

# THE ORIOLE

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



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VOL. 55

DECEMBER 1990

NO. 4

# THE ORIOLE

(ISSN 0030-553)

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Publication Date - March 1993  
GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
Founded December 13, 1936

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## BROWN PELICAN NESTING IN GEORGIA

Carol Ruckdeschel, C. Robert Shoop and Bradford Winn

Burleigh (1958) reported that the Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) had never been found nesting in Georgia. Because suitable habitat was available, he suggested that nesting might occur with an increase in the pesticide-reduced population of that time. Pelican populations have dramatically increased since (Spendelov et al., 1988). This is the first report of Brown Pelican nesting in Georgia.

The first confirmed Brown Pelican nesting in Georgia occurred on 25 June 1988 when an estimated 200 pairs were observed raising young on a sandbar extending from the north tip of St. Catherines Island, Liberty County (latitude 31° 42' N, longitude 81° 07' W). Several individuals including H.W. Coolidge and R. Hayes made observations on the Brown Pelicans nesting there, but chose not to publicize the event.

In late June 1989, approximately 200 pairs of nesting Brown Pelicans were again observed in the same locality (BW). Nesting was asynchronous; some pelicans were brooding eggs, but most had chicks in various stages of development ranging from downy hatchlings to feathered juveniles. Other species nesting in 1989 included: approximately 30 pairs of Black Skimmers (*Rynchops niger*), 600 to 1,000 pairs of Royal Terns (*Sterna maxima*), and several pairs of Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*). The skimmers nested west of the pelicans in a tight colony while the terns were east of the pelicans and spread over a wide area down to the high water.

In 1990, Brown Pelicans were not observed nesting on the St. Catherines bar in late June (R. Hayes, pers. comm.) or early August 1990 (BW). Only 4 pairs of Black Skimmers were nesting there in June 1990.

The bar was approximately 6 ha with a slight dune ridge less than 1 m above high tide elevation. Vegetation was absent from the site in 1985, but by the fall of 1987 clumps of *Eriochloa michauxii* had taken root with Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*). By the summer of 1990, sea oats (*Uniola paniculata*) and *Croton punctatus* were established (BW).

First observed in the late summer of 1987, and in the fall of 1988 and 1989, an estimated 1000 Brown Pelicans used the easternmost tip of the St. Catherines bar as a roost site. In September 1990, about 2000 were roosting on the bar. By mid-October numbers began to decline, and by December, 300 pelicans and about 100 Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) were roosting on the bar (BW).

A second nesting site for Brown Pelicans was recorded in 1990. During an overflight on 6 June 1990 by two of us (CR and CRS), a large concentration of birds was seen on a small, unnamed island in the mouth of the Satilla



River, Camden County, Georgia (latitude 30° 58' 00" N, longitude 81° 29' 30" W). The island was visited by boat on 11 June 1990 (CR and CRS) and the following species were recorded nesting: Brown Pelican, Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*), Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*), Tricolored Heron (*E. tricolor*), and White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*). Table 1 shows estimates of the numbers of adults and nests for each species. Black-crowned Night-Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) and Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) were also present but nesting was not verified for those species. On 23 June 1990, Fish Crows (*Corvus ossifragus*) were observed depredating eggs and hatchling White Ibis and Tricolored Herons, and several Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) were seen over the island. Many carcasses of adult Snowy Egrets and Great Egrets, and a few nestling pelicans were also observed.

Table 1. Species at the Satilla River heronry, June 1990. Nesting was not verified (n.v.) for Black-crowned Night-Heron and Glossy Ibis.

Species	Estimated Adults Present	Estimated Number of Active Nests
Brown Pelican	1,000	300-500
Great Egret	200	100
Snowy Egret	100	50
Tricolored Heron	500	250
Black-crowned Night-Heron	20-30	n.v.
White Ibis	1,000-1,500	500
Glossy Ibis	3	n.v.

The island in the Satilla has been known for its nesting bird colonies for at least 20 years. In a listing of locations and descriptions of wading bird heronries on the Georgia coast, Johnson et al. (1974) included the "Satilla River Rookery," visited in 1970. The island was described by Johnson et al. (1974) as a treeless marsh island, three-fifths submerged by spring or storm tides, yet having the largest concentration of wading birds on the Georgia coast. No description of the island vegetation was provided. A coastal heronry survey was made by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in 1975 (Odom, 1976), and the Satilla River heronry was again identified as the largest heronry on the Georgia coast. The island was described in that report as treeless, covered primarily with cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*). All nesting was in the cordgrass. Table 2 presents a comparison of species reported from the island by that survey and our 1990 visits.

