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FIRST EVIDENCE FOR DOUBLE-BROODING IN SOUTHEASTERN AMERICAN KESTRELS IN GEORGIA

Timothy F. Breen and John W. Parrish, Jr.

The Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) has been known to breed below the Fall Line in Georgia since the turn of the century (Burleigh 1958). It has been breeding at Fort Gordon Military Base, Richmond County, Georgia at least since the early 1970's (Denton 1975). During 1994 to 1995, more than 50 kestrels fledged from nest boxes at Fort Gordon (Breen 1995, Breen and Parrish unpublished). We report evidence for double-brooding of the Southeastern American Kestrel in Georgia for the first time.

As part of an ongoing study of kestrel breeding at Fort Gordon, 71 nest boxes were placed 4-5 m high on utility poles at the military base. In 1994, three kestrels were fledged from one of only three nest boxes which were used. In addition, two other kestrel pairs fledged 7 young from man-made structures other than nest boxes, and at least two other pairs fledged about 4 or 5 young from unidentified nest sites on the base. There was no evidence of any of the kestrels having bred for a second time on the base in 1994.

In 1995, there were 11 successful nests in nest boxes and two additional nests in other man-made structures at Fort Gordon. All of those nests were completed by the second week in June. Much to our surprise, two pairs of kestrels were observed in early August, 1995, entering previously unused nest boxes that were adjacent to boxes that had been used earlier in the summer. When the two new boxes were checked on 8 August, one box was found to contain two three-week old kestrels, a male and female. The second box was found to contain a two-week old male kestrel. The boxes were checked again on 18 August, and both the male and female kestrels had fledged from the first box, and the male in the second box was near fledging. The fact that the young fledged from the first box by 18 August, means the young would have hatched around 18 July and the eggs would have been laid by 18 June, since kestrels both incubate and fledge in about 30 days each (Johnsgard 1990). The expected date of fledging for the second male kestrel was about 22 August, and therefore, it would have been hatched 22 July and its egg laid around 22 June.

A total of seven pairs of kestrels fledged their young by the end of May. Two of these pairs nested within proximity of the boxes that fledged young from the two second-brood boxes. Assuming those pairs would have spent about three weeks with the young fledglings from the first clutch (Stys 1993), the pairs would have had sufficient time to initiate a second brood in late June.

It is not known why only two pairs produced a second brood. It is likely that the two productive pairs may have been older birds, with sufficient experience to complete second broods. Our observations showing two of the thirteen (15.4%) active pairs of kestrels reared a second brood approximates the percentage of kestrels that double-brooded in a previous report (Toland 1985). Both of the second clutches were small in comparison to all of the first-brood pairs which laid 4-6 eggs and fledged at least four young. Smaller second clutches are typical of Southeastern American Kestrels in Florida (Howell 1932, Smallwood pers. comm.). It is not known why the broods were smaller than those found in second broods of southeastern kestrels in Florida, which generally numbered between 3-4 fledglings per clutch (Smallwood pers. comm.). The relatively dry, hot summer weather was likely the major contributing factor which produced the reduced clutch-size of the second broods in the kestrels in our study.

This is the first report of second-brooding in kestrels in Georgia, to the best of our knowledge. We expect to detect more such cases as the population continues to increase on the Fort Gordon military base. We plan to have additional boxes in place for the 1996 breeding season.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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GENERAL NOTES

BLACK-NECKED STILT IN THE UPPER COASTAL PLAIN - The Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) is a bird you would not expect to find anywhere in the interior of Georgia, according to the *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C., et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986). Therefore, the observation of a single bird of the species at a small, wet weather pond in NE Laurens County, near Dublin, was totally unexpected.

At 1440 on 4 May 1995 the bird was seen feeding on the grassy flats of the pond. The very long red legs, the black upperparts, the white underparts and the white mark above the eye made the identification unquestionable (please see accompanying photograph). I approached to within 75 m, observing through my binoculars. After a very short time, I departed for Dublin to get my camera. At 1730 I returned to the pond, prepared to secure color slides of the bird, using my 35 mm Pentax ME which was equipped with a 100-300 mm zoom lens and a 2X converter. I was able to approach the bird to within about 50 m in my vehicle; then



Black-necked Stilt in Laurens County, 4-5 May 1995. Photo by Allen Rhodes.

waited for it to come nearer as it fed down the grassy flat toward me. It approached to within 25 m or less as I was taking pictures. It was then moving down the flats away from me. I exited the car, attempting to close the distance between me and the bird, but it would not tolerate my presence outside the car, and flew farther away across a neck of the pond.

