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## SECOND ROSS' GOOSE RECORD FOR GEORGIA

John W. Parrish

Ross' Goose (*Chen rossii*) nests in the Arctic and winters primarily in the central valleys of California (Brown et al. 1979, Robbins et al. 1983). It is also listed as a casual winter visitor to much of the west and a very rare winter visitor to the mid-Atlantic states, where it is reportedly always seen with Snow Geese (*C. caerulescens*) (National Geographic Society 1987). Ross' Goose was first reported in Georgia at the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, along the Georgia-Alabama border, from mid-February (Manns 1989, Ogren 1989) through early April, 1989 (Brise 1989).

I report here a second sighting of Ross' Goose in Georgia. The bird was first observed on a small farm pond 1.6 km south (32° 18' N, 81° 58' W) of Excelsior, Candler County, Georgia on 1 February 1994 (Figure 1). It was seen in the company of domestic and wild Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) and according to the landowner, had arrived in early January with a flock of wild Canada Geese. The bird remained on the farm pond and an adjacent house pond and according to the landowner departed in mid-April.

The Ross' Goose was viewed many days in February and through 31 March. Its identity was confirmed by others including Bill Blakeslee, Bill Lovejoy, Bruce Dralle, Thomas Patterson and Anne Waters. It appeared calm and was never attacked by the Canada Geese as was observed by Ogren (1989). The Ross' Goose appeared to have dull gray markings on the head and back, suggesting it was an immature bird (National Geographic Society 1987). It did not appear to be a hybrid Ross' Goose X Snow Goose because of the very small size relative to the Canada Geese it was with. Wintering Snow Geese were observed in the area by Bill Lovejoy and me, and all were significantly larger than the Ross' Goose. Also, the beak of the Ross' Goose was short and stubby, with gray coloration at the base as has been previously described (Peterson 1980, National Geographic Society 1987). In addition, the Ross' Goose showed no evidence of black "lips" on the beak, as is typical of the Snow Goose (Peterson 1980).

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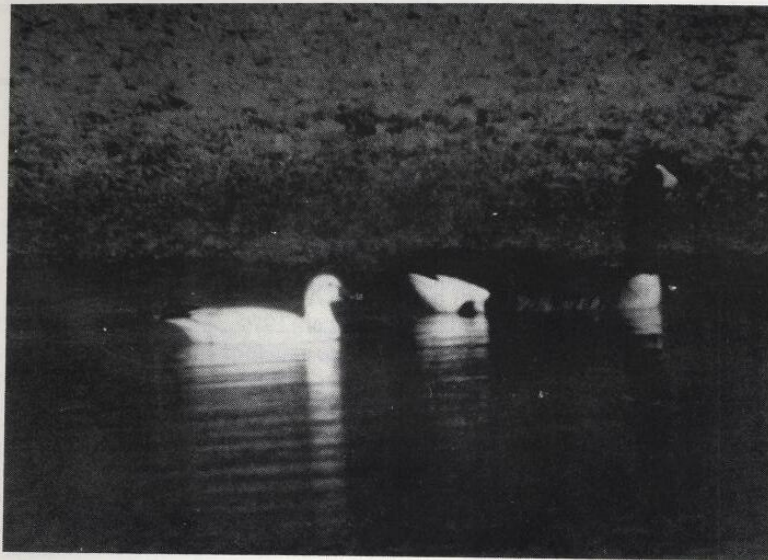


Figure 1. Ross' Goose and Canada Goose near Excelsior, GA 21 Feb. 1994. Photo by John Parrish.

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#### IN MEMORIAM: GEORGE A. DORSEY

George A. Dorsey died on 10 April 1991, in Rome, Georgia after a short illness. He was a charter member of the Georgia Ornithological Society and a co-founder of the Atlanta Bird Club (now Atlanta Audubon Society). He was born in Gainesville, Georgia on 23 August 1907, the oldest of eight children. His family moved several times in the northeastern part of the state and in 1916 to Atlanta where it remained. In 1921 he entered Tech High School but left in 1923 and took a job with a credit service company as a trade reporter. For the next twenty years he held a variety of jobs and at times was unemployed, as in much of this time the country was suffering through the Great Depression, and jobs were scarce. One entry in his records states "I spent much time in job hunting".

In 1929 he spent his first summer at Bert Adams Boy Scout Camp as a nature counselor. The camp at that time was at Vinings just north of Atlanta, rural then but now well within the metropolitan area. He continued work at the camp through 1943, mostly as a nature counselor but also in other capacities. He was Camp Superintendent from February 1940 to October 1942 and during that time lived at the camp.

Some other interesting jobs he had were: 1929 - Micro-technician in the Micro-anatomy Department, Emory University Medical School; 1934 - Social service work, Wesley Community House; 1937 - Museum and educational work, Georgia Department of Game and Fish; 1938 - Weekly nature study lectures and lessons at Lovett School. In late 1942 and early 1943 he attended the U.S. Army Air Force Radio Operator and Mechanical Training School in Chicago but never served in the army as he received a medical discharge.

In the fall of 1943 he began teaching at the Darlington School in Rome, Georgia, living in an apartment on the campus where he remained until shortly before his death. He taught there until 1972 when he reached the age of sixty-five. He then became semi-retired serving as Librarian at the Darlington Middle School. During this time he also taught an occasional class and was active in summer day camps.

In the summer of 1946 he attended the University of Georgia Evening School in Atlanta (now Georgia State University) and in the summer of 1947 entered Emory University and began a course of study for an AB degree. He continued there each summer until 1955 when he received his degree. He also attended the University of North Carolina in the summers of 1957, 1959, and 1961 and received an MEd degree. Quite an educational accomplishment for a high school dropout.

From November 1938 to May 1941 he wrote a weekly column "Afield with a Naturalist" for the *Atlanta Constitution*. This was a short essay on a nature subject, usually birds, which he illustrated with a pen and ink drawing.



George A. Dorsey  
1907-1991

In 1926 George saw a note in the Atlanta Library copy of Frank M. Chapman's *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America* asking that "Anyone interested in birds call C.R.W. Hemlock 2134". George called, and he and Carter Whittaker, who had written the note, began making a list of prospective members for a bird club. Their efforts were successful, and thus was formed the Atlanta Bird Club. It was through the interest of some members of the Atlanta Bird Club that the Georgia Ornithological

Society was founded in December of 1936. There are probably few GOS members who know that *The Oriole* was first published a year earlier as a publication sponsored by the Atlanta Bird Club. In 1937 it became the official organ of the GOS.

One of his temporary jobs in the late 1930's was doing advertising photography for a waterproofing company. In 1962 he opened a darkroom and taught a course in photography at Darlington which he did again in 1978-79. Later he became an active photographer, and it was a common sight at GOS meetings to see him in the field loaded with two cameras, a tripod, and camera bag as well as binoculars. The accompanying photograph shows only part of the equipment he often carried in the field. If you look closely you can see the two watches attached to his belt which, at the proper season, he was never without. One was set to standard and the other to daylight savings time.

George was a meticulous note and record keeper. He kept a complete family record including his grandparents, parents, and brothers and sisters, their birth dates, deaths, and marriages. He recorded every job he held from the time he left high school no matter how minor (paper route) or short (one week) and in many cases how much he was paid (typically \$15.00/wk). After high school he recorded every course he took with the grade he made, and every course he had taught in his teaching career.

Honors that George received include: Silver Beaver, Boy Scouts of America, 1942; Star Teacher, Darlington School and Georgia Chamber of Commerce, 1960 and 1961; Darlington School Yearbook, *The Jabberwock*, dedicated to him, 1964; The Earle R. Greene Memorial Award, Georgia Ornithological Society, 1983.

My earliest memories of George from my boyhood are of his skill at whistled imitations of bird calls and songs, and it was this for which he was best known. He was often called on at meetings and other gatherings for a display of this talent. As he grew older and his hearing declined, he would no longer do this despite frequent requests. However, he had not lost this ability, for at the 1983 spring GOS meeting in Dalton, he and I were together, and the song of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet became a subject of discussion. To illustrate a point, he began whistling the bird's song. I had not heard him give an imitation of a bird song in many years, and I never heard one again.

George was a faithful member and supporter of GOS and gave a number of promising new birders life memberships in GOS to encourage their continued interest in bird study. He attended most meetings including that of the fall of 1990, the last before his death.

Richard A. Parks, 2636 Warwick Circle, Atlanta, GA 30345.

# VERIFIED HISTORICAL BREEDING RECORD OF THE KILLDEER ON THE GEORGIA COAST

Douglas B. McNair

S.W. Wilson (see Bailey 1883) stated he collected an egg set of the Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) at St. Simons Island, Georgia, on 1 April. One extant egg (USNM B00615) collected by Wilson and identified as that of a Killdeer is from 1858; this egg probably belongs to the set collected by Wilson on 1 April though this is uncertain. The egg measures 36 mm x 26 mm, is heavily marked and spotted, especially at the larger end, and the small end is pointed (pyriform), indicating it is the egg of a Killdeer (B.B. Farmer, *in litt.*). The completed egg-laying date of 1 April is typical for first clutches of the Killdeer (e.g., see Burleigh 1958), and is also much earlier than the earliest date of 16 April for the Wilson's Plover (*C. wilsonia*) (Burleigh 1958). Burleigh's (1958) data relied primarily on Rossignol's very large data set collected between 1905 and 1935.

