain the species of the bird, the flock rose and headed inland in the direction from which we had just come.

Returning to the Bottoms, we could see that there were now two smaller white geese, one perceptively smaller than the other. In our Questar the smaller bird was showing the dark bill base, triangular bill shape and lack of "grinning patch" characteristic of the Ross' Goose.

The Ross' Goose was a life bird for Bruce and a southeastern record for the author. Then, perhaps because the two of us were the first observers on the refuge that morning, the entire flock moved back some 40 m. Then all rose with the Ross' on the outer right edge of the flock and flew on a straight line toward the exposed flats of the Chattahoochee River. Tree lines prohibited us from watching a precise landing and the geese may have continued flight to grazing areas on the Georgia side of the refuge. Either that was the case or they sought sanctuary on the mid-river sandbars where two weeks earlier we had witnessed several blue-phase Snow Geese and Canada Geese. At any rate, when last seen, the birds were occupying Georgia airspace over the Chattahoochee River, wherever their landing.

Although careful search of flocks of Snow Geese in southeastern states have revealed the presence of individual Ross' Geese in other southeastern states, there is no previous record of the species in the *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney *et. al.*, GOS, Occas. Publ. No. 10, 1986).

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OBSERVATION OF ROSS' GOOSE AT EUFAULA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Helen Ogren

On Thursday, 23 February 1989 Jep Murray and I drove to Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge to look for the Ross' Goose (*Chen rossii*) which had recently been reported. Joe Greenberg (pers. comm.) reported seeing it at the Lake Point Resort Marina the previous weekend with some Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*). At that time it had appeared very tame.

We stopped at the Visitor's Center/Park Office first. The park ranger had seen the Ross' Goose with a Snow Goose (*C. caerulescens*) in the Houston Tract on the Alabama side of the refuge earlier that morning. He said that several people had already come to the refuge to see the goose that day. This was at 1220 on a bitterly cold day. The temperature was 25 ° F., with a wind chill factor equating to 0 ° F according to a weather radio.

We drove to the Houston Tract and parked beside the locked gate. We spotted the Ross' Goose immediately upon passing the gate. The bird was with 14 Canada Geese in a field of winter wheat. All of the geese were very wary and restless. They moved about alertly with heads raised, looking in all directions, occasionally honking and occasionally feeding.

The Canada Geese appeared not to want the Ross' Goose nearby. The Ross' Goose tried to remain close but whenever it approached closer than 1 m, the Canada Geese would threaten it. Their wings would be held out, their necks arched with beaks opening and closing as if hissing; however, we were watching through a telescope and were too far away to hear actual hissing. The Canada Geese actually made contact with their beaks at least four times. The Ross' Goose would squawk and leap away each time.

Optics used were a 25X telescope, 7X35 binoculars and 7X-15X zoom binoculars. We compared the physical characteristics of the bird against those noted in Robbins (1966), Farrand (1983) and Scott (1987). The only departure from these descriptions was our failure to see the warty protuberances at the base of the bill. Whether the bird actually lacked these or we couldn't see them from where we were viewing the bird (as close as 30 m and as far away as 100 m) could not be determined.

Once during the hour and a half we watched, the entire group took off flying northward up the Chattahoochee River for at least 100 m. They circled out across the river and flew back down the river over the trees on the other side in Georgia. They never landed in Georgia but circled around across the lake and came back up river to land on the peninsula which juts out from the Houston Tract (in Alabama). There they fed, continuing the behavior first noted, until the time we left.

The next day Carolina Lane and I drove to Eufaula, arriving at about the same time as the day before, about 1230. A staff member in the office said we had to check with the ranger or the biologist before looking for the Ross' Goose as too many birders had recently "bothered" it.

We found both men as we drove toward the Houston Tract. They said that about 12 people had come the day before and the refuge wasn't prepared for the

"onslaught" of people who had come down to see the goose. They were anxious for the bird to stay and were concerned that so many birders were making it shy. They said they hadn't seen it anywhere that morning.