I returned to Dublin reporting the presence of the bird to Dr. Allen Rhodes. He confirmed the presence of the bird later that afternoon. On the following day, Allen and I both returned to the pond at different times. Allen took several pictures of the bird including the one accompanying this note. A check of the pond on the morning of 6 May revealed that the bird had departed.

The weather during the two days that the bird was present was clear and stable, with no showers or frontal systems in the area. There were Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) and Least Sandpipers (*Calidris minutilla*) also present at the pond; but the stilt was not seen to associate with these, apparently preferring to feed alone.

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SECOND ATLANTA RECORD FOR FRANKLIN'S GULL - On 28 October 1995 the authors were observing the large south pond at the E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton County, Georgia. At 0845 a lone gull caught our attention as it settled onto a mud flat in the middle of the pond. Jeff Sewell joined us shortly after our discovery. Several field marks led us all to the decision that we had a first winter Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*) in our scopes. Foremost was a clearly defined black half-hood toward the back of the head in addition to the diffuse black typical of winter hooded gulls. The most likely gull to be confused with Franklin's would be Laughing Gull (*L. atricilla*), but the latter generally does not have a distinct partial hood in any plumage. In addition, we observed a strikingly large white crescent on both the top and bottom of the eye, and a black bill with no hook. The crescents were distinctly larger, and the bill was smaller than those depicted in the National Geographic Society guide (1987) for *L. atricilla*.

When the bird was in flight, we were able to see a single black subterminal band on the tail with white outer tail feathers and a distinct white terminal edge. Laughing Gull, on the other hand, has a thicker band than what we observed, and it is continuous to the outer feathers. We all agreed on the bird's age based on the subterminal tail band (absent in older birds), brown on the primaries and slate gray on the back. Jeff and Patrick reported that the gull left at 1042 and was not seen again.

Franklin's Gull is an inland species, breeding on freshwater lakes, large marshes, and rivers of the northern plains of the U.S. and Canada

(Burger, et al. 1994). Non-breeding birds are common on irrigated fields. Wintering is concentrated along the western coast of South America south to southern Chile. However, there are casual records along the Gulf Coast of Louisiana and Texas. Migration takes place regularly through western North America, south through southern California, Texas and eastern Mexico, but *L. pipixcan* also moves south on a casual basis from the maritime provinces of Canada along the Atlantic coast to Florida (AOU 1983). Harrison's maps (1983) and Burger (1994) note that casual migration takes place throughout the interior of the U.S.

Although this is only the eleventh record for the state (Johnson 1994) and the second for Atlanta, these data lend credence to Moore (1989, 1991) that this species could possibly be a regular but very rare visitor to the state during spring and fall migration.

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- Russ Wigh, 5650 River Oaks Place, Atlanta, GA 30327 and Patrick Brisse, 4960 Gatehouse Way, Stone Mountain, GA 30088.

INLAND GEORGIA'S THIRD AND THE ATLANTA AREA'S SECOND LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - On 11 November 1994 my wife, Carol, and I found inland Georgia's second Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) which we saw from Lanier Park, a Gwinnett County park on the south side of Lake Lanier (Sewell 1995). That bird was an adult of the subspecies *graellsii*, one of three subspecies, the

others being *fuscus*, the darkest, and *intermedius*. *Graellsii* is the lightest of the three and, with only a very few exceptions, the only subspecies of this European gull seen in North America. In my account of that sighting, I speculated that we should begin seeing more of this recent invader inland based on other inland sightings in neighboring states.

A few months later, on 19 February 1995, Russell Wigh, Patrick Brisse and I set out early on a cold morning in Russell's boat to look for the huge flock of Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) and a few Herring Gulls (*L. argentatus*) I had seen the previous day from Lanier Park point. I had estimated the size of the Ring-billed Gull flock at approximately 10,000 birds, including 10-12 Herring Gulls. This huge number is much larger than the resident winter population of Ring-billed Gulls, so I can only speculate what brought this aggregation to Lake Lanier. Whether the birds were driven south by cold weather farther north or were gathering here for a push to the north, I have no idea, though I suspect the latter. Anyway, we hoped the huge flock would produce a rarity, like the Glaucous Gull (*L. hyperboreus*) seen the previous month (Beaton 1995). This was the Atlanta area's second Glaucous Gull and Lake Lanier's first.