The flora of the island was apparently more varied by the summer of 1981 (S. and K. Eckert, pers. comm.). By 1990 the vegetation was arranged in irregularly-shaped concentric rings based on elevation. Cordgrass covered only the periphery of the island although in some areas it was extensive. Large patches of needlerush were interspersed in the upper border of the cordgrass. In most areas there was a narrow band of glasswort (*Salicornia*

Table 2. Estimated numbers of adult birds of nesting species at the Satilla River heronry. Species reported by Eckert and Eckert, who did not estimate numbers, are indicated by "X".

Species	Year			
	1970 <sup>1</sup>	1975 <sup>2</sup>	1981 <sup>3</sup>	1990 <sup>4</sup>
Brown Pelican	0	0	0	1,000
Great Egret	200	2,400	X	200
Snowy Egret	175	400	X	100
Little Blue Heron	30	0	X	0
Tricolored Heron	150	1,500	X	500
Black-crowned Night-Heron	5	5	X	25
White Ibis	3,600	3,000	X	1,000
Glossy Ibis	16	40	0	3

<sup>1</sup> Johnson, et al. (1974)

<sup>2</sup> Odom (1976)

<sup>3</sup> Eckert & Eckert (Pers. Comm.)

<sup>4</sup> Ruckdeschel, Shoop & Winn (this paper)

sp.) and saltwort (*Batis maritima*) between the surrounding needlerush-cordgrass and a higher, wider band of sea ox-eye (*Borrchia frutescens*). Many Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, Tricolored Herons, and most of the White Ibis nested in the sea ox-eye. As a group, the White Ibis were the most segregated from the Brown Pelicans, and concentrated their activity on the east side of the heronry. White Ibis were apparently segregated in 1981 also, but nested in glasswort (S. and K. Eckert, pers. comm.). The area of highest elevation on the island supported a stand of marsh-elder (*Iva frutescens*), a bushy branched shrub, and was the habitat preempted by the nesting Brown Pelicans. The Brown Pelican nests were constructed on the ground and nesting was asynchronous. Some adults were brooding eggs on 11 June 1990, while others had near full-sized young, suggesting nesting may have begun as early as March and would continue at least through August.

A comparison of estimated numbers of nesting birds in the above studies (Table 2) shows considerable fluctuation in actual and relative numbers. In all observations, White Ibis were the most abundant. The marsh-elder habitat was dominated by nesting Great Egrets in 1981 (S. and K. Eckert, pers. comm.), but in 1990, although some Great Egrets were nesting among the pelicans, most were in the sea ox-eye vegetation. When we visited the heronry, many Tricolored Heron and White Ibis nests were placed in seemingly marginal or poor habitat, vulnerable to spring tides. Some nests had water underneath them during our visit. The occupation of the highest ground by the Brown Pelicans apparently forced the other species into less desirable nesting areas.

In October 1990, the island was thoroughly examined for both plants and animals. The only mammal seen was an adult rice rat (*Oryzomys palustris*). No tracks or signs of other mammals were found. Many of the abandoned Brown Pelican nests were occupied by active colonies of imported fire ants (*Solenopsis invictus*). Fire ants have been reported to kill hatchling Brown Pelicans on islands in Texas (Conniff, 1990), but their relationship with the Satilla island group is unknown. Judging by the strong odor and fresh fecal



material, many birds were continuing to use the site as a roost.

We have no data on the species present in the Satilla River heronry between 1981 and 1989, although vegetation was similar in 1981 and 1990, and the island was relatively stable compared to the St. Catherines site. Two of us (CR and CRS) frequently observed flocks of White Ibis flying toward the Satilla heronry from Cumberland Island at dusk throughout the summers of 1981 to 1989. We assume that the Satilla heronry was active during those years, and that pelicans could have nested there.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Milton N. Hopkins, Jr. provided helpful background material for this paper, and accompanied CR and CRS on a visit to the Satilla site. L. Letson, C. Fries, and D. Makemson provided transportation to the Satilla site for which we are grateful. We appreciate the excellent suggestions of an anonymous reviewer.

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Cumberland Island Museum, P.O. Box 796, St. Marys, GA 31558; Department of Zoology, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881; and Wildlife Survival Center, St. Catherines Island, Rt. 1, Box 207Z, Midway, GA 31320.