We assured them we had no intention of approaching the bird or doing anything to harass it. We searched the rest of the afternoon before finally finding it at about 1630 with a group of Canada Geese close to the Lake Point Resort Marina where Joe Greenberg first mentioned seeing it. We stayed out of sight behind a cottage and were able to observe the bird in excellent sunlight with a spotting scope and binoculars. Again the group was as skittish as the day before, and the Canada Geese continued to threaten the Ross' Goose whenever it came too close.

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CORRECTION

Stacia Hendricks wishes to have her name removed as the junior author of the article "Wood Stork nesting, roosting and foraging at Cumberland Island, Georgia" which appeared in *The Oriole* (53:17-24).

GENERAL NOTES

COMMON EIDER FOUND ON ST. CATHERINE'S ISLAND 1988 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's), sponsored by the National Audubon Society and local birding groups, invariably report a few oddities; birds out of their normal range or so secretive they are rarely seen. This year's sighting of a Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) on the St. Catherine's Island (Liberty County, GA) CBC on 17 December 1988 is a good example.

The female eider was found on "South Beach", adjacent to Sapelo Sound. She was first sighted at 0900 and observed for 15 minutes. At 1030 she was observed again at the same site for 5 minutes. Both times she was alone, apparently feeding off of a submerged stump approximately 20-25 m from shore. The morning was clear and cold (31-45 ° F) with a northwest wind (20-25 mph). The tide was low and incoming. Positive identification was possible with the aid of 8X binoculars and a 15X telescope. Diagnostic field marks included its large size, deep brown coloration and long, sloping forehead. The neck, sides and back were barred in dark and light brown linear streaks. The bird was distinguished from a female King Eider (*S. spectabilis*) by its lack of feathering on the nasal process (bare patch extending up towards the eye) and the straighter forehead profile.

Although numerous on CBC's in Massachusetts (i.e., Martha's Vineyard, Newburyport, Nantucket), the Common Eider rarely strays further south than New England. The American race (*S. m. dresseri*) breeds from southern Labrador to Maine, and winters along the Atlantic coast from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Virginia (Bellrose 1976). Common Eiders are regularly seen, in small numbers, off the coast of Long Island, New York, and sporadically in Virginia and Maryland (Bellrose 1976). Historical records of more southerly wanderings are sparse. There have been two recent CBC reports for South Carolina (Litchfield Pawleys 1985 and 1987), and scattered reports from both the east and west coasts of Florida from 1957-1980 (Below 1983). In Georgia, the only record was a female plumaged bird seen on Tybee Island on 24 Dec. 1987 (Parks 1987). Obviously, the lone female was a rare find for the St. Catherine's Island Christmas Count.

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Janice Nichols, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 75 Spring St. SW, Atlanta, GA 30303 and Brad Winn, New York Zoological Society, St. Catherine's Island, P.O. Box 207-Z, Rt. 1, Midway, GA 31320.

FIRST GEORGIA INLAND RECORD FOR THE LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - January birding is generally rather routine in central Georgia. After the excitement of Christmas Counts very little change usually occurs until spring migration. One of the high points is counting the number of Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*) that join the 800-1,000 plus Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) around the Macon Sanitary Landfill. The middle of the day generally finds most of the gulls sleeping and resting in the nearby open pit mines.

On 21 January 1989 it was clear, brisk and windy. It was the kind of wind that causes your eyes to water because no matter which way you look, the wind comes from that direction. As Marie and Jerry Amerson and I scanned the mixed flock of gulls clinging to the dirt, I commented to Jerry that one of the gulls appeared very dark on the mantle. Jerry had just noticed the bird. The bird was a winter plumaged adult but we knew that we needed to see the leg color in order to determine whether it was a Lesser Black-backed (*L. fuscus*) or a Great Black-backed Gull (*L. marinus*). As we cautiously moved toward the flock they did what all flocks with a mystery bird do - they all got up. Fortunately, they settled again about 30 m away. We became more cautious. After some flanking movements we were able to get about 80 m away. Here the telescopes allowed us to see the yellow legs we had hoped for.