Having been unable to find any huge concentrations of gulls in the main open area at the south end of the lake near Lanier Park, we turned northward up the channel of the Chattahoochee River into Forsyth County. As we neared the entrance to Two Mile Creek Bay I spotted a gull perched on a pier marking the entrance to the bay. In size it was smaller than the nearby Herring Gulls, but considerably larger than the several Ring-billed Gulls in the water near the piers. We got good looks at the bird as it perched atop the pier, then a Herring Gull displaced it, and it flew down to the water where we watched it for several minutes. Finally, it and a first winter Herring Gull took flight as we approached for a closer look, so we were able to see it in flight directly away from us, alongside the Herring Gull.

After the size difference, the next thing I noticed as I compared the subject bird with the nearby Herring Gull, were the darker tertials and primaries of the subject bird contrasting with the paler mantle and scapulars and mostly white head whereas the first winter Herring Gull nearby showed much less overall contrast between the different areas of its body and its folded wing was not as dark as the subject bird's.

The head of the subject bird was mostly all white, except for a dusky area around the eye and a little bit of dusky streaking on the nape. The eyes were dark. The bill was black, lacking a pale base that young Herring Gulls have. The head itself was rounder than the more flat-headed Herring Gulls. The bill was smaller in proportion to the head and, given the shape of the head, rounder than Herring Gull, gave the bird a more "gentle" expression as compared with the fierce look of a Herring Gull.

The mantle and scapulars were, overall, darker than the Herring Gulls, but showed a scaly effect. The tertials on the perched bird were darker than the wing coverts causing a contrasting effect. The Herring Gulls, in contrast, were much more uniformly brown in these areas. The chest was all white with a little dusky mottling on the belly. The legs were a dull yellowish color.

As the bird and the nearby first winter Herring Gull took flight because of the approach of our boat, the contrast with Herring Gull in the wings and tail were easily noted. The subject bird had dark brown primaries and a dark trailing edge to the upper wing that contrasted with the much paler wing coverts. The inner primaries lacked the pale window shown by first winter Herring Gulls. The rumps and tails on the two birds were quite different. The Herring Gull's rump and upper tail were whitish with dark streaking and were about the same color as the mantle, that is, sort of a whitish gray-brown. This color faded into a diffuse, wide dark tail band. By contrast, the subject bird's rump was much whiter with only a little dark streaking. This effect continued over the base of the tail, down to an almost black tail band, narrower and more sharply defined than the Herring Gull's tail band.

Based on these characteristics, I concluded that the bird was an immature Lesser Black-backed Gull. I have had occasion to study immature Lesser Black-backed Gulls on Tybee and Jekyll islands where one or two can often be found from late fall through early spring. Later, at home, after studying the description in Grant (1986), I concluded that the bird was a first winter Lesser Black-backed Gull well along in a moult to first summer. This I base on Grant's comment that the first summer plumage (as the bird nears one year of age) is acquired by moult of the head and body, which gets whiter from January to April, and that, by this age, the legs have usually acquired some yellowishness, as had the subject bird (Grant 1986).

This is only the third inland sighting of this species in Georgia and comes about three months after the second inland sighting, also at Lake Lanier, to which I referred at the beginning of this note. The first inland sighting was of an adult in Macon that stayed from 21 January to 7 March 1989 (Ivey 1989).

The spread of this European gull in North America is detailed in an excellent two part article in *Birding* (Post and Lewis 1995a, 1995b) which also discusses the identification of the three subspecies of the gull. We can surely expect more sightings of this species which is already expected on the coast, but those of us birding the large inland lakes should take particular care as we examine subadult Herring Gulls. On the coast, I have seen at least ten immature Lesser Black-backed Gulls, most of which were in the company of an adult, making them easier to pick out from among the immature Herring Gulls they are usually seen with, but inland, it would be very easy to overlook a lone first or second winter Lesser Black-backed Gull, even those in the company of Herring Gulls.

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LATE YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER IN COLUMBIA COUNTY -

While conducting a Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) along GA highway 232 in Columbia County just west of Lewiston on 30 May 1995, I was confronted with a chip note coming from a scrubby hedgerow that I couldn't immediately identify. The chip was fairly loud, but not musical or particularly sharp. While vaguely familiar, it bothered me that I couldn't name this bird since you are supposed to be able to identify everything you see or hear on your route. I waited until my three official count minutes were up and then decided to try to pish in my mystery bird (pishing or any other method of attracting birds is not allowed on a BBS route). I hoped the bird would respond so I could add it to the survey, and began pishing. The bird came in immediately, not surprising since it was a Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), one of the most "pishable" of all warblers.