S.W. Wilson's verified breeding record of the Killdeer at St. Simons Island was the first for coastal Georgia. Greene et al. (1945) knew about the report but rejected it. Burleigh (1958) cited St. Simons Island as a breeding locality, but provided no definite information. He may have been influenced by Townsend (1929) who accepted this and other early coastal breeding records in Georgia and South Carolina (see below).

S.W. Wilson's verified breeding record of the Killdeer in 1858 is especially important because the second confirmed coastal nest record in Georgia did not occur until almost 100 years later, in 1954 in the Savannah River Delta (Burleigh 1958, Tomkins 1958). Earlier, Fargo (1934) cited W.J. Hoxie who suggested that the Killdeer "formerly nested" in Chatham County, sometime prior to 1911, though no documentation was provided. Hoxie's statement was ignored by Burleigh (1958) though accepted by Townsend (1929). Hoxie's statement may also not have relied on his own observations (cf., Eyles 1941). Today, Killdeer are evidently still rare breeders on the Georgia coast (Denton et al. 1977, Haney et al. 1986), though this remains to be conclusively determined.

In South Carolina, Killdeer apparently nested on the southwest coast at Lady's Island and formerly Frogmore, Beaufort County, before 1931 though no verified evidence exists (McNair and Post, *in prep.*). Hoxie (1888; see also Hoxie (1884, 1885), Fargo 1934) stated that "Twenty years ago they [Killdeer] were a resident bird, breeding abundantly in the cotton fields. Eight or ten years ago they became only a winter visitor but were then very abundant. For the last five years they have steadily decreased in numbers and are now almost ready to be classed as a rare bird. If I see three or four in a day it is a fact to be remarked." While Hoxie committed some obvious misidentifications (e.g. see McNair in

press, McNair and Post *in press*), or occasionally misinterpreted avian behavior (*contra* Fargo 1934; Wayne 1910; Charleston Museum, unpubl.), Hoxie was generally a fairly astute observer, and the bulk of his work is reliable and on occasion, original for its time (*pers. exam.*).

The early verified breeding record from St. Simons Island, Georgia, enhances my confidence that Killdeer also formerly nested in old cotton fields on the southwest South Carolina coast during this period. The Georgia breeding record may also have occurred in a sea island cotton field, which were formerly plentiful on St. Simons Island. It is even possible that during this period Killdeer also formerly nested in Chatham County, Georgia, perhaps in the same habitat.

Market gunning may have eliminated breeding Killdeer on the Georgia and South Carolina coasts, where they were probably quite scarce anyway, during the latter half of the nineteenth century (see Cooke 1912, Forbush 1912, 1925). Alternatively, local shooting could have eliminated small breeding populations, because Killdeer provide an easy and tempting target for individuals who wanted to augment their sources of protein during the difficult post-Civil War period in the South. The apparent elimination of their breeding populations coincided with the most bitter era, the Reconstruction period. Killdeer flesh has been described as "indifferent, except in the Fall, when fat" (Simpson and Simpson 1983; also see Forbush 1912), though shorebird meat is generally considered flavorful (Cooke 1912, Forbush 1925).

Some other evidence from the southeast coastal plain exists for the decline or local extirpation of Killdeer breeding populations during the market gunning period. In southeast Virginia, Killdeer were locally common breeders in the 1890s (Bailey 1913), and were undoubtedly more numerous there than they ever were in coastal Georgia or South Carolina. However, breeding populations in southeast Virginia were rapidly decimated thereafter. Bailey (1913) states "...but of late years it [Killdeer] has become more scarce each season, until it has entirely disappeared on the James River peninsula as a breeder, and but few pair still breed on the Eastern Shore, and in Princess Anne County. Many years ago one could find 2-3 pairs nesting in every field on their farms, but nowadays they seldom even hear one the year round."

During this same period in Florida, Killdeer nested south to the central peninsula (Howell 1932), where the earliest confirmed nest records are from 1887-1895. Apparently, Killdeer were not persecuted that much for food or sport in Florida.

Consequently, I believe market gunning or local shooting extirpated small and local breeding populations of the Killdeer in coastal Georgia and South Carolina, long after European settlement. Cotton farming and other changes to the landscape had created favorable habitat for Killdeer when they finally began nesting in the region, for at least a brief period prior to about 1880. Much later, the modest breeding range expansion of

the Killdeer to south peninsula Florida in the 1950s and thereafter (Kushlan and Fisk 1972) had its analogue in coastal Georgia and South Carolina when breeding populations also noticeably increased or were first discovered at new localities (Burleigh 1958; Charleston Museum, unpubl.). In coastal Georgia and South Carolina, however, I believe these new Killdeer breeding populations probably represented a historical reinvasion, not a new expansion of their breeding range.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank B.B. Farmer (USNM), collection management specialist, Smithsonian Institution, for providing very detailed information about the collection under her care. Will Post, Curator of Ornithology, Charleston Museum, provided access to the collections under his care. I also thank R.L. Crawford for reviewing a draft of this manuscript.

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#### CORRECTION

The caption for the photograph of the Brown Pelican at Lake Lanier, Forsyth County in *The Oriole* (58:12) was incorrectly listed as 4-6 September 1993. The correct date should have been 4-6 September 1990.

## GENERAL NOTES

**NORTHERN GANNETS OBSERVED OVER ST. ANDREWS SOUND** - Since 1963, the author has made many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of observations of the air and of the surface waters of St. Andrews Sound and the contiguous waters of the Cumberland River, the Satilla River, Jekyll Sound and Jekyll River. No Northern Gannets (*Sula bassanus*) had ever been seen there by myself until the spring of 1993.

Starting in the mid weeks of March 1993, as many as six Northern Gannets at once were seen flying over and diving into St. Andrews Sound and the Cumberland River by Tim Goddard, Superintendent of Little Cumberland Island (pers. comm.). Goddard indicates that one or more Gannets were seen almost daily over a period of about a month in March and April.

During this period I saw three individual Gannets on one occasion and two on another occasion a day or so later. These birds dived from time to time from quite high in the air, striking the water with great force and disappearing beneath the surface for a few moments. One was seen to secure food during a dive and to ingest it as it sprang into the air after bobbing to the surface.

George W. Sciple, 2601 Parkwood Drive, Suite One, Brunswick, GA 31520.

**WHITE-WINGED SCOTER SEEN IN CLAYTON COUNTY** - At 1430 on 10 November 1993 I arrived at the E.L. Huie Land Application Facility holding pond complex in Clayton County, Georgia. This five pond complex located just south of Atlanta holds treated sewage water from the Clayton County waste water system before being sprayed on adjacent forested acreage. As I approached the northeast corner of the south pond I observed a group of about forty Ring-necked Ducks (*Aythya collaris*) and also a large dark duck with them. From its size, distinctive low profile and short neck, I knew this was some type of sea duck. Using my binoculars I could see that the duck was all dark, even the bill. Two white spots could be seen on the head, one forward and below the eye and the other behind and below the eye. Also very prominent were the white patches on the bird's secondaries. These field marks helped confirm the identification of the bird as a White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*).

Many observers were able to visit the facility to observe the bird for the next few days. The last report came on 14 November 1993 by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert. The accompanying photograph taken by Giff Beaton clearly shows the prominent field marks of this bird.



White-winged Scoter seen in Clayton County 10-14 November 1993.  
Photo by Giff Beaton.

The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C., et al., GOS Occas. Publ. No. 10, 1986) lists the White-winged Scoter as a rare inland visitor. This is however the fifth record for the species in the Atlanta area with extreme occurrence dates of 30 December and 30 March.

Brock Hutchins, 145 Timberlane Drive, Fayetteville, GA 30214.

**LARGE MOVEMENT OF OSPREYS AND OTHER RAPTORS SEEN AT CUMBERLAND ISLAND** - During the morning of 18 March 1994 a rather large number of migrating raptors were sighted moving north past Cumberland Island, Camden County, Georgia by Wezil Walraven, Jerry Hightower, Sara Denham and Donna and Greg Greer. The total number of birds seen included 25 Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), 2 American Swallow-tailed Kites (*Elanoides forficatus*), an immature Bald Eagle

(*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and 15 American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*). Also seen at this time were numerous Black Vultures (*Coragyps atratus*) and Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*). Their numbers were impossible to estimate due to their habit of "lapping" before finally moving north. Interestingly, the two American Swallow-tailed Kites provided the earliest ever arrival date for Georgia with the previous early date of 20 March (Haney, J.C. et al., *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986).

Starting at noon we observed an amazing number of raptors moving north along the west side of Cumberland Island. We observed for three hours until the flight stopped abruptly at 1500. The totals we arrived at were 360 Osprey, 40 Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), 1 Cooper's Hawk (*A. cooperii*), 5 Red-tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and 1 Merlin (*F. columbarius*). There were so many Ospreys moving north that an exact count was impossible but an estimate of two per minute yielded the impressive total of 360.

The weather during this movement was clear skies, light 5-10 mph SW winds and temperatures in the 70's.

Greg Greer, Chattahoochee Nature Center, 9135 Willeo Road, Roswell, GA 30075.

**POSSIBLE YELLOW RAIL SEEN ON GLYNN COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT** - On 1 January 1994, while walking along the road leading to the dredge spoil site on Andrew's Island near Brunswick, Glynn County, Georgia, I attempted to entice into view a sparrow that had dropped into the knee-high greenery along the water's edge. The strange sounds I produced had no effect until I began a "tick-tick" sound. Something responded with persistent "tick-ticks" of its own and I walked forward into the greenery. A small rail popped up about 3 m in front of me, flew about 4 m, then dropped at the water's edge, between the greenery and some rushes, landing within 0.5 m of a Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*) and then scooted off through the dense cover. Kathy Chapman, Chris Daughtery and I searched briefly for the rail in this area (just north of the boat launching area) but it was not seen again.