Burleigh (*Georgia Birds*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 1958) does not deal with the Lesser Black-backed Gull. Haney *et al.* (*Annotated checklist of Georgia birds*, GOS, Occas. Publ. No. 10, 1986) lists the Lesser Black-backed Gull as a rare visitor to the coast since 1977.

Apparently there is no inland sighting in Georgia prior to this time. Because of a busy travel schedule I was unable to put the bird on the GOS hotline. The bird was sporadic in its appearances and wasn't seen at all on some days. The last sighting of the gull was in early March. We can hope that the bird will return to live up our winter birding next year.

Ty Ivey, 752 St. Andrews Drive, Macon, GA 31210.

FISH CROWS IN SOUTHWEST GEORGIA: FURTHER COMMENTS - McNair (*Oriole* 52:28-45) discussed the changing status of the Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*) in Georgia and the Carolinas. He documented an increase in numbers within the last 20 years, particularly in the Coastal Plain, a scarcity during the winter, and a use of different habitats than before. I can offer some anecdotal data of my own from Thomas County, Georgia, to augment and reinforce some of McNair's observations.

McNair noted an expansion into wooded residential areas. This had occurred in Thomasville by the mid-1960s, for the calls of Fish Crows from the tall pines around my home were a characteristic sound of spring then. Recently, however, the crows have begun to use another habitat here in Thomasville (and in nearby Tallahassee, Florida), at least for foraging: the highly urbanized, downtown business sector. I first recorded this in Thomasville in my notes for the spring/summer/fall of 1986. I have seen them downtown from 25 March (1987) through 11 November (1986). I have two winter records for the urban area: 4 December 1987 (5 calling) and 9 December 1987 (9 calling). As McNair noted,

compared to the wary American Crow (*C. brachyrhynchos*), Fish Crows are rather tame, and they have become exceedingly so in the urban environment. They perch on wires, lampposts, and utility poles, seemingly oblivious to the traffic and pedestrians below. They strut about sidewalks, gutters, and parking lots looking for food. On 29 April 1988 I saw 5 Fish Crows scavenging from a "dumpster" (a large metal receptacle for trash and garbage) in a busy, open parking lot in back of a library and some offices. Some of the crows were down inside the dumpster, while others were perched on the rim or were chasing off some Common Grackles (*Quiscalus quiscula*). I have seen this behavior since. The crows are a frequent sight during the warm months in downtown Thomasville, flying about, perched, or foraging; they are often harrassed by Northern Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*), especially in the spring.

Outside of downtown Thomasville, observations indicate they are here in all months of the year. They are certainly scarcer in winter, and apparently are absent from the wooded suburban areas then. Migration dates are difficult to determine, but I have recorded one in our wooded neighborhood as early as 1 March (1987), which agrees with McNair's finding that away from the coast, migration in the Coastal Plain begins the last week of February and the first week of March. Some migration, or at least large local movements, may occur earlier: on 14 January 1989 I saw a high, very vocal flock of 27 Fish Crows flying NNW over Thomasville. This was quite different from the few scattered individual Fish Crows I usually record during the winter months.

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LECONTE'S SPARROWS AT A&B FARMS, DESOTO, GEORGIA - On 19 January 1989 Helen Ogren and I went to the A&B Farms near DeSoto, GA to look for the Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*) that appear to be a regular winter visitor to the area. We were in a large field which runs parallel to US 280 and GA Highway 30. In this overgrown field was an area of broom sedge grass that was about 20 m wide and over 100 m in length. During the four hours (1000 - 1400) that we were walking through this field we encountered the LeConte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*) twice. There were definitely three and possibly four or five birds.