This bird was not in very clean plumage, considering this late date. A male, the yellow rump and yellow side patches were visible (but not as bright as they should have been) and the black cheek, crown and breast appeared to be just coming in from the duller winter plumage of this species. The white throat identified it as the "Myrtle" form. The late date and tattered condition of the plumage suggested that this bird was not in prime health, even though it appeared to be moving and feeding normally.

As I drove to my next stop, I pondered this experience. Although I probably know the Yellow-rump's chip as well as I know any chip, I had been unable to place it because it was so unexpected. Most members of this species leave Georgia by the end of April although a few linger into early May. The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C., et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986) lists the previous late spring date as 29 May. The lesson, which I have learned many times, is to not be locked into what you expect at a given time and place.

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LATE FALL SCARLET TANAGER SIGHTING IN FORSYTH COUNTY - On 12 November 1995 at about 1030 Patrick Brisse and I were birding along Lanier Beach Road South, in a residential area east of Cumming, Forsyth County, Georgia. We were going through a winter feeding flock of the usual species in a small overgrown wooded area adjacent to the road. I had already seen several American Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) and at least one Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) feeding on dogwood berries, when Brisse excitedly called my attention to a bird he spotted in the flock. I could tell from the tone of his voice that he had already made an identification. I got my 8X42 binocular on the bird from a range of about 15 m and was very surprised to see, in full view, a winter plumaged male Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) that had popped up in response to our pishing. We looked at it for maybe ten seconds in good light when it became alarmed and flew off deeper into the thicket. We did not see it again.

The bird was obviously a tanager from its size and body and bill shape. Overall, it was olive-green, but the underparts and head were a richer yellow than the back. The entire wing was black. There was no evidence of moult. It did not vocalize.

This sighting exceeds the state's previous late departure date for the species of 2 November 1986 (Moore 1986). Haney et al. (1986) list 20 October 1946 as the late departure date. However, please see Dobbs elsewhere in this issue for an additional November sighting.

Brisse provided me a copy of an excellent work by McNair and Escobar (1993) which examines the occurrence of the Scarlet Tanager in late fall and winter in seven southeastern states (Louisiana through Maryland). They examined the period from 22 November through 8 March. The occasion for their article was Escobar's discovery of a female Scarlet Tanager at his feeder in Charleston, South Carolina, on 28 December 1990. This bird was carefully studied, photographed and seen by a number of observers through 13 January 1991. Based on their study of all records they could obtain, McNair and Escobar concluded that this

was the first adequately documented record of the species in the southeast during the period studied.

Of course, this is not to say that the species has never before been reported during this time period from the southeast. McNair and Escobar found 16 reports of Scarlet Tanagers between 22 November and 8 March in the seven southeastern states studied, but rejected all of these for lack of proper documentation except one: a male was banded on 27 November 1974 near Nashville, Tennessee. Having rejected most sightings, however, they go on to say that they suspect that a few of these sightings are valid and conclude that for the winter season (20 November - 20 March), the Scarlet Tanager is a very rare winter vagrant in the southeast.

In their article, McNair and Escobar made several very interesting points that all of us should keep in mind when confronted with a late fall or winter tanager, especially a female. The authors believe that a number of the 16 reports of Scarlet Tanagers during the study period were misidentified female Summer Tanagers (*Piranga rubra*) which closely resemble female Scarlet Tanagers. They point out that field guides do not adequately address the considerable plumage variability of female Summer and Scarlet Tanagers which has undoubtedly led to confusion in identification. They make another important point about call notes. Citing several studies as well as their own experience with their female Scarlet, which responded to a Summer Tanager call note, but not to the Scarlet Tanager call note, they conclude that it is not reliable to identify a silent tanager by noting which of the call notes of the two species it responds to. One case is noted where a Scarlet Tanager was observed uttering the typical "picky-tucky-tuck" call note of the Summer Tanager.