The rail was chunky but small, barely longer than the Sharp-tailed Sparrow. It was much too small to be a Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*). The colors I saw were much more buff on the underside, more like the ocher of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow's face pattern; it was definitely not a rusty color. The upper side was darker with black "streaks" running lengthwise on a noticeably lighter background. I didn't notice a white patch on the wings during the brief flight.

Based on the size, color and voice, I think this was a Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*). An immature Sora (*Porzana carolina*) has similar color but it should be noticeably larger than a Sharp-tailed Sparrow and the dark-on-light pattern of the back would not be as obvious. A Virginia Rail (*R. limicola*) would also be much bigger and a Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) would be much darker.

This very elusive species undoubtedly winters in the lower coastal plain of Georgia in some numbers but is so difficult to see that the species has not been reliably reported from the state in at least 20+ years. Any observation of this species, however fleeting, should be documented in *The Oriole* so that we might learn more of its distribution within the state.

Dan Guynn, Jr., 159 Grovania Road, Elko, Georgia 31025.

**UNUSUAL BOLD BEHAVIOR BY A KING RAIL** - Few birds are as renowned as the rails for secretiveness and for preserving concealment by a reluctance to fly. I was particularly surprised, therefore, to see a King Rail (*Rallus elegans*) busily searching for food in the west end zone at the Georgia-Arkansas football game in Sanford Stadium, Athens, Clarke County, Georgia on 2 October 1993, in front of 74,000 spectators. With 10X binoculars I could easily observe the critical field marks of this species, which occurs infrequently at Athens. I describe here this rail's behavioral changes while it was entrapped in an unnatural and threatening situation from which it could have escaped at any time by flight, presumably the means by which it had previously entered the stadium.

My wife called my attention to the rail during the second quarter of the game as it moved about, chickenlike, in the end zone, close to the privet hedge surrounding the field. When some of the players entered the end zone, the bird initially showed no fear but after almost being trampled, it retreated into the hedge. Soon after play resumed downfield, it reappeared but remained hidden in the hedge at halftime as numerous band members occupied the field. Sound levels were high then and throughout the game.

Early in the second half the rail continued searching and then retreating if players approached, always limiting itself to the same small portions of the end zone and hedge. Later on, however, the bird began to show considerable confusion and stress; movement became faster and erratic, followed by longer intervals of concealment.

I left the stadium but returned in about an hour, when no spectators remained. I was then able to search the field and hedge but failed to find the rail. I might have overlooked it, but in the absence of people and loud sounds, perhaps the bird had finally seized the opportunity to fly from the

stadium before I returned. A more suitable habitat, the North Oconee River and adjacent woods, was nearby.

*H. Branch Howe, Jr., 130 Bishop Drive, Athens, GA 30606.*

**SPRING RECORD FOR THE BAIRD'S SANDPIPER IN CLAYTON COUNTY** - After the 14 April 1991 Atlanta Audubon Society field trip to the E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton County, Georgia had ended, Paul Raney and I plus two other observers decided to take one more look at the pond area hoping that some new bird had appeared while we were looking elsewhere.

On the large island in the south pond we found four sandpipers - one Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*), two Least Sandpipers (*C. minutilla*) and a long-winged *Calidrid*. We immediately had the latter bird in four spotting scopes at a distance of about 25 m where we were able to view the following field marks: (1) plain brown head with a weak white supercilium, (2) black bill, drooping slightly at the tip, (3) white chin, (4) fine light brown wash over upper breast, no hint of gray, (5) unmarked belly and sides, (6) no distinct colors on scapulars, only even light brown, (7) black legs and (8) wings clearly longer than tail.

While these characteristics are consistent with the Baird's Sandpiper (*C. bairdii*), spring records of the species are very rare in the east and we wanted to see the bird fly to eliminate the possibility of its being a White-rumped Sandpiper (*C. fuscicollis*). The bird was feeding actively and when seen next to the other shorebirds it appeared to be slightly larger than the Least Sandpipers and much smaller than the Pectoral Sandpiper. The Least and Pectoral sandpipers were very skittish and flew several times during the next 30 minutes but the Baird's Sandpiper just fed. At this point the other three observers left.

After a short while all the birds did flush and flew off toward the NW corner of the pond area, passing about 7 m from me. The Baird's Sandpiper twice gave a short, burry call note in flight similar to the call of a Pectoral Sandpiper. As it flew by me I noted a dark center to the uppertail flanked by white edges. The two Least Sandpipers had returned almost immediately so I was fairly certain I had watched the correct bird.

I drove to the NW corner of the complex to the only other mudflat present that day and found the Baird's Sandpiper feeding again only about 12 m from me. I took several pictures at this location which are fairly diagnostic but the bird's image is too small to be reproduced here. Two nearby Spotted Sandpipers (*Actitis macularia*) were the same size when compared to the Baird's Sandpiper. After a short time one of the Spotted Sandpipers rushed the Baird's Sandpiper and forced it to leave the small flat. As it flew back toward the first spot I again saw the dark uppertail

flanked by white edges on the Baird's Sandpiper. The bird was seen again the next day by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert but not thereafter.

The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C., et al., GOS Occas. Publ. No. 10, 1986) lists two spring records for the state. One record was on 27 May 1962 at St. Mary's and the other was on 30 May 1983 at Atlanta. In addition there are five records which the Checklist Committee was unable to verify due to lack of documentation. They were 14 May 1977, 13 May 1978 and 4 May 1979 at the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, 29 May 1981 at Augusta and 14 May 1983 at Cumberland Island (P. Brisse, pers. comm.). All these records indicate that the species may be a rare but certainly not accidental spring migrant through Georgia.

*Giff Beaton, 320 Willow Glen Drive, Marietta, GA 30068.*

**RED PHALAROPE OBSERVED NEAR DUBLIN, LAURENS COUNTY** - In the early afternoon of 4 October 1993, I observed a Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicaria*) at a small pond in Jackson's pasture in NE Laurens County, Georgia. The bird was swimming about 20 m from the water's edge and was not associating with the other shorebirds that were feeding there.

Noting the very white bird, I determined immediately that it was a phalarope, but not the Wilson's Phalarope (*P. tricolor*), a species which I had seen at the pond on several occasions through the seasons in past years. However, its white neck and breast, its head markings, its grayish mantle and its short black bill did not permit easy identification in distinguishing between the Red Phalarope and the Red-necked Phalarope (*P. lobatus*). Either species is considered rare in the interior, with the former being referred to as "accidental" (Haney, J.C. et al., *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986).

In the excellent warm and clear prevailing weather, with the sun behind me, I observed the bird through 8X40 binoculars, noting the "phalarope mark" behind the eye, its blue-gray mantle with light streaking and its short, black bill. The bird was swimming parallel to the water's edge and was not turning in tight circles as phalaropes are known to do. I concluded that the bird was probably a Red-necked Phalarope in winter (basic) plumage, possibly a first year bird. After making this assessment, I returned to Dublin for my camera. At 1545 I returned to the pond and found the bird at rest on a flat near a few Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*). I examined the bird through a 15X40 telescope for a couple minutes, but without gaining any new insights on its identification. As I approached the bird the Killdeer flushed along with the phalarope. I noted strong white wingbars on its blue-gray wings and I observed these flight



Red Phalarope in Laurens County 4-5 October 1993. Photo by Tommy Patterson.

markings on five occasions in the next few minutes as I followed the bird, flushing it from the water's surface. It did not return to the water's edge.

After 45 minutes I departed, still questioning my earlier identification. I had taken a few slides with my camera but had not been able to get close to the bird.

At 0930 the next morning, Allen Rhodes and I returned to the pond, each prepared for photography. We observed and photographed for about an hour under excellent weather conditions. The bird was cooperative, swimming to within 6-7 m from me on one occasion. Using a 2X extender attached to my 70-300 mm zoom lens and equipped with a tripod and cable release, I was able to secure what I felt would be good identifying photographs.

Allen and I both believed we were observing a Red-necked Phalarope, although some doubt remained. However, upon close scrutiny of the developed photographs, and with opinions of others who saw the photographs, it was determined that the bird was a Red Phalarope. The

length and the thickness of the bird's bill were the primary determining factors and these are clearly seen in the accompanying photograph.

A cold front passed through the area the night of 5 October and the bird was not seen again.

This is the second record of the species at the same location. On 22 December 1990, Hunter Patterson et al., on the Dublin Christmas Bird Count, found and identified another bird (Patterson *Oriole* 55:69-71).

Tommy Patterson, 1409 Edgewood Drive, Dublin, Georgia 31021.

**TWO FRANKLIN'S GULLS IN BIBB COUNTY, GEORGIA** - At 1215 on 7 November 1992, Ty Ivey, Ken and Arlene Clark and I found two Franklin's Gulls (*Larus pipixcan*) moulting into basic plumage at the Macon Cherokee Brickyards, Bibb County, Georgia.