We were able to observe two of the sparrows for at least five minutes. They were partially hidden by the broom sedge and a weedy, square stemmed herb. One sparrow perched on a stem in the open for about a minute and a half. The sparrows were very buffy in tone and seemed very light colored compared to the very dark Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) that we had been seeing. The head had a cream colored median crown stripe separated from a very buffy bright eyeline by two dark brown stripes. The malar area was also buffy orange color. The bill was darkish. The flanks were covered with streaks of dark chocolate. There was a buffy chest band that had the merest hint of stipples. The feathers along the very colorfully streaked back seemed to be edged in white. This lighter edging contributed to the overall lightness of the sparrow.

The sparrows, when flushed, flew about 4-6 m and dropped back into the grass. One bird was observed running along the ground. We were using 8X and 7X binoculars and a 20X telescope to view these birds. We also saw two White-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), one of which was in immature plumage.

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FROM THE FIELD

August - November 1988

Even though it seemed like a rather dull migration there were still a good number of interesting sightings reported during the period. Eared Grebes at Forsyth, a Magnificent Frigatebird at Jekyll, a Black-bellied Whistling-Duck at Lake Lanier, wandering Swallow-tailed Kites, continued increase of Bald Eagle sightings, Rufous Hummingbirds at two different locations, and a nesting pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers certainly would spice up any period. Just think what would be out there if we all went looking!

Abbreviations used include AAS - Atlanta Audubon Society, ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility (formerly CCWTP), MBBT - Merry Brothers Brick and Tile Company (Augusta), MIA - Macon Industrial Area, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, RCWMA - Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area and SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- RED-THROATED LOON - The only report received for the period came from Stuart Coward who saw a single bird off St. Catherine's Island on 18 Oct.
- COMMON LOON - The previously reported summering bird at Lake Lanier was still noted by John Paget on 22 Aug.
- EARED GREBE - This now regular fall visitor was noted on 30 Sept. when two birds were at the Plant Scherer ash pond near Forsyth (Terry Johnson). The next day, Mike Chapman and others saw one at nearby Lake Juliette.
- ANHINGA - The species is now reported annually along the fall line. A few birds summered at the MIA according to Ty Ivey. In Augusta at MBBT Anne Waters reported a high count of six birds on 27 Aug. with one still there on 5 Nov.
- MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD - Rarely reported from Georgia, this species was spotted by Lydia Thompson at Jekyll Island on 30 Sept. A few other lucky observers were able to view it before it sailed out of sight. I am always amazed that states north of us have almost annual records of the species while this observation represents only the second sighting for Georgia since 1982.
- POST-BREEDING HERONS - Anne Waters mentioned that the roost at MBBT which normally yields 3000 to 4000 birds, had only about 1600 this summer on 26 Aug. Hopefully this is not a sign of things to come.
- TRICOLORED HERON - During the month of August, Anne Waters saw from one to four birds at the MBBT roost or feeding around the ponds.
- WHITE IBIS - Post-breeding birds were sparingly reported this fall. Lyle Bundt had an immature on 6 Sept. in north Columbus and another was at Pendergrass until 2 Oct. according to John Paget.
- GLOSSY IBIS - Always of note inland were two birds seen by Anne and Vernon Waters at MBBT on 3 Aug. and another at the roost on 13 Aug.
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL - One bird noted along the Jekyll Island Causeway during the GOS meeting on 8 Oct. was last seen on 16 Oct. (many observers).
- WOOD STORK - Anne Waters reported that only 25 young were raised at Birdsville in Millen this summer. Around Macon, Jerry and Marie Amerson saw fourteen on 21 Aug., Ty Ivey saw 13 on 28 Aug. at the MIA and Don and Joyce Duncan saw nine immature birds on 4 Sept. Tom Patterson counted 57 birds at Buckeye Marsh in Laurens County on 4 Sept. More unusual was the lone bird seen by Lon Slack at Commerce Lake on 9 Sept.
- BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK - A single bird was discovered at Wahoo Creek, Lake Lanier, Hall County by John Paget on 2 Sept. It was seen again 14, 16 and 17 Sept. Jack Carusos and Greg Valpey were also able to see the duck. The bird was unbanded. This record is currently under consideration by the GOS Checklist Committee.