#### GENERAL NOTES

**RED PHALAROPE IN LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA** - On 22 December 1990, during the Dublin Christmas Bird Count, a Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicaria*) was discovered feeding at a small pond locally known as Avocet Pond in eastern Laurens County. This is the first record of the species for Laurens County.

Avocet Pond is the location mentioned in several articles published in *The Oriole* by Thomas K. Patterson (e.g. Patterson 1978). It is the premier shorebird location in the area during migration. As it is within the area covered by the annual Christmas Bird Count, the party covering the eastern portion of Laurens County always makes a stop at the pond in pursuit more of waterfowl than of shorebirds.

The eastern party, comprised of Carol Lambert, Jeff McLeod, Donny Screws, Jeff Sewell and the author, was approaching the pond from the northwest while searching for Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) around the livestock feedlot in the pasture which surrounds the pond. Finding no Brewer's Blackbirds in this area, I turned my attention to the pond. I could see with my naked eye and with my Minolta 7X42 binoculars that there were a number of ducks feeding, including several Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Gadwalls (*A. strepera*), Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*), and Hooded Mergansers (*Lophodytes cucullatus*). Along the shore of the pond I could see several Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), as well as Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca* and *flavipes* respectively). I then scanned with my Mead Zoom (15X - 60X) telescope and noticed a bird swimming about 5 m from the shore, which I immediately suspected to be a phalarope. This suspicion was based on my observation that the bird was a very light colored shorebird with black or dark gray markings on the head, relatively small (Killdeer size or smaller) and swimming, spinning and dipping in characteristic phalarope fashion. This observation was made from approximately 150 m at 20-25X. We decided to attempt to approach the bird immediately for a closer look.

We slowly approached the bird, making observations along the way, and stopped on a rise in the pasture overlooking the bird from the northwest. The time was approximately 1500 and the sun, when visible, was in the southwest. It was partially cloudy with brief periods of bright sun. The temperature was 70 degrees F. We set up for our prolonged observation of the bird at a distance of approximately 40 m.

As we watched the bird feeding and spinning in tight circles and dipping its head, we took note of the field marks, and I made several sketches prior to consulting our field guides. The forehead, lores, and crown were white. The nape and hindneck were marked with a dark gray hour-glass which extended from the back of the crown, tapered to very narrow, and then widened and faded into the clean pale gray of the mantle. The throat and front and sides of the neck were white. The bill appeared totally black, no longer than the head, and was not needle-like. There was a black or dark gray patch ("phalarope mark") which extended from the eye back across the side of the head (auricular), but ended before the dark nape. The space between the back of the eye patch and the nape marking was white like the throat, lores, cap and sides of



neck. The back of the bird was pale gray, much lighter than the nape marking and the primaries visible while the bird was on the water. The breast and sides of the belly were white, though there was a faint gray wash in front of and extending slightly below the shoulder.

We observed the bird in brief flights on two occasions, noting a plain gray mantle and back and darker gray wings with a prominent white wing stripe. The white wing stripe, lack of white rump and tail, and short relatively blunt bill distinguished the bird from the Wilson's Phalarope (*P. tricolor*). The lack of markings on the back and the short relatively blunt bill distinguished the bird from the Red-necked Phalarope (*P. lobatus*). We were unable to observe the feet and legs of the bird, as it was either flying, at which time we concentrated on the back and wings, or swimming. On both flights the bird took off from and landed on the surface of the water, and was never observed wading.

In identifying the bird and making the distinctions noted above, we consulted several field guides such as Robbins et al. (1966), National Geographic Society (1978), and Marchant et al. (1986). Of these, the drawing of the Red ("Grey") Phalarope on page 163 of Marchant et al. (1986) designated "158c" is the closest rendering to the bird we encountered, though the black on the back of the crown of the bird in the book extends higher up the crown than on the bird we observed.

After making these observations, we decided to approach the bird as close as possible in order to obtain a recording of its vocalization. Having determined that we were observing a Red Phalarope, we were not concerned that we might cause the bird to leave the area. A recording was made by Jeff Sewell using a Sony Cassett-Corder TCM-818 with a parabolic microphone. The vocalization, quite audible on the tape, can be described as a single high-pitched "pit". Marchant et al. (1986) describes the call note of the Red-necked as similar to that of the Red, but lower pitched. The bird did not leave the area at this time, but only flushed out into the middle of the pond. The closest approach was to approximately 15 m.