While we were checking out the large pond for cormorants and gulls, Arlene called our attention to two smaller gulls sitting on a sandbar with two Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) and a Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*). She noticed that the mantle on both gulls was darker than the nearby Ring-billed Gulls and that they both had partial hoods. Ty suggested that they could be Franklin's Gulls. Since we were several hundred meters from the birds, we needed to get closer to eliminate the Laughing Gull (*L. atricilla*), a rare-uncommon visitor to the brickyards. We drove to the east side of the pond, approximately 200 m from the birds.

Using telescopes we were able to make direct size comparisons between the two gulls and the nearby Forster's Tern. The gulls were the same size as the tern but not as slender. That helped us eliminate the Laughing Gull which is larger than the Forster's Tern. The birds preened and moved around occasionally affording good views in the November mid-day light. Their partial hoods were shaped like a triangle on the side of the face, extending over the crown and just above the nape. The eye was surrounded by the hood but the hood did not go any farther towards the bill. Also, the hood did not go below the eye. The hood was much darker and more prominent than that of the winter Laughing Gull, many of which Ken and Arlene had observed on Jekyll Island just a week before. Another important field mark we noticed was the broken, wide white eye-ring. The primaries, when folded created a series of white "dots". When the two gulls started flying south at 1235, we were able to see the white tips on their primaries. The day was clear and cool. The temperature was 65° F.

This sighting is the ninth record of the species in the state of Georgia. Haney, J.C. et al. (*Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986) list the species as accidental with sightings at

Columbus on 24 April 1965, at Savannah on 18 March 1978, at Lake Lanier on 28 April 1981 and at Lake Chatuge, Towns County, on 4-5 May 1984. Additional records include a bird seen by Bill Pulliam on 11 May 1986 at Lake Hartwell (*American Birds* 40:457-458), a bird seen at Jekyll Island by Terry Moore et al. on 8 Oct. 1989 (*Oriole* 54:47-48), single birds seen at Jekyll Island on 3 Nov. 1990 by Paul Sykes (*Oriole* 56:24) and at Skidaway Island on 18 Nov. by Robert Manns (*Oriole* 56:24). A tenth record came from Sapelo Island on 21 May 1993 by Alvaro Jaramillo (*American Birds* 47:404).

Paul Johnson, 901 Santa Fe Trail, Macon, GA 31210.

**BLACK-CHINNED AND ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRDS BANDED IN BARTOW COUNTY** - The hummingbird event of the winter of 1993-1994 took place in Cartersville, Bartow County, where for a period of eight days in January not one but two western hummingbird species appeared at a feeder maintained by Janis Thompson.

The story began on 11 November 1993 when Ms. Thompson first noticed a hummingbird coming to her feeder. Over the next few weeks a number of observers viewed the bird and it was tentatively identified as a young male Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*).

Bob and Martha Sargent of Trussville, AL made two unsuccessful trips to Cartersville attempting to band this particular bird. The Sargents are currently undertaking an unprecedented project of banding wintering hummingbirds in the southeastern US in order to determine exactly what species are occurring and in what numbers.

Incredibly, on 7 January 1994, Ms. Thompson noticed a second hummingbird at her feeder. On 9 January 1994 the Sargents returned and quickly captured both birds. The first bird was positively identified as an after hatch year Black-chinned Hummingbird which was the sixth record of the species in Georgia. Banding terminology requires that even though the bird still had evidence of immature plumage, after 1 January, any banded bird has to be regarded as after hatch year.

The real excitement was with the second bird as it already had a band. The Sargents had banded this bird, a female Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) on 27 December 1993 at the home of Dee and Clark George in Soddy Daisy, TN where the bird remained through 5 January 1994.

This female Allen's Hummingbird, now a second year bird, was the second record for Georgia, the first record for Tennessee and was the first winter banding recovery for the Sargents.

The two hummingbirds remained at the Thompson home until the morning of 15 January 1994 when they disappeared just in advance of a cold wave which dropped temperatures well below freezing that night.

John Swiderski, 29 Town & Country Drive, Cartersville, GA 30120.

#### RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD IN RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA -

A female Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) wintered in the general vicinity of our two hummingbird feeders from 3 January through 6 February 1994. The feeders hung at the south side of our house in western Richmond County (West Augusta area), Georgia. We observed the bird daily, sometimes several times each day, at the feeders, or in the bushes or bordering grassy areas. This hummingbird was quite aggressive at the feeders and the immediate vicinity, chasing off and sometimes striking Ruby-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus calendula*), Carolina Chickadees (*Parus carolinensis*) and Tufted Titmice (*Parus bicolor*). In addition to drinking from the feeders, the bird often hovered near (25-50 cm) the ground, darting forward or to the side, apparently to catch insects. She also seemed to search out insects in the shrubs, especially Thorny Elaeagnus (*Elaeagnus pungens*) and Azalea (*Rhododendron* spp.). Sometimes she poked at suet hanging near one hummingbird feeder and she hovered at the orange-colored parts of a seed feeder near the second hummingbird feeder.

Robert and Martha Sargent, of Trussville, AL, trapped, identified, photographed and banded the hummingbird on 20 January 1994 (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Band No. 8000T82089). At the time of capture it was determined to be a second year female weighing 3.72 grams.

This record represents the easternmost record of the species in Georgia. Previously, the most eastern sightings have been at Clarksville, Commerce and Valdosta (R. Sargent, pers. comm.).

Emil K. Urban and Lois L. Urban, 3114 Trafalgar Drive, Augusta, Georgia 30909.

**LATE MARTINS SEEN IN MCINTOSH COUNTY** - Late in the afternoon of 11 November 1993, Paul Raney, Bruce Dralle, Bill Blakeslee and I set out to walk the dikes surrounding the ponds on the east side of U.S. Highway 17 at the Altamaha State Waterfowl Management Area just south of Darien, McIntosh County, Georgia. Perhaps as many as 100 Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*) swirled above us, feeding in the insect laden air. Near dusk as we walked down the central dike,

headed in a southerly direction, Raney suddenly turned to follow a bird that flew over him at a relatively low height, about 15 m I would guess, at the same time exclaiming "Purple Martin". I saw the bird out of the corner of my eye, turned to look, raised my binocular, but then realized because of the speed of the bird, that I would not be able to focus on it. It did indeed appear to be a female Purple Martin (*Progne subis*), dark above, dark wings, with dusky white underparts, a starling-like wing shape and a forked tail.

At that moment, as this first bird sped away from us, headed toward the coast a few miles away, I noticed a second bird following the first at the same speed and about 20 m behind the first bird. This bird was almost directly overhead when I saw it. It was all dark with the shape typical of a Purple Martin. Given the waning light, I could not determine the color of the bird, whether it was dark blue, black, or possibly a dark brown but I could tell that the underparts were not light-colored. Both birds were flying directly toward the coast at a fast clip and were not feeding. They quickly were out of sight over the trees at the east end of the ponds.

I assumed that we had seen a pair of Purple Martins until someone noted that Haney et al. (1986) give a late departure date for the state of 25 October, so that, given the quick look we had and the poor light conditions, there is a possibility that we had seen one of the four species of southern martins whose normal ranges are well south of coastal Georgia but which have occasionally strayed to the United States. However, as will be discussed below, I believe that these other species can be ruled out.

First, there is the Southern Martin (*P. modesta*) which is normally confined to South America and the Galapagos Islands. There is one record in the United States, a specimen taken at Key West, FL on 14 August 1890. The male is all dark like a male Purple Martin. The female is also all dark, but duller-colored than the male. This is the only all dark female in the genus. The first bird of our pair was light underneath, at least from the lower chest to the undertail coverts. I believe this eliminates this species as a possibility.

Also, I think the Gray-breasted Martin (*P. chalybea*) can be ruled out as the male of this species resembles a female Purple Martin but is whiter underneath and the female is similar to the male but duller colored. The second bird was all dark, certainly the underparts were all dark. The Gray-breasted Martin ranges from southern Mexico to northern Argentina with two old records from southern Texas, one in 1880 and one in 1889.

Thirdly, there is the Brown-chested Martin (*P. tapera*) which breeds from northern coastal South America to northern Argentina, though one turned up on 12 June 1983 at Monomoy Island, MA where it was dutifully collected. The adults of this species are dull brown above, have white throats, a brown breast-band and white lower chests and bellies. Again, I believe that the underparts of the two birds we saw bear no

resemblance to this species.

Finally, and most tantalizing of the four, is the Snowy-bellied Martin (*P. dominicensis*) one of whose three races is the Cuban Martin (*P.d. crytoleuca*) which breeds in Cuba and on the Isle of Pines and has visited Florida at least three times (Key Biscayne, 1858; Clearwater, no date but described in 1932 (specimen); and Key West, an undated specimen in a Chicago museum).

According to Turner and Rose (*Swallows and Martins - An Identification Guide and Handbook*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, MA 1989) the male Cuban Martin closely resembles the male Purple Martin, that is, it is all dark above, but differs in that the male Cuban has "a broad white band across the lower abdomen," but in a rather mystical parenthetical note says that, however, this white band is "always concealed." Only slightly more helpful is the fact that Cuban Martins have relatively longer and more deeply forked tails. Regarding female Cuban Martins, Turner and Rose state that females somewhat resemble female Purple Martins but are a dark brown overall, have a greenish-blue gloss to the wings and tail, and are a gray-brown or sooty-gray from the side of the head across the chest and down the sides. They are white on the remainder of the underparts with some shafts streaked. Except for the exact color of the underparts, the pattern of color seems to closely resemble the female Purple Martin. Unfortunately, though both sexes of the Cuban Martin differ considerably from the nominate race of the species and closely resemble the Purple Martin, there is no illustration of it in Turner and Rose's otherwise fine book. Given the poor lighting conditions that day and the short look we had, I think it would be impossible to separate a female Cuban Martin from a female Purple Martin. As to the male I saw, if, in fact, the white belly band on the male Cuban Martin is "always concealed," the only field marks left are the "relatively longer and more deeply forked tail." My opinion, however, is that neither of the birds we saw had tails longer or more deeply forked than Purple Martins, but again, given the conditions, a clear judgement about the length and shape of the tails of these birds is dubious at best.