- SNOW GOOSE - Very few birds were sighted inland this fall. Paul Sykes saw three blue morph adults at Watkinsville, Oconee County, on 12 Nov. Ty Ivey and others saw six birds at the MIA on the same day and Terry Johnson reported a blue and white phase on 18 Nov. at the Plant Scherer ash pond.
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL - High inland counts were 29 at the RCWMA on 19 Aug. (Terry Johnson) and 85 at the ELHLAF on 18 Sept. (Patrick Brisse).
- NORTHERN SHOVELER - Ty Ivey reported a single bird at the MIA on 3 Sept.
- GADWALL - Unusual was the single bird seen at St. Simons Island on 25 Aug. by Eileen Hutcheson. The bird was at least three weeks early or it could have been the same individual seen at Darien in June by Terry Moore and others.
- CANVASBACK - Very few birds are reported anymore. The best inland count was ten at the Plant Scherer ash pond on 12 Nov. (Terry Johnson).
- REDHEAD - A very early bird visited a pond near the Clark's house in Macon on 15 Oct. (Ken and Arlene Clark).
- RING-NECKED DUCK - Ty Ivey and others estimated over 1000 birds at the MIA on 12 Nov. for a very decent inland count.
- GREATER SCAUP - Four males seen by Anne Waters flying around MBBT on 5 Nov. were the only inland sighting received.
- SURF SCOTER - Jean and Wally Dreyfoos saw a small flock off Sapelo Island on 29 Oct.
- RUDDY DUCK - Three hundred birds at the MIA on 12 Nov. would have to be considered an excellent count (Ty Ivey).
- AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - The two birds found by Father Francis Michael at the Conyer's Monastery in late July were last seen on 4 Aug. Donny Screws noted two along with a group of twenty-two Mississippi Kites near Rhine, Dodge County, on 10 Aug. The birds remained for three days in the same general area.
- BALD EAGLE - Too many sightings were received this period from all over the state to be detailed here. The main news was the discovery of a pair building a nest at the RCWMA on 19 Nov. Terry Johnson mentioned that during the previous nesting season only eight nests were known to exist in Georgia.
- MERLIN - Patrick Brisse and Paul Raney watched a lone bird chase a Red-necked Phalarope at the ELHLAF on 10 Sept. for the only period report.
- PEREGRINE FALCON - Numerous inland records were received this fall. The earliest one was seen by Anne and Vernon Waters at MBBT on 26 Aug. They also saw another on 30 Sept. On 18 Sept. Jerry and Marie Amerson sighted one over the Ocmulgee Indian Mounds in Macon. Patrick Brisse observed a bird working the ponds at the ELHLAF for over an hour on 24 Sept. Harriett DiGioia reported a bird left at the Murray Veterinary Clinic on 3 Oct. The bird was not injured but was refusing to eat. Another was in Clarke County on 7 Oct. according to Stuart Coward. The last one was at Dawson Forest in Dawson County on 27 Oct. (Frank McCamey). Along the coast, especially Jekyll Island, Terry Moore reported only a couple birds in Oct. instead of the usual 25-50.
- BLACK RAIL - Regional Wildlife Supervisor Richard Whittington identified this species at the West Point WMA on 31 Aug. (fide Terry Johnson). The bird was flushed from a field adjacent to West Point Lake.
- VIRGINIA RAIL - A bird was captured and banded during mowing operations at the RCWMA on 24 Oct. (fide Terry Johnson).
- COMMON MOORHEN - Hunter Patterson was the only observer to report the species. He saw a bird at the ELHLAF on 17 Sept.
- AMERICAN COOT - A good count was the 500+ seen by Ty Ivey at the MIA on 12 Nov.
- SHOREBIRDS - Any information on large inland concentrations of shorebirds would be appreciated as we still don't know that much about their movements through inland Georgia.
- BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER - Ty Ivey reported a single individual at the MIA on 28 Aug. for a rare inland record.
- LESSER GOLDEN-PLOVER - Fall sightings were down as only one report was received. A lone bird was photographed at the Gainesville Airport by Paul Raney on 10 Sept.
- BLACK-NECKED STILT - Fifteen birds at Sapelo Island on 13 Nov. were late (Stuart Coward).
- AMERICAN AVOCET - A single bird at the Plant Scherer ash pond on 20 Aug., reported by Terry Johnson and Mike Chapman, furnished the first local record.
- WILLET - Always of note inland, one individual was sighted at the Gainesville Airport on 10 and 13 Sept. (Greg Valpey and John Paget).