Among the other shorebirds seen along the edge of the pond was a single Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*), which is quite noteworthy as the first winter record for Laurens County, the late date for this species in the fall being 24 September 1989. There were also three Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*), two Least Sandpipers (*C. minutilla*), and several Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*). This was an exceptional day for shorebirds at "Avocet Pond" in late December.

Paul W. Sykes, Thomas K. Patterson, Allen Rhodes and I returned the following morning at first daylight to photograph the bird. The night had been clear with a steady southwesterly wind ahead of a strong cold front. The Red Phalarope was no longer to be found at "Avocet Pond" or any other nearby pond. Nor was the Semipalmated Plover still present. The Lesser Yellowlegs had increased their number to eleven, and there were a total of five Least Sandpipers. The three Dunlin also remained. The Red Phalarope and Semipalmated Plover had apparently departed the area during the clear windy night.

A cold front passed through the area on 23 December 1990 at 1930, after having stalled a day over Alabama. Temperatures dropped from 70+ degrees

F to below freezing in the early morning hours of 24 December. My father, Thomas K. Patterson, informed me he had visited the pond on 21 December and had not noted the Red Phalarope. This would indicate it was a one day visit, perhaps weather related.

This appears to be the sixth inland record of the Red Phalarope in Georgia and the first interior winter record for the state. Imhof (1976) mentioned two interior winter records in Alabama on 5-11 January 1972 (Lake Purdy) and January 1924 (Pickett Springs, Montgomery County). Previous interior records of the Red Phalarope in Georgia include a debilitated bird captured at Thomaston on 29 October 1970 (Haney et al. 1986), and individual birds reported at Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge on 5 November 1978 (Haney et al. 1986), in Atlanta on 18 September 1981 (Haney et al. 1986), in Macon on 25 October 1987 (Ivey 1988), and again in Atlanta on 3 March 1990 (Moore 1990). It was unclear from the literature whether the Eufaula record was from Georgia or Alabama.

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LATE NIGHTHAWK IN DECATUR, GEORGIA - At dusk on 10 December 1990 Mark LaPointe and I noted a nighthawk feeding high above the mature hardwood forest along Peavine Creek south of Westchester School near my house in Decatur, DeKalb County, Georgia. Unfortunately, I did not have binoculars with me but the bird was viewed at distances as close as 100 m. The bird was silent, but its size, the position of the white wing patch, and the complete lack of buff markings suggested that it was most likely a Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*). The weather was clear and warm.

Of interest, on 8 November 1985, I had seen a late nighthawk at the



same location. The thin strip of mature woodland along Peavine Creek is contiguous with the Fernbank Forest, one of the largest fragments of mature forest remaining in the Georgia Piedmont. It is possible that insects in this habitat type are active on warm evenings in early winter and may offer a regular food source for late nighthawks. Both globally and within Georgia, 1990 continued the recent trend of warming temperatures (Kerr, R.A., Global temperature hits record again. *Science* 251:274, 1991.). Thus, Georgia nighthawk sightings in November and December may become more frequent.

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## FROM THE FIELD

June - July 1990

Weather did not play a big part in our summer bird observations as it was quite seasonable during the period. Although this is often a period of seemingly quiet bird activity, a number of good observations were made. Summering Horned Grebes, large numbers of American White Pelicans, first state nesting of Double-crested Cormorants, large numbers of Black-necked Stilts, plus summer records of Purple Finch, Red Crossbill and Pine Siskin are but a few of the interesting reports from this summer.

Abbreviations used include: CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area north of Atlanta; ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton County; MBBT - Merry Brothers Brick and Tile Company at Augusta; MIA - Macon Industrial Area; SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park in Douglas County.

## SPECIES ACCOUNTS

**HORNED GREBE** - Two very late birds, in breeding plumage, were seen in Forsyth County at Lake Lanier on 11 June by John Paget.

**AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** - An amazing assemblage of birds appeared at Andrews Island near Brunswick during the period. They were first seen on 26 June with several birds on that date but had built up to 66 on 8 July (Mike Chapman, Don and Doris Cohrs) and 69 on 28 July (Paul Raney et al.)

**DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT** - Five birds were seen flying over the Mountain City vicinity on 2 June by Paul Raney and Dick Williams. Several birds were seen at the ELHLAF during the period and several more were seen on a new reservoir (now called Blalock Lake) that is part of the ELHLAF. This reservoir is in both Clayton and Henry counties. About 7 or so birds were seen there during the period and in early June it appeared that one pair was constructing a nest. Photos were taken of the nest and an adult sitting, apparently incubating, on the nest. In late June young could be seen but on 7 July the nest and its supporting limb were gone. New nest construction started but was soon abandoned. This appears to be the first documented nesting record of the species in Georgia (see Brisse *Oriole* 55:42-43).

**ANHINGA** - Patrick Brisse saw a female plumaged bird at Blalock Lake on 21 July. This is a very rare sighting for the Atlanta area with only two previous records.

**GREAT WHITE HERON** - The bird reported from the Conyers Monastery during May was last seen there on 9 June (Francis Michael). This bird appeared to be an adult according to the photo which I saw. A more normally plumaged immature was at Blalock Lake on 30 June (Patrick Brisse) and was seen through the end of the period by a number of observers.

**"WHITE" HERONS** - In the Atlanta area, Great Egrets and Little Blue Herons seemed to be in about normal numbers or perhaps a little lower than normal (fide Terry Moore).

**REDDISH EGRET** - Two birds of undescribed age were reported from Sapelo Island in late July by Tracie Jones and Elizabeth McGee.

**CATTLE EGRET** - Two birds near Cartersville on 2 June by John and Kate Swiderski were somewhat unusual as most of the birds seen in the Atlanta area are earlier migrants than this.

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** - Three birds were seen flying over the north part of downtown Atlanta the morning of 18 June by Terry Moore. One bird was seen at the MIA on 21 July by Ty Ivey et al.

**WHITE IBIS** - Inland sightings were on 9 June at Lake Blackshear by Sherri Tippens, near Vidalia on 10 June by Bruce Dralle and Dale Hardee, two immatures at Covington on 14 July by Paul Raney, four immatures near Lake Oconee on 26 July by Joe Greenberg et al. and at Lawrenceville on 30 July by Joel Volpi.



- ROSEATE SPOONBILL - Seven was an excellent count at Andrews Island on 7 June by Don and Doris Cohrs.
- WOOD STORK - There were 259 nests of the species in the Birdsville Colony near Millen this year (Anne Waters). A bird at the Ocmulgee National Monument near Macon on 29 July was quite unusual (Jerry and Marie Amerson).
- MUTE SWAN - The two young birds which have spent a lot of time around Lake Lanier were last seen by John Paget on 26 July. Since this species is so widely kept in captivity, these birds have to be assumed to be escapees.
- AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - One bird remained at the ELHLAF until at least 2 June (Patrick Brisse).
- NORTHERN PINTAIL - A female remained at the ELHLAF at least until 7 July (Peggy and Terry Moore) and 8 July (Patrick Brisse).
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL - An early bird was at the ELHLAF on 29 July (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Chuck Hunter).
- RING-NECKED DUCK - A male and female remained at the ELHLAF until 7 July when the management staff started to draw down the lake where the ducks were summering (Patrick Brisse, Bruce Dralle, Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert). On 8 July only the male was seen (Patrick Brisse).
- LESSER SCAUP - A male and female were seen at Andrews Island on 8 July by Mike Chapman and Don and Doris Cohrs.
- OSPREY - Two nests were reported during the period from the Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area by Terry Johnson.
- AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - The species was reported from the Eastman area on 12 July (Donny Screws) and along the Savannah River opposite the Silver Bluff Sanctuary on 21 July by Dan Connelly (fide Anne Waters).
- MISSISSIPPI KITE - A bird was reported from the Hamburg State Park on 7 July by Joe Greenberg. This is at the northern limit of their normal range in Georgia.
- BALD EAGLE - Two adults and one immature were seen in Greene County near Lake Oconee on 10 June by David Glass. An adult was seen at Lake Tobesofkee in early July by John Rheeling (fide Ken Clark). Another adult plumaged bird was seen in the Lake Oconee area on 26 July by Joe Greenberg et al.
- COOPER'S HAWK - A bird near Lincolnton on 21 June was described as late for a non-breeder by Anne Waters although this species appears to be an uncommon to rare breeder throughout the state.
- AMERICAN KESTREL - This species was reported as nesting in the Athens vicinity during the period by Paul Sykes.
- KING RAIL - This species is rarely recorded anymore during the summer so a bird at Pendergrass on 29 July was of interest (John Paget).
- COMMON MOORHEN - The first confirmed nesting for the Augusta area occurred on 23 June when two pairs with young were found at MBBT by Anne Waters. There were four young with one of the pairs and five young with the other.
- AMERICAN COOT - One bird remained at SCSP until at least 17 June (Paul Raney). Another bird was seen all summer at MBBT but no evidence of nesting was found (Anne Waters).
- BLACK-NECKED STILT - Patrick Brisse and Terry Miller reported at least 200 from the Andrews Island spoil area on 29 July.
- WHIMBREL - Patrick Brisse and Terry Miller saw about a dozen near Brunswick on 28 July which indicates this species is a fairly early fall migrant.
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS - At the ELHLAF single birds were seen on 21 and 28 July (Patrick Brisse). At Augusta, a single bird was seen on 28 July by George Reeves (fide Lee Gibbs).
- LESSER YELLOWLEGS - A bird seen at Covington on 30 June was probably already south-bound (Paul Raney). More normal fall arrivals at the ELHLAF were four birds on 21 July and two on 28 July (Patrick Brisse).
- SOLITARY SANDPIPER - The earliest fall arrival was the single bird at the ELHLAF on 7 July by Patrick Brisse. Somewhat later birds were seen at the MIA on 21 July by Ty Ivey et al. and at the Ocmulgee National Monument on 29 July by Jerry and Marie Amerson.
- WESTERN SANDPIPER - The nine birds seen at the ELHLAF on 21 July was a very high count for the Atlanta area (Patrick Brisse). At Augusta, the species was found by George Reeves on 28 July (fide Lee Gibbs).