Purple Martins are known to be quite regular in their departure in the fall, as well as their arrival in the spring, so any martins seen after late October should be carefully studied, though because the other species of southern martins, especially the Cuban Martin, so closely resemble Purple Martins, a much better look than we had will be required.

Jeff Sewell, 4608 Westhampton Dr., Tucker, GA 30084.

**MOVEMENTS OF FLOCKS OF AMERICAN ROBINS IN WINTER IN COASTAL GEORGIA** - In the mid-1950s Ivan Tomkins (pers. comm.) made the author aware of his observations of large flocks of apparently transient American Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) appearing occasionally along the Georgia coast in mid to late winter.

Typically, dense concentrations of American Robins are observed in the morning hours at times of overcast skies and/or light rain. On one such occasion in the 1950s at Harris Neck in McIntosh County, Tomkins and the author saw many tens to perhaps hundreds of thousands of these birds. They appeared to be occupying almost every square foot of space on the ground and almost every practical perch in the trees and bushes along the road leading from the U.S. Highway 17 east to the water overlook at the river. None were seen in flocks high in the air. On our return trip from the water to U.S. 17 several hours later, only a few robins were seen.

Over the intervening years, the author has observed a number of such occurrences along the Georgia coast, none as dramatic as the one above. In his experience, robins are not frequently seen in numbers in this area in the early winter period.

On 16 January 1993 between 1200 and 1300, the author observed a part of an exceedingly large flock of airbourne American Robins. The location was about 0.25 mile west of U.S. Highway 17 and about 0.5 mile south of its junction with Highway 303 north of Brunswick, Glynn County, Georgia. Because of vegetation, the view of the overcast sky was an arc of an estimated thirty degrees east and west. The flock occupied more than this arc. All birds seen were flying swiftly and strongly to the south and were so closely packed together that they blotted out the author's view of the clouds above them. It was exceptionally difficult to estimate the altitude of the flock as seen against the dull, cloudy sky; a guess was made that they were travelling at roughly 800 to 1000 feet. The flock passed for many seconds, possibly about a minute, over the observation point. It appeared to be made up entirely of American Robins. As the author watched, several hundred birds left the flock, partly folded their wings, and dropped precipitously toward the ground. An estimated 200 to 250 individuals landed in large cedar trees (*Juniper virginiana*) and on mowed, grassy lawns beneath these trees. They joined about an equal number of Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) and American Robins already feeding there.

Perhaps 10 to 15 minutes later, another high-flying flock of robins was observed. It was, again, headed south. The birds covered the arc of sky open to the observer, but they appeared to be somewhat less densely packed together than the preceding flight. They were at a slightly lower altitude and they passed overhead for a shorter time. The number seen was guessed to be about three-fifths the number seen in the earlier flock.

In the next hour to hour and a half, four additional flocks of robins

were seen. All were headed south. These were far less in numbers of individuals than the two earlier flights. They were at somewhat lower altitudes as well. The last flock was believed to number no more than several hundred to a thousand.

Heavy, thick, dark, low-lying clouds were present to the north and northeast during all the foregoing observations. They were estimated to be five to seven miles away. Air temperature about five feet above ground by a mercury-tube thermometer was about 46-48° F. Ground and vegetation were wet from preceding rain. There was little wind.

Well before dusk, only one or two robins were observable in the vicinity of the observation point. These were the last of the hundreds which had dropped from the flocks, as above, and had been observed feeding in the cedar trees and on the lawns beneath and near these trees. The robins appeared to feed for a time and then leave singly or in groups having about two to six members. Every one of these birds which was seen to be leaving the cedar trees, the lawns, or perches in surrounding vegetation moved off in a southerly direction. None were seen to form into flocks and none were seen to rise high in the air. They moved off in the trees and shrubs, undertaking short passages and flying from perch to perch.

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**EARLY PHILADELPHIA VIREO AT KENNESAW MOUNTAIN** - On 4 August 1993, Bruce Hallett and I were looking for early neotropical migrants at the Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield Park near Kennesaw, Cobb County, Georgia. About halfway to the top of the mountain I observed from below a small bird showing a yellow breast and a stubby, short-tailed look. The bird had no wingbars and its back was a grayish-green color suggesting a vireo. It was active but I was able to note all-yellow underparts, including the throat, and its short, thick bill. The white supercilium appeared thin compared to a Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*) and the black interocular stripe clearly continued from the eye forward to the bill.

I was unable to give directions fast enough for Hallett to see the bird before it followed the flock of warblers it was with down slope. However, all the field marks noted led me to the conclusion that the bird was a very early Philadelphia Vireo (*V. philadelphicus*). The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C., et al., GOS Occas. Publ. No. 10, 1986) lists the early fall arrival date for the species as 30 August so this bird was over three weeks early.

Three days later, on 7 August, Jeff Sewell and I observed a bird with the same field marks in the same general area at Kennesaw Mountain. This Philadelphia Vireo may well have been the same individual given the extreme early date of these observations.

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#### EARLY SUMMER TANAGER SIGHTING IN DEKALB COUNTY -

On 28 March 1994, at about 0830, as my wife Carol and I were having coffee in our dining room, I heard the "picky-tucky-tuck" call of the Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) coming from our backyard in Tucker, DeKalb County, Georgia. As I grabbed my binocular and headed toward the backdoor, I heard the call again. Once outside, I began looking into the thick stand of mature oaks and beech that dominate our backyard. I then heard two calls from some 10-12 m apart.

The thick foliage presented by our large hardwoods, which were mostly leafed out, made locating the birds difficult. After maybe 30 seconds or so and another "picky-tucky-tuck" or two, I located one of the birds in an American beech tree (*Fagus grandifolia*) about 15 m above the ground. I was able to see it with my 8X42 binocular for only a moment, maybe five seconds, but in spite of low light conditions in the thick leaves, was able to see enough of the size and shape of the bird and the orangish color to conclude I was looking at a female Summer Tanager. Also, I noted none of the contrast between the wings and body that one might see in a female Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*).

At that moment, out of the corner of my eye, I saw another bird fly from about 7 m away toward the one I had under observation. Pulling my binocular down from my eyes, I saw a male Summer Tanager fly by the female which then took wing and followed the male into the dense woods across the street. While my look at the male was brief, I concluded from the size and shape of the bird, and the characteristic Summer Tanager color (rose-red distinctly different from the scarlet red of the Scarlet Tanager or the deep rich red of the male Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)) that I had seen a male Summer Tanager.

Haney et al. (1986) state that the Summer Tanager is a common summer resident over all of the state except in the mountains and gives an early arrival date of 8 March (1968) but without a location. Burleigh (1958) gives the Atlanta area arrival date as 3 April (1894) but without offering further details.

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Jeff Sewell, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA 30084.

LATE ORCHARD ORIOLE FOUND IN CLAYTON COUNTY - On 18 October 1993 my parents and I were looking for waterfowl and shorebirds at the E. L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton County, Georgia when we spotted an Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) in the overgrown northern edge of the south pond. The bird was somewhat larger than the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) which was perched in the same bush. The bird's sturdy, pointed bill and dark wings with two white wingbars immediately suggested an oriole and the greenish back and yellowish underparts specifically suggested an Orchard Oriole. The bird was too small and yellow (not orange) to be a Northern Oriole (*I. galbula*). The bird turned to face us before dropping down out of sight and we noted a thin black bib extending from the chin to mid-breast.

Since this was such a late date for an Orchard Oriole in Georgia (the latest fall departure date mentioned in Haney (1986) is 17 September), we then considered the possibility that the bird might be a Hooded Oriole (*I. cucullatus*). That western oriole would have shown a larger size, larger, more curved bill and probably buffier hindneck than the bird we observed. A check of the references (White 1990) revealed no previous East Coast occurrences of this species.

Having settled on the identification of the bird as an Orchard Oriole, I was then interested in trying to determine the age and sex of the bird. This was complicated by the species' unusual molt sequence. According to Bent (1958) the fall postnuptial molt does not occur until after the birds fly south while the prenuptial molt occurs before their migration in the spring. Young male Orchard Orioles acquire the black bib in their first prenuptial molt when they are about 9-10 months old. This plumage is retained until their second fall (postnuptial) molt. Therefore, since this second fall molt would not occur until the bird migrated, it is assumed this particular bird was a second year male.

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Giff Beaton, 320 Willow Glen Drive, Marietta, Georgia 30068.

**MORE ON THE WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL IN GEORGIA** - In December 1982, James Jones reported a White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*) near the Cohutta Wilderness area, Fannin County, Georgia (Oberle 1986). This is not a far-fetched possibility since flocks of up to 50 White-winged Crossbills have occurred in the North Carolina mountains (Potter et al., 1980; Simpson 1992), and single birds have been reported in Tennessee and northern Florida (American Ornithologists' Union 1983; Hall 1985). The Georgia Rare Birds committee reviewed and accepted the sight record, placing the species on the provisional list of birds of the state (Haney et al., 1986).