- LONG-BILLED CURLEW - Two birds were photographed on Jekyll Island's South Beach by Dale Hardee and Bruce Dralle on 30 Sept. (see *Oriole* 53:29).
- MARBLED GODWIT - An early bird was back at St. Simons Island on 8 Aug. (Lydia Thompson and Kit Lane). Four birds were seen on Jekyll Island's South Beach on 14 Sept. (John Swiderski) and two were still there with the Long-billed Curlews on 30 Sept. (Dale Hardee and Bruce Dralle).
- SANDERLING - Rare inland was a bird at the RCWMA on 19 Aug. (Terry Johnson) and another at the ELHLAF on 12 Sept. (Hugh Garrett).
- LEAST SANDPIPER - Terry Johnson reported a few late individuals for the Piedmont area at the RCWMA on 12 Nov.
- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - Unusual for the fall and also very early was a bird spotted by Lydia Thompson and Kit Lane on St. Simons Island on 8 Aug.
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - John Paget sighted the species twice. The first was at Lake Lanier on 19 Aug. and the other was in Forsyth County on 9-10 Sept. These represent the 8th and 9th state records.
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER - The hundred birds seen by Tom Patterson in Laurens County on 4 Sept. was a good inland count. On the other hand, Anne Waters found only four birds in the Augusta area. "The species used to be easy to find, but it isn't anymore" she reported. A late bird for the Atlanta area was found at the ELHLAF on 19 Nov. by Patrick Brisse.
- DUNLIN - As usual a few birds showed up at some inland locations in late fall. Patrick Brisse had single birds at the ELHLAF on 5 and 11 Nov. and Terry Johnson saw the species at the Plant Scherer ash pond on 11 and 19 Nov.
- STILT SANDPIPER - Inland counts of interest were the eighteen in Laurens County on 4 Sept. (Tom Patterson) and seven at Lake Lanier on 10 Sept. (John Paget).
- BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER - John Paget and Greg Valpey had a single bird at the Gainesville Airport on 9-10 Sept.
- COMMON SNIFE - Lyle Bundt reported a very early individual in Columbus on 10-12 Aug. (*vide* Sam Pate).
- RED-NECKED PHALAROPE - A first record for the Atlanta area was a single bird found by Patrick Brisse at the ELHLAF on 5 Sept. It was seen by many observers through 10 Sept. and was photographed on 10 Sept. by Paul Raney (*Oriole* 53:50).
- LAUGHING GULL - Rare inland, but probably regular, one was spotted at the MIA on 9 Sept. by Ty Ivey.
- RING-BILLED GULL - Terry Johnson saw an early bird at the RCWMA on 3 Sept.
- HERRING GULL - Also early were the three birds on 3 Oct. at the ELHLAF (Hugh Garrett).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - This now regular fall species was sighted again this period. Thirteen previous records exist, most of them in the fall. On 13 through 15 Aug., Robert Manns and others saw one bird around the Jekyll and St. Simons Island areas. Two more were seen on Tybee Island by Susan Callaway and Anne Wyatt on 22-23 Aug. One to two birds were still around Jekyll Island's South Beach in late Sept. through early Oct. (*vide* Terry Moore).
- CASPIAN TERN - John Paget spotted single birds on Lake Lanier on 20 Sept. and 4 Oct. for rare inland sightings.
- COMMON TERN - Rare in the Atlanta area, four were seen by Hugh Garrett at SCSP on 12 Sept. From Lake Lanier, John Paget sighted single birds on 10, 11, 20 and 22 Sept.
- LEAST TERN - A bird seen at Pendergrass on 20 Aug. by Dale Hardee and Bruce Dralle was the third record from above the fall line (*Oriole* 53:31).
- BLACK TERN - A few more inland Piedmont records were received than usual. Nine were at Pendergrass on 12 Aug. (John Paget); one was at the MIA the next day (Ty Ivey); nine more were at the Plant Scherer ash pond on 20 Aug. (Terry Johnson and others); another was at the ELHLAF on 1 Sept. (Bruce Dralle); and on 4 Sept. fourteen were at the ELHLAF (Peggy and Terry Moore) and two others were near Kathleen (Don and Joyce Duncan).
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - One was banded on Jekyll Island on 6 Oct. (*vide* Terry Moore).
- SHORT-EARED OWL - For the third time in the last four years, John Paget located a single bird at the Gainesville Airport from 13-20 Nov.
- COMMON NIGHTHAWK - The migration over Atlanta was outstanding. Five hundred were seen at the Atlanta Stadium on 26 Aug. (Richard Yow). On 2 Sept., Joel Hitt saw 525 near Stone Mountain. On 12 Sept. Peggy and Terry Moore counted 280 over Roswell and Patrick Brisse counted 1100+ just above his house in Stone Mountain and estimated the total bird migration much higher in the sky at over 5000 birds. Finally, three late birds were seen in Athens on 16 Oct. by Paul Sykes.

- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD - Terry Johnson mentioned an immature male at the RCWMA feeder near Forsyth on 19 Oct. for a first local record. The bird stayed for five days. On 24 Nov. Robert Manns saw a bird coming to Buzz Trotty's feeder in north Atlanta. The bird had been seen a few days earlier. Photographs taken later that winter confirmed the identification of the bird as a Rufous rather than a hoped for Allen's. Some day one of these *Selasphorus* hummingbirds will indeed turn out to be an Allen's.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER - Terry Moore was the only one to receive reports this period. Single birds were seen near Roswell on 2-4 Sept. and again on 20 Sept. (Peggy and Terry Moore). Another was along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta on 10 Sept. (Jack Carusos) and the last one was near Commerce Lake on 17 Sept. (Jack Carusos and John Paget).
- YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER - One bird on 1 Oct. along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta was well described (Paul Raney).
- WESTERN KINGBIRD - Regular in Georgia, but rare inland, one was at the MIA on 5 Sept. as reported by Ty Ivey and others. Near the coast, Anselm Atkins saw one on 24 Nov. at Fort Pulaski near Tybee Island.
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - The nesting pair reported previously from the Cartersville area evidently fledged one young and was last seen in early Sept. (*vide* John Swiderski).
- NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW - A very late bird was carefully studied at Pendergrass on 22 Oct. by Jack Carusos and John Paget.
- CLIFF SWALLOW - A few individuals were noted later than usual. Anne Waters mentioned four birds at the Augusta Airport on 20 Sept. and two additional birds near the Augusta levee on 24 Sept. In the Atlanta area, a few were seen during the AAS migration walks at the ELHLAF on 25 Sept. and 2 Oct. (many observers).
- BARN SWALLOW - Anne and Vernon Waters and Clarence Belger noted a very late immature at MBBT on 19 Nov.
- FISH CROW - A few reports were still coming from the Piedmont area, but the number of birds was relatively small.
- COMMON RAVEN - Almost never reported anymore, two were seen on 9 Nov. from Blood Mountain, Union County, by Carolyn and Mike Kelly (*vide* Dot Freeman). How many pairs do we still have in the Georgia mountains?
- BEWICK'S WREN - Amazing were the two reports received from the Atlanta area. One was at the Monastery in Conyers on 28 Oct. (Father Francis Michael) and the other in Marietta on 30 Oct. (Nancy Iha). Previously, only a couple reports existed from Atlanta in the last 15 years.
- VEERY - Anne Waters commented how hard the species is to find in the Augusta area anymore. Any comments regarding this species from other parts of the state would be appreciated!
- GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - The Atlanta birders were the only ones to find the species. Individuals were noted in Forsyth County on 4 Sept. (John Paget), near Conyers on 8 and 22 Sept. (Father Francis Michael) and near Roswell on 29 Sept. (Peggy and Terry Moore). Along the coast, one was banded on 5 Oct. on Jekyll Island (*vide* Terry Moore).
- WATER PIPIT - Eighteen birds at MBBT on 30 Sept. were rather early for the area according to Anne Waters. The early arrival date for the state is 28 Sept.
- WARBLING VIREO - This rare migrant was seen by John Paget on 24 Sept. at Commerce Lake.
- PHILADELPHIA VIREO - Terry Moore reported receiving only two sightings from the Atlanta area, a much lower number than usual.
- BREWSTER'S WARBLER - This hybrid was sighted by Father Francis Michael at the Conyers Monastery on 13 Sept. for what now seems to be an annual record in the Atlanta area.
- LAWRENCE'S WARBLER - More unusual than the Brewster's, this hybrid was located by Anne and Vernon Waters along the Augusta levee on 1 Oct.
- NASHVILLE WARBLER - Bruce Dralle and Dale Hardee spotted one at Pendergrass on 16 Oct.
- CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER - A good count for the Atlanta area was the 100+ along the Chattahoochee River during the 3 Sept. AAS migration walk.
- YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER - A very early bird was noted at Callaway Gardens on 12 Sept. by Lyle Bundt. Early and late arrival and departure dates such as this deserve to be documented in the General Notes section of *The Oriole*.
- BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER - Relatively early for north Fulton County, a bird was found by Peggy and Terry Moore on 6 Aug. near Roswell.
- CERULEAN WARBLER - In general, the migration through the Atlanta area (where the species is most frequently reported) was well below average (*vide* Terry Moore).