A final point McNair and Escobar make is that unlike the Scarlet Tanager, the Summer Tanager occurs regularly in the southeast during late fall and winter and occasionally survives all winter, while no Scarlet Tanagers are known to have survived. The normal winter range of the Scarlet Tanager is South America whereas Summer Tanagers winter in Middle America and the West Indies. It is this group of wintering birds that are more likely to be seen in the southeast during the winter than Scarlet Tanagers.

So if you see a tanager, especially a female, after October and before March, when Summer Tanagers begin arriving again, be sure to study it thoroughly, especially if you think you have a Scarlet Tanager, as it will be necessary to document your sighting. Fortunately for Brisse and I on that day, we saw a male.

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LATE SCARLET TANAGER SIGHTING IN CLARKE COUNTY - On a cool, clear and calm 19 November 1995, I opted for an early afternoon bird/exercise jog at Sandy Creek Nature Center just north of Athens, Clarke County, Georgia. On the drive near the center itself, my attention was drawn upward by the busy sounds of a small foraging flock of Carolina Chickadees (*Parus carolinensis*) and Tufted Titmice (*Parus bicolor*), interrupted by the flat rattle of what I hoped was a Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*). The woodpecker was not immediately in evidence (although it did show up later). However, visibility was good through the partially denuded branches, and I soon spied a Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) about 8 m aboveground in a nearby hardwood. A quick movement in the same tree caught my eye and I turned to catch sight of a Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) at approximately the same height. The bird appeared to be a winter plumaged male as attested by its overall yellow color sharply contrasting with the all black wings and tail. This species occurs in the area in the breeding season, but this was my first sight of the bird in its winter garb. The *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C. et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10, 1986) lists a late departure date of 29 October 1946. However, please see the note by Sewell elsewhere in this issue for more information on late Scarlet Tanagers in the southeast.

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FROM THE FIELD

June - July 1995

Fortunately, this breeding season was not marred by any catastrophic weather events, like last July's floods brought by Hurricane Alberto; however, June was wetter than average and July hotter and drier. Perhaps the heat kept many birders out of the field as reports in July fell off significantly from an outstanding June. Wanderers and late and early migrants enlivened the season as did reports of the possibility of breeding by a number of species which seem to be expanding their range or, at least, have isolated colonies outside their usual range, like Scarlet Tanager and Solitary Vireo.

Who knows what to make of the sightings on the coast of a number of shorebird species that are not supposed to be in Georgia at this time of year such as Whimbrel and Marbled Godwit? Are these birds wandering non-breeders which have chosen to summer here?

Reddish Egrets continue their increase in Georgia, setting a record this period for the most seen at one location, though evidence of their nesting in Georgia has yet to be found. And what of the flock of American White Pelicans that seem to have taken up permanent residence on the St. Marys River near Cumberland Island? I hope that someone can check on them during July and August to determine if they spend the entire year here. Are these non-breeding birds which have yet to make the long trip to their mid-continent breeding grounds?

So much is yet to be learned about these and many other species. GOS members can help advance knowledge of our state's avifauna by careful observation and documentation of unusual events and sightings.

Speaking of documentation, readers are reminded that, at the time you read this, most of the sightings of rare birds reported in these field notes have not been documented, or for those for which details have been received by the GOS Checklist and Records Committee, final action for acceptance or rejection has not been taken. The mere appearance in these field notes does not imply acceptance by the committee. I am told that GOS members do not have a good track record in responding to requests from the committee for sighting documentation, so I hope we can do better in the future. A list of species requiring documentation to the committee for acceptance as valid records appears in Table 1. When I speak of documentation, I do not mean that a formal note for *The Oriole* has to be written. You may use any of the several "Rare Bird Report Forms" which have been published from time to time in *The Oriole* and the *Goshawk* or you may choose to use your own narrative style to describe your sighting.

Abbreviations include: ARE - Altamaha River Estuary in Glynn and McIntosh counties, *Annotated Checklist - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds* (Haney, J.C. et al., GOS Occas. Publ. No. 10, 1986); ASWMA -

Table 1. Species requiring documentation for the Georgia Ornithological Society Checklist and Records Committee.