McNair provided a thought-provoking critique of the sight record (McNair 1988). His concerns centered around three issues: size and color comparisons with Red Crossbills (*L. curvirostra*) in the same flock, and the presence of wing bars. In fact, immature Red Crossbills can have wing bars, and bird lengths and sizes can be difficult to gauge at a distance. Further confusing the situation in North America is that up to eight call types of Red Crossbills may represent emerging species (Groth 1993a). Call types one and two occur in the southern Appalachians (Groth 1988; Groth 1993b). It is not clear which call type of Red Crossbill occurred in the flock observed by Jones.

However, there are several considerations that limit the relevance of these criticisms. While immature Red Crossbills can have wing bars, they are usually a buffy terminal edge to the secondary coverts rather than white bars (Newton 1972). These buffy edges are sometimes retained through the partial post-juvenile molt, but are variable and easily wear off (Newton 1972). Hahn has banded over 1,000 Red Crossbills and has encountered only buffy, not white, wing bars on immatures (T. Hahn, pers. comm.).

Color shades in crossbills are quite variable, and size is difficult to estimate in the field. Length measurements typically reported in standard field guides are averages from "stretched" museum specimens, measured from the tip of the bill to the tip of the tail. However, while the average body length of White-winged Crossbills is less than the average for Red Crossbills, White-winged Crossbills have a proportionately longer tail than the call types of Red Crossbill found in the Southern Appalachians. Thus the overall impression in the field could well be that a White-winged Crossbill is "larger" than Red Crossbills, while the standard museum length measurements would be the reverse.

Sight records leave a lot to be desired, but photographs of crossbills feeding in tall White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) would be difficult to obtain. With the increasingly mild winters in Georgia in the 1980s and early 1990s, the decreasing snowcover in the entire Northern Hemisphere, and the possibility of a continuing global warming trend, "winter" finches may continue to be rare in Georgia (Oberle 1987). If Jones really did see a White-winged Crossbill in 1982, this may be a rare occurrence for some time to come.

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## FROM THE FIELD

August-November 1993

The fall migration period was characterized by a rather poor movement of migrants through Georgia. With the exception of very intensive coverage of Kennesaw Mountain (in Cobb County) and the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (also in Cobb County), you would have thought that fall migration had disappeared. We really need to report our sightings better in order to fully document exactly what bird populations we are seeing right now. Imagine the researcher 50 years from now trying to determine just how many Black-and-white Warblers an observer could see on an average fall day back in 1993.

I apologize for the extent of the coverage given to the Atlanta area but that's where the majority of the reports come from. I urge all observers, especially those outside of Atlanta, to submit their reports so we can give a more balanced picture of bird populations in Georgia. With the downsizing of *American Birds*, *The Oriole* is the one vehicle we have to do this.

Even though migration was rather lackluster, there were still a number of good reports. Read on for records of Masked Booby, Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, Sooty Tern, Brown Noddy, White-winged Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, and Townsend's Warbler.

Abbreviations used include: AAS - Atlanta Audubon Society (generally in conjunction with a regularly scheduled migration walk), *Annotated Checklist* - *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* by Haney, J.C. et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986, CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area in Cobb County north of Atlanta, ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton County, Fernbank Forest - part of the Fernbank Science Center in DeKalb County, GOS - Georgia Ornithological Society, Kennesaw Mountain - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Cobb County, MIA - Macon Industrial Area, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge and OAS - Ocmulgee Audubon Society.

## SPECIES ACCOUNTS

**RED-THROATED LOON** - One bird seen flying over the parking lot of the Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield Park in Cobb County on 25 Oct. was certainly an amazing sight (Giff Beaton).

**COMMON LOON** - Two birds at Lake Lanier in Forsyth County were seen on 27 Aug. by John Paget. This species has proved to be a rare summer visitor during the past few years.

**CORY'S SHEARWATER** - Twenty-two birds were seen on a GOS sponsored pelagic trip out from Wilmington Island near Savannah on 22 Aug. (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER** - On the same pelagic trip mentioned above, eight Audubon's Shearwaters were seen (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**MASKED BOOBY** - This species is very rarely seen in Georgia. The *Annotated Checklist* mentions but six records so two birds seen perching on a transmitter platform 125.4 km off the coast of Savannah on a 14 Nov. GOS sponsored pelagic trip were not only rare but also the latest date for Georgia (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**AMERICAN BITTERN** - One bird in west Bibb County on 30 Oct. was a rare find for this difficult to locate species (Jerry and Rose Payne).

**GREAT BLUE HERON** - Rather large numbers were counted at a swamp in Henry County during August and September with the peak count of 20 on 21 Aug. (Patrick Brisse).

**GREAT EGRET** - Also at the same swamp mentioned above on the same date were 20+ Great Egrets (Patrick Brisse). Patrick Brisse had 24 at the ELHLAF on 19 Sept. and a flock of 22 flying north past Kennesaw Mountain on 28 Sept. (Giff Beaton). The last Atlanta area bird was one at the ELHLAF on 20 Oct. (Patrick Brisse).

**SNOWY EGRET** - Rare for the piedmont region were single birds at the Griffin Reservoir on 7 and 14 Aug. (Paul Raney), three birds at the ELHLAF on 9 Aug. (Giff Beaton) and one at Commerce Lake in Banks County on 28 Aug. (John Paget).

**LITTLE BLUE HERON** - At the same Henry County swamp mentioned above, Patrick Brisse saw 27 birds on 15 Aug.

**TRICOLORED HERON** - Very rare for the piedmont region were single birds in Forsyth County on 22 Aug. and at Commerce Lake in Jackson County on 28 Aug. (both by John Paget).

**REDDISH EGRET** - One bird was seen at the reliable spot at St. Simons Island's Gould's Inlet on 21 Aug. by Paul Raney and Anne and Vernon Waters. One bird was seen on Sapelo Island on 2 Oct. and at least one and maybe two there the next day (Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert). Another sighting was a bird at Jekyll Island on 11 Oct. by Peggy and Terry Moore.

**CATTLE EGRET** - Rare for the Atlanta area were two birds seen near the ELHLAF on 9 Aug. (Giff Beaton) and a single bird at Cartersville on 21-22 Aug. (John Swiderski).

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** - Also rare for the piedmont were two immatures at Griffin Reservoir on 14 Aug. (Paul Raney).

**WHITE IBIS** - Three immatures were seen at the Griffin Reservoir on 1 Aug. and two there on 7 Aug. (Paul Raney). Two were seen in Henry County on 15 Aug. by Jeff Sewell and Paul Raney.

**ROSEATE SPOONBILL** - The Jekyll Island area, especially the Jekyll Island Causeway, continues to be the most reliable spot to find this species. Two were seen along the causeway on 21 Aug. by Bill Blakeslee et al. and Joe Greenberg et al. reported an excellent count of eight in the Jekyll Island area on 16 Oct.

**WOOD STORK** - Barny Dunning had a good count of 200+ in late Sept. at Skidaway Island.

**FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK** - At the Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area near Darien, observers attending the GOS fall meeting the weekend of 8-10 Oct. found as many as 30 birds. Nancy Gobris saw 15

- on 18 Oct. and a single bird was still there as late as 21 Nov. (Giff Beaton).
- BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** - Two birds were seen near the Lake Walter F. George Dam on 5 Nov. by Joe Greenberg et al. We know that at least one person in south Georgia has been releasing captive raised birds into the wild but all sightings should be reported as the population in Florida appears to be healthy and expanding and could possibly reach Georgia at some point.
- MUTE SWAN** - Two birds were seen in the Dalton area on 15 Aug. by Harriett DiGioia. This species is a fairly common domestically kept bird, at least in the Atlanta area, including at least some pairs that are able to fledge young. However, the population from the northeastern US is expanding toward the south and we may eventually pick up a few stragglers from that population.
- SNOW GOOSE** - Two birds were a good find in the Darien area on 21 Nov. (Giff Beaton).
- AMERICAN BLACK DUCK** - Two birds were either summering or extremely early migrants at the ELHLAF on 15 Aug. (Paul Raney, Jeff Sewell et al.).
- REDHEAD** - An excellent count of 17 was made at the Buford Dam at Lake Lanier in Gwinnett County on 6 Nov. (Jeff Sewell et al.).
- RING-NECKED DUCK** - A male seen at the Griffin Reservoir on 1 Aug. was almost undoubtedly a rare summering bird and not an early migrant (Paul Raney).
- GREATER SCAUP** - A female which appeared at the ELHLAF on 31 Oct. (AAS) was joined by a male and the pair remained there at least through 12 Nov. (Brock Hutchins).
- OLDSQUAW** - One bird was seen at Jekyll Island on 27 Nov. by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert.
- WHITE-WINGED SCOTER** - A female plumaged bird appeared at the ELHLAF on 10 Nov. (Brock Hutchins) and remained there through 17 Nov. (Bruce Dralle). Another bird was observed in the Rome area on 24 Nov. by Lanny Henson and a very high count of 23 was made at Jekyll Island on 27 Nov. by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert.
- AMERICAN SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** - Don and Doris Cohrs saw three birds on 9 Aug. near Darien.
- MISSISSIPPI KITE** - One bird was seen in the Darien area on 14 Aug. by Don and Doris Cohrs. One bird seen during August near Columbus was rare for that area (Jake Burns fide Sam Pate). An amazing find was the group of eight immatures found near the ELHLAF on 28 Aug. by Patrick Brisse. Four more were seen later a mile away but these could have been part of the original eight. This species is considered accidental by the *Annotated Checklist* anywhere in the piedmont.
- BALD EAGLE** - There were not as many reports of this species as has been the case in the last few "From the Field" columns. The only sightings came from Atlanta, Columbus and Augusta.
- NORTHERN HARRIER** - A rather early bird was seen in the Jekyll Island area on 21 Aug. by Paul Raney and Anne and Vernon Waters.
- SHARP-SHINNED HAWK** - Five reports came from the Atlanta area during the month of Aug. This is too early for most migrants so this may indicate an increase in the population of this rare breeder in Georgia. It would be