WILSON'S WARBLER - Single birds were banded on Jekyll Island on 21 and 30 Sept. (*vide* Terry Moore) and an additional bird was sighted along the Chattahoochee River in north Atlanta during the 1 Oct. AAS migration walk.

DICKCISSEL - One bird was banded on Jekyll Island on 5 Oct. (*vide* Terry Moore).

SAVANNAH SPARROW - A new early fall arrival record for the species was established when John Paget and Jack Carusos found one in Forsyth County on 28 Aug. In the Atlanta area they did not appear until 11 Sept. (Joe Greenberg).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW - A few birds were banded this fall: one at Jekyll Island on 5 Oct. (*vide* Terry Moore); two at Dawsonville on 5 Oct. and another on 14 Oct. (Frank McCamey). One of the birds banded in Dawsonville on 5 Oct. was recaptured on 15 Oct. Finally, a bird was seen along the Chattahoochee River in north Fulton County on 15 Oct. by Joel Hiitt and Jack Carusos.

LAPLAND LONGSPUR - For the third year in a row, John Paget found the species in the north Piedmont area. He and Jack Carusos flushed two birds near Lake Lanier on the early date of 22 Oct. Earliest previous date for the species in the state is 10 Nov.

EVENING GROSBEAK - It will most likely not be an invasion year as only one sighting was received during the late fall. Daryl Pulis reported forty birds near Alpharetta on 24 Nov.

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