- LEAST SANDPIPER - Nine birds were already at the ELHLAF on 14 July (Patrick Brisse). At the MIA, the first was first reported on 21 July by Ty Ivey et al.
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER - The first birds reported for the fall were found on 21 July at both the MIA (Ty Ivey et al.) and at the ELHLAF (Patrick Brisse).
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - Always a good find in the Atlanta area, one bird was seen at the ELHLAF on 14 July by Jerry Brunner et al. According to Patrick Brisse it was a *hendersoni* subspecies in breeding plumage. At Covington, three more birds were seen on 10 July by Paul Raney. These birds were also felt to be *hendersoni*.
- COMMON SNIPES - One bird seen at the ELHLAF by Patrick Brisse on 2 June was almost record late for the state (current record is 3 June).
- RED-NECKED PHALAROPE - One bird was seen at Lake Oconee on the rather late date of 1 June by Dale Davis.
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - This species can now be found with regularity on the Georgia coast during the summer. On 28 July Patrick Brisse and Terry Miller saw two adults and one immature at St. Simons's Island East Beach.
- GULL-BILLED TERN - One bird was seen at Andrews Island on 29 July by Patrick Brisse, Terry Miller, Paul Raney et al. for a now rare sighting. This species may have attempted to nest in the area this summer.
- CASPIAN TERN - Two birds at the ELHLAF on 2 June (Jerry Brunner) was a very rare sighting for the Atlanta area. Unfortunately they were there for only a few minutes and were missed by all other observers. This is an example of having to be at the right place at the right time.
- BLACK TERN - The only inland reports were of 5-6 at Lake Lanier (Forsyth County) on 15 July by John Paget and four birds at Lake Oconee on 20 July (David Belcher fide Terry Johnson). On the coast Patrick Brisse and Terry Miller had three single birds at three separate locations near Brunswick on 29 July.
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - This rarely reported species was found near Baxter on 9 June by Joe Greenberg.
- RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - Numbers of this species appeared to be down from previous years. This was especially true during the late July timeframe when we expect numbers of hummingbirds to be moving through the state.
- RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER - A nest on private land was found in Emanuel County on 9 June by Jerry and Marie Amerson. Most nesting colonies of this endangered species are found on public lands where the pines have been allowed to grow to the necessary size.
- WILLOW FLYCATCHER - At its usual nesting area around Mountain City and Dillard, six birds were found on 2-3 June by Paul Raney and Dick Williams. In Greene County Paul Sykes and Peter Yaukey found one pair plus another male on 9 June. In Dawson County, the species was still singing on territory at Big Bottoms on 24 July (John Paget).
- GRAY KINGBIRD - One bird was seen at the Jekyll Island Convention Center on or about 28 July by Robert Manns.
- HORNED LARK - A bird seen and heard at Sandersville, Washington County, on 9 June was a surprise to Bruce Dralle and Ann Wyand. Cartersville continues to be the most reliable place in the Atlanta area to find this very local species (John and Kate Swiderski).
- TREE SWALLOW - An early migrant was at the ELHLAF on 15 July (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Chuck Hunter).
- BANK SWALLOW - The first migrant was a bird at Pendergrass on 28 July by John Paget.
- CLIFF SWALLOW - This species appears to be on the increase as the Lake Oconee colony had at least 20 birds on 10 June (David Glass) and a few were seen in the Gainesville area on 24 June by Bruce Dralle, Adrienne Myles and John Paget (nesting reported by John).
- CEDAR WAXWING - This species is rarely encountered during the summer in the Atlanta area so sightings near Dacula in Gwinnett County on 7 July (Joel Hitt) and in Forsyth County on 22 July (John Paget and Jack Carusos) were of great interest.
- SOLITARY VIREO - A pair raised three young in the yard of Joel Hitt in north Gwinnett County during the period. This is quite a rare nester in the Atlanta area with only four or five records.
- BLUE-WINGED WARBLER - A bird found in Haralson County west of Atlanta must have been right at the edge of its range. The bird was found on 17 June by Paul Raney.
- PALM WARBLER - An amazingly early bird was at Andrews Island on 29 July (Don and Doris Cohrs).



- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - A nesting pair was found at Hamburg State Park in north Washington County on 27 June by Nancy Iha. This species is rarely documented as nesting away from the mountains. Another bird was found at the Ocmulgee National Monument on 8 July by Jerry and Marie Amerson.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER - A bird at the Conyers Monastery on 27 June may have been a somewhat early migrant from its nesting grounds just to the north of Atlanta (Francis Michael).
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER - Robert Crawford saw and heard the species in Thomas County on 16-24 June for the first record for the county. Anne Waters found one bird near Hiltonia, Screven County, on 18 June and reported that a pair nested at the MBBT.
- AMERICAN REDSTART - A female was seen off and on during June and July by Don and Doris Cohrs at Darien. Might there be a small nesting population along the coast?
- PAINTED BUNTING - Two singing males were found near Macon during the period and another male was found about a mile away (Ty Ivey et al.).
- DICKCISSEL - Dan and Pam Gynn found a male and female near Vienna on 3 June. In Monroe County Terry Johnson found two males and a female on 9 June and one male still there on 1 July. A male and female were seen on 26 July by Joe Greenberg et al. near Rock Eagle where a pair was seen in late spring.
- BACHMAN'S SPARROW - This species was found in Emanuel County on 9 June by Jerry and Marie Amerson. The birds found previously in Henry County were still singing on 15 July (Bruce Dralle and Adrienne Myles).
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - During June and July Terry Johnson reported a good number of this species from pastures and fields in Monroe County.
- PURPLE FINCH - Very unusual was a male seen near Mountain City on the very late date of 2 June by Paul Nancy and Dick Williams.
- HOUSE FINCH - A bird at Youman's Pond near Midway on 28 July by Patrick Brisse and Terry Miller was certainly unexpected as the species has rarely, if ever, been reported from the immediate coastal area before. This species was also a very common visitor during summer at the Rum Creek feeders (Terry Johnson).
- RED CROSSBILL - A male and a younger bird were seen at the Cooper Creek Recreation Area on 11 July by Joe Greenberg and Joel Volpi. Harriett DiGioia recorded the species during the period at the Chattahoochee National Forest.
- PINE SISKIN - One bird remained to the late date of 6 June at Roswell (Peggy and Terry Moore). This is evidently the first June record for the state. See *Oriole* 55:51 for more details.

Terry Moore, 13000 Bucksport Court, Roswell, GA 30075.

#### CORRECTION

In Table 1 of "1989 Georgia Christmas Bird Counts" (*Oriole* 55:32), the number for Killdeer and Piping Plovers on the Okefenokee count were reversed. The correct count should be 366 Killdeer and no Piping Plovers. The Editor thanks Bill Blakeslee for pointing out this error.

#### EDITOR'S COMMENT

I want to thank Rose Payne for her painstaking work in preparing the Author and Species indexes to Volumes 51-55 of *The Oriole* which appear in this issue. Although very tedious work, this is a very necessary part of *The Oriole*. Without volunteers to do work such as this, *The Oriole* could never be published.

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