- very worthwhile to have someone familiar with the breeding status of this species in the state to document what is known.
- BROAD-WINGED HAWK** - The only reports of significant numbers came from the Atlanta area with 40+ over Lawrenceville on 24 Sept. (Joel Volpi), 131 over Kennesaw Mt. on 28 Sept. (Giff Beaton et al.), and 50-60 over Lawrenceville on 29 Sept. (Joel Volpi).
- GOLDEN EAGLE** - This rare species was seen in the Chattahoochee National Forest on 10 Nov. by Harriett DiGioia.
- MERLIN** - The only inland report was from Kennesaw Mt. on 13 Oct. by Giff and Becky Beaton.
- PEREGRINE FALCON** - The only inland report of this falcon was from the ELHLAF on 20 Sept. by Jeff Sewell and Bill Blakeslee.
- VIRGINIA RAIL** - The only reports came from the Atlanta area with a bird found in Henry County on 15 Aug. by Jeff Sewell and Paul Raney et al. and a bird near Woodstock on 18 Nov. (Giff Beaton).
- SANDHILL CRANE** - One group was rather early over Marietta on 28 Oct. (Nancy Iha). The peak movement over Atlanta definitely occurred on 22 Nov. with 1500+ seen from Kennesaw Mt. by Jeff Petit. The last report for the period was a flock of 90 in the Alpharetta area on 28 Nov. (Peggy Moore).
- AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER** - Ken Clark received a report of this species from Houston County in late Aug.-early Sept. (exact dates not provided). Two birds were seen at the ELHLAF on 19 Sept. (Patrick Brisse, AAS) and 20 Sept. (Jeff Sewell and Bill Blakeslee). One bird was seen in the Dublin area on 4 Oct. by Tom Patterson.
- SEMIPALMATED PLOVER** - As many as eight birds were in the Dublin area the last week of Aug. (Tom Patterson). Two birds were found in Floyd County on 30 Aug. by Lanny Henson and a late bird was at the ELHLAF on 23 Oct. (Jeff Sewell).
- PIPING PLOVER** - A somewhat early bird was seen at Jekyll Island on 21 Aug. by Bill Blakeslee et al.
- AMERICAN AVOCET** - Very rare inland was a bird in the Dublin area from 10 through 28 Sept. (Tom Patterson).
- UPLAND SANDPIPER** - Ken Clark reported that the OAS found this species in Houston County during late Aug. or early Sept. (exact dates not provided).
- MARBLED GODWIT** - A bird seen at Jekyll Island on 21 Aug. was quite early for the state (Bill Blakeslee et al.).
- SANDERLING** - Inland sightings included a bird in Hall County on 22 Aug. and six at Pendergrass on 28 Aug. (both by John Paget).
- WESTERN SANDPIPER** - Five birds at the ELHLAF on 3 Sept. was a good inland count (Terry Moore). A very late bird for the Atlanta area was at the same location on 17 Oct. (Jeff Sewell, AAS).
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** - This very rare migrant was reported by Tom Patterson in NE Laurens County where he observed two birds from 22-23 Aug.
- STILT SANDPIPER** - One bird was found near Dublin during the last week of Aug. by Tom Patterson. Another single bird was seen at the ELHLAF on 3 Sept. (Terry Moore) and 4 Sept. (Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert). Back at Dublin, eight were seen on 4 Oct. by Tom Patterson.
- BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** - Six birds were seen in the Dublin area during the last week of Aug. by Tom Patterson. Ken Clark reported that

the OAS found the species in Houston County during late Aug. - early Sept. (exact dates not provided). One bird was seen at the ELHLAF from 6 Sept. (Patrick Brisse and Terry Miller) through 20 Sept. (Jeff Sewell and Bill Blakeslee).

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** - Two birds at the ELHLAF from 24 Aug. (Terry Moore) through 28 Aug. (Patrick Brisse, Carolina Lane, AAS) were rather rare for the Atlanta area.

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** - This species is difficult to find anywhere in Georgia so a bird at the ELHLAF on 10 Oct. is noteworthy (Patrick Brisse).

**COMMON SNIPE** - One bird was somewhat early at the ELHLAF on 22 Aug. (Jeff Sewell et al.).

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE** - Again at the ELHLAF, one bird was seen on 4 Sept. (Patrick Brisse, Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert) and 5 Sept. (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Lloyd Snyder).

**RED PHALAROPE** - One bird was seen on the 22 Aug. GOS pelagic trip out from Wilmington Island (Bill Blakeslee et al.). One bird was seen in the Dublin area on 4-5 Oct. by Tom Patterson (see elsewhere in this issue for details of this sighting). Fifty were found on the 14 Nov. GOS pelagic trip out from Wilmington Island (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**PARASITIC JAEGER** - One bird was seen on the 22 Aug. GOS pelagic trip (Bill Blakeslee et al.) but very surprising was a bird seen along the Oconee River on 4 Sept. for one of the few inland records for Georgia (Paul Sykes).

**RING-BILLED GULL** - A bird at the ELHLAF on 25 Sept. was quite a surprise as this species is rare inland before late Oct. or so (Patrick Brisse).

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** - As usual a few birds showed up along the coast during the fall. The first bird was seen at Jekyll Island on 21 Aug. by Paul Raney and Anne and Vernon Waters. The best count was three at Jekyll Island on 16 Oct. (Joe Greenberg et al.).

**GULL-BILLED TERN** - Fifteen was a good count at Jekyll and St. Simons Island on 21 Aug. (Paul Raney, Anne and Vernon Waters).

**COMMON TERN** - On the 22 Aug. GOS pelagic trip out of Wilmington Island, a total of 125 birds were seen (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**BRIDLED TERN** - On the above trip, three birds were seen (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**SOOTY TERN** - Again, on the same trip, three birds were seen (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**BROWN NODDY** - One bird seen on the same GOS pelagic trip was identified as an immature Brown Noddy (Bill Blakeslee et al.). Hopefully this observation of a very rare species will be documented in *The Oriole*.

**BLACK TERN** - There were a number of reports of single digit inland counts but the best count was 50 on the 22 Aug. GOS pelagic trip (Bill Blakeslee et al.).

**EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** - This species appears to have established a stronghold in the Brunswick area with at least three birds being seen there during Nov. (Paul Raney, Bruce Dralle, Dennie and Pam McClure).

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** - This very rare visitor to the state was seen around the south end of Jekyll Island during the early part of Oct. The first date

of observation was never reported but the last date appeared to be 9 Oct. (Bruce Hallett).

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** - Very rare for the Atlanta area was a bird seen at the ELHLAF on 20 Nov. by Pierre Howard.

**BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** - The only report of this species was a bird seen at the CRNRA on 4 Oct. by Bruce Hallett.

**COMMON NIGHTHAWK** - This species appears to be declining in numbers as there were very few reports of 100+ birds seen during the fall migration period. It used to be that many observers would see hundreds if not thousands during some good evening movements. The latest report was a bird over Fernbank Forest in DeKalb County on 11 Nov. (Georgann Schmalz).

**BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** - An immature male paid a brief visit to a Winder, Barrow County, feeder between 14-18 Oct. for the fifth record for Georgia - all coming in the past three years. Please see *Oriole* 58:18-19 for details of this observation.

**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** - One bird was found in Murray County from July through late Nov. (fide Harriett DiGioia). The appearance of this bird in July is quite early for Georgia and documentation of the details of this record would be worthwhile.

**YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER** - One bird was fairly early at Kennesaw Mt. on 29 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** - One bird was banded at Jekyll Island on 1 Oct. (Don and Doris Cohrs).

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** - A very late bird was seen near Pendergrass on 6 Nov. by Joel Volpi. When a flycatcher of this type is seen this late, observers should definitely consider that the bird might be a Brown-crested or Ash-throated Flycatcher.

**GRAY KINGBIRD** - One bird was seen carrying nesting material to a nest at the Jekyll Island Convention Center on the late date of 21 Aug. (Bill Blakeslee et al.). Three birds were seen at the same location on 21 Oct. hopefully indicating a successful nesting (Nancy Gobris).

**HORNED LARK** - This species was found in Houston County during late Aug. and early Sept. (fide Ken Clark - exact dates not provided).

**PURPLE MARTIN** - Two birds were seen at Darien on the extremely late date of 13 Nov. by Paul Raney and Jeff Sewell. See elsewhere in this issue for details of this sighting.

**TREE SWALLOW** - Rather large numbers were seen at Harris Neck NWR on the fairly early date of 7 Aug. (Don and Doris Cohrs). In the Atlanta area counts of 65 at the ELHLAF and 200 at Blalock Lake on 31 Oct. were unusual for being so late (Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert). The last Atlanta sighting was on 7 Nov. at the ELHLAF by Jeff Sewell and Patrick Brisse.

**FISH CROW** - A very high count of 63 was made at Blalock Lake on 9 Aug. by Giff Beaton.

**RED-BREADED NUTHATCH** - Considering the fact that the past few years have been remarkable in their lack of this species, this fall's flight is almost like a major invasion. One bird was seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 11 Sept. by Bruce Dralle et al. There were ten additional reports for the remainder of the period with most of the sightings in the piedmont

except for the bird on Sapelo Island on 2-3 Oct. (Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert).

**BROWN CREEPER** - A fairly early bird was seen near Duluth on 10 Oct. by Joel Volpi.

**MARSH WREN** - Good for anywhere in the piedmont was a bird at the CRNRA on 9 Oct. (Jack Caruso, AAS).

**BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** - A bird seen at the Lake Lanier Dam in Gwinnett County on 27 Nov. was quite late (Bruce Dralle).

**VEERY** - Most of the reports of thrushes came from the Atlanta area - either Kennesaw Mt. or Fernbank Forest. The best count of this species was five at Fernbank Forest on 25 Sept. (Georgann Schmalz, AAS).

**GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH** - There were a total of nine reports of this species, all from the Atlanta area, between 16 Sept. and 16 Oct.

**SWAINSON'S THRUSH** - The best counts for this species were the 20 at Kennesaw Mt. on 18 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.), 15 at Fernbank Forest on 9 Oct. (Georgann Schmalz, AAS) and 11 also at Fernbank Forest on 25 Sept. (Georgann Schmalz, AAS).

**WOOD THRUSH** - Fernbank Forest also claimed the high counts for this species with 15 on 25 Sept., 17 on 9 Oct. and 18 on 16 Oct. (Georgann Schmalz, AAS).

**CEDAR WAXWING** - John Paget observed this species in the Dawson Forest on 1, 15 and 29 Aug. This is one of the few species that appears to be somewhat expanding its range and may start nesting south of its usual mountain habitats.

**LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** - A bird in Murray County on 8 Nov. was certainly rare for that area of Georgia (Harriett DiGioia).

**BELL'S VIREO** - An enticing report of a bird seen at Sapelo Island on 3 Oct. was received from Richard Ellenberg. However, the details do not completely eliminate White-eyed Vireo as a possibility. It would be worthwhile for someone to do a study on exactly what characteristics would separate a Bell's from a White-eyed Vireo in the fall as the two species are so easily confused.

**SOLITARY VIREO** - Generally this species doesn't appear in the lower piedmont areas until Oct. so six reports from the Atlanta area from 17 through 26 Sept. were quite interesting (fide Terry Moore). An amazingly high count of 22 was made at Kennesaw Mt. on 27 Oct. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** - A rather late bird was seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 27 Oct. (Giff Beaton, Bruce Dralle).

**WARBLING VIREO** - The only report of this rare migrant was from northern Greene County on 28 Aug. (Paul Sykes).

**PHILADELPHIA VIREO** - A record early bird was seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 4 and 7 Aug. by Giff Beaton. This is not only the earliest record for Georgia but probably for the entire southeast. See elsewhere in this issue for details of this sighting. More normal were the seven reports, all from the Atlanta area, from 4 Sept. through 4 Oct. (fide Terry Moore).

**RED-EYED VIREO** - The best counts came from Kennesaw Mt. with 25 on 4 Sept., 39 on 5 Sept., 28 on 6 Sept. and 25 on 12 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**WARBLERS** - Intensive coverage of Kennesaw Mt. in Cobb County led to a number of high counts for many species during the fall migration period. We can't include all the observations but hopefully these reports will encourage others to seek out a good habitat in their locality and report their sightings. All the following warbler sightings came from Kennesaw Mt. unless otherwise noted.

**BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** - The highest count for this species was four found on both 10 and 19 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** - An early bird was seen on 7 Aug. by Giff Beaton, Jeff Sewell and Bruce Dralle. High count for this species was five on 25 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**TENNESSEE WARBLER** - Although this species could be found regularly starting in mid-Sept., the high count was 45 on 21 Oct. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**NASHVILLE WARBLER** - Single birds were seen at the CRNRA on 2 Oct. (AAS), at the MIA on 2 Oct. (Ty Ivey, Paul Johnson) and at Kennesaw Mt. on 18 Oct. (Giff and Becky Beaton).

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** - Peak counts were the 30 seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 5 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.) and the 24 at the CRNRA on 2 Oct. (Kiki Widjaja, AAS).

**MAGNOLIA WARBLER** - Best counts were 30 on 25 Sept. (Dick Parks, AAS) and 50 on 2 Oct. (Kiki Widjaja, AAS) both at the CRNRA.

**CAPE MAY WARBLER** - The only inland report for the entire fall was a single bird at Kennesaw Mt. on 20 Oct. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**TOWNSEND'S WARBLER** - The first record for Georgia was established when a bird was banded at Jekyll Island on 30 Sept. (Don and Doris Cohrs, Lydia Thompson). See Oriole 58:1-3 for details of this outstanding record.

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** - Four early birds were seen on 7 Aug. by Giff Beaton, Bruce Dralle and Jeff Sewell. Peak counts were the 22 at Kennesaw Mt. on 11 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.) and the 24 at the CRNRA on 2 Oct. (Kiki Widjaja, AAS).

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** - One bird was early on 4 Aug. (Giff Beaton, Bruce Hallett). The peak counts were 13 on 5 Sept., 14 on 6 Sept. and 12 on 19 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**BAY-BREASTED WARBLER** - This species is a fairly late migrant as evidenced by the peak count of 39 on 20 Oct. (Giff Beaton, Bruce Dralle).

**CERULEAN WARBLER** - This species is a very early migrant with a total of 65 seen during the month of Aug. at Kennesaw Mt. The peak counts were 14 on 3 Aug. (Giff Beaton) and 18 on 7 Aug. (Giff Beaton, Bruce Dralle, Jeff Sewell). The numbers dwindled during Sept. with very late birds seen on 2 Oct. at the CRNRA (Kiki Widjaja, AAS) and on 18 (Giff and Becky Beaton) and 20 Oct. (Giff Beaton, Bruce Dralle) at Kennesaw Mt.

**BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** - The peak counts were 19 on 5 Sept. and 12 on 6 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).

**AMERICAN REDSTART** - The best count was the 30 at the CRNRA on 25 Sept. (Dick Parks, AAS).

- WORM-EATING WARBLER - A total of 23 birds were seen at Kennesaw Mt. during the month of Aug. (Bruce Dralle et al.), indicating that this species is primarily an early migrant through that area.
- WILSON'S WARBLER - Two birds were seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 5 Sept. (AAS), one there on 11 Sept. (AAS), one at the CRNRA on 18 Sept. (AAS), one bird at Kennesaw Mt. on 25 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.), one near Stone Mountain on 25-26 Sept. (Patrick Brisse) and one at the CRNRA on 4 Oct. (Ken Blackshaw).
- CANADA WARBLER - An early bird was seen in the Marietta area on 9 Aug. by Nancy Iha. The peak count was four seen on 5 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).
- SCARLET Tanager - Joe Greenberg et al. recorded an excellent count of 28 birds in Union County on 10 Sept. At Kennesaw Mt., 28 were seen on 21 Sept., 25 on 25 Sept., and 20 on 28 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK - One bird seen in the Dawson Forest on 1 Aug. by Jack Caruso (fide John Paget) was quite early. The best count was 39 at Fernbank Forest on 2 Oct. (Georgann Schmalz).
- BLUE GROSBEAK - A somewhat late migrant was seen at the CRNRA on 23 Oct. (Bill Blakeslee, AAS).
- INDIGO BUNTING - One bird near Alpharetta on 7 Nov. was late for the piedmont area (Bruce Dralle).
- LARK SPARROW - At least one and maybe two birds were seen near the south beach area of Jekyll Island on 10 Oct. (Bill Blakeslee et al.).
- LECONTE'S SPARROW - Paul Sykes found one bird in northern Greene County on 13 Nov.
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW - The only report was a bird seen in Greene County on 18 Nov. by Bruce Dralle.
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - Twelve birds were seen at Pendergrass on 6 Nov. (Bruce Dralle, Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert) and nine birds were seen in the Canton area on 21 Nov. by Jeff Petit.
- RUSTY BLACKBIRD - Anne Waters reported an excellent count of 450 in the Augusta area on 23 Oct.
- ORCHARD ORIOLE - A very late bird was seen at the ELHLAF on 18 Oct. by Giff and Becky Beaton. See elsewhere in this issue for details of this sighting.
- NORTHERN ORIOLE - There were scattered reports from the Atlanta area starting in late Aug. with the peak count of three coming from Kennesaw Mt. on 5 Sept. (Bruce Dralle et al.).
- PINE SISKIN - The observation of three birds at a feeder near Brasstown Bald on 21 Aug. (Joe Greenberg et al.) reminds us that the species has been found nesting just across the border in North Carolina so nesting in Georgia is not out of the question. One bird was seen at the same feeder on 3 Sept. (Joe Greenberg et al.). The species was also seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 25 and 27 Oct. for what will hopefully be a decent flight year for the species (Giff Beaton, Bruce Dralle).
- EVENING GROSBEAK - Six reports were received, all from the Atlanta area, with the first sighting being a flock of 15 in the Lawrenceville area on 12 Nov. (fide Bruce Dralle). This is the best early winter flight that we have had for a number of years.

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