Regular Species List

Red-necked Grebe	Glaucous Gull
Black-capped Petrel	Black-legged Kittiwake
Greater Shearwater	Sabine's Gull
Sooty Shearwater	Arctic Tern
Manx Shearwater	Bridled Tern
Leach's Storm-Petrel	Sooty Tern
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel	Brown Noddy
White-tailed Tropicbird	Dovekie
Red-billed Tropicbird	Razorbill
Great Cormorant	White-winged Dove
Magnificent Frigatebird	Smooth-billed Ani
Reddish Egret	Snowy Owl
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Long-eared Owl
Greater White-fronted Goose	Northern Saw-whet Owl
Ross' Goose	Magnificent Hummingbird
Brant	Black-chinned Hummingbird
Mottled Duck	Anna's Hummingbird
Cinnamon Teal	Broad-tailed Hummingbird
Eurasian Wigeon	Allen's Hummingbird
King Eider	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
Harlequin Duck	Alder Flycatcher
Common Merganser	Least Flycatcher
Masked Duck	Say's Phoebe
Northern Goshawk	Vermilion Flycatcher
Rough-legged Hawk	Western Kingbird
Golden Eagle	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Plain Chachalaca	Florida Scrub-Jay
Yellow Rail	Bewick's Wren
Black Rail	Bicknell's Thrush
Limpkin	Varied Thrush
Whooping Crane	Sprague's Pipit
Long-billed Curlew	Warbling Vireo
Red Phalarope	Black-throated Gray Warbler
Pomarine Jaeger	Townsend's Warbler
South Polar Skua	Kirtland's Warbler
Franklin's Gull	Mourning Warbler
Little Gull	MacGillivray's Warbler
Iceland Gull	Western Tanager

Table 1. Continued.

Black-headed Grosbeak	Snow Bunting
Green-tailed Towhee	Western Meadowlark
American Tree Sparrow	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Lark Bunting	Bullock's Oriole
Harris' Sparrow	Red Crossbill
Lapland Longspur	Common Redpoll

Provisional Species List

Northern Fulmar	Long-tailed Jaeger
Masked Booby	Roseate Tern
Brown Booby	White-winged Tern
Common Eider	Burrowing Owl
Swainson's Hawk	Bell's Vireo
Mountain Plover	Painted Redstart
Hudsonian Godwit	Shiny Cowbird

Hypothetical Species List

Any species now listed as hypothetical (see GOS Occas. Publ. No. 10) or not previously recorded in Georgia.

Altamaha State Waterfowl Management Area at Darien, McIntosh County; CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Fulton and Cobb counties; DNR - Georgia State Department of Natural Resources; ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton County; Kennesaw Mt. - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, near Marietta, Cobb County, Is. - Island, m.ob. - many observers; and NWR - National Wildlife Refuge,

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

COMMON LOON - One bird found at the ELHLAF on 2 June by Carol Lambert was last seen on 4 June by Patrick Brisse and Terry Moore. At least one and sometimes two were seen in Doboy Sound (south end of Sapelo Is.) up through 10 June (Brad Winn, Doris Cohrs). One basic plumaged bird was seen at the DeKalb Reservoir (DeKalb Co.) on 8 and 31 July by Jeff Sewell.

PIED-BILLED GREBE - Rare for the Atlanta area was a bird which remained through the month of June at the ELHLAF (m.ob.). Other sightings came from Oconee Co. on 3 June by Paul Sykes, Dooly Co. on 4 June (adult and 3 young by Dan Guynn) and one in McIntosh Co. on 14 June by Jeff Sewell, Pierre Howard and Malcolm Hodges.

WILSON'S STORM-PETREL - One bird was seen on the inshore side of Cumberland Is., in the St. Mary's River, on 24 June by Mark Welford. Details have already been published (*Oriole* 60:45). This apparently is the first inshore sighting of this species for Georgia.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - Paul Sykes had an excellent count of 60-70 in early June at the Kings Bay Naval Base in Camden Co. This flock has been here since last fall. On 27 July, Brad Winn counted 29 near Ossabaw Is. As this is the first report from this location, it is impossible to say whether this flock was just passing through or had been there for some time. It may be time to change the status of this species from "rare visitor" to "locally common winter resident" in the *Annotated Checklist*.

ANHINGA - Inland sightings included a bird in Clarke Co. on 3 June (Eugenia Thompson), two birds in Dooly Co. on 4 June (Dan Guynn) and six on 22 July in Macon (Paul Johnson et al.). This species is definitely being seen more frequently inland and farther north than in previous years.

LEAST BITTERN - Any nesting away from the coast is noteworthy so a sighting of two adults with three young at a Greene Co. marsh on 25 June was exciting (Billy Dunbar, Paul Sykes). Giff Beaton believes he had two pairs of adults and three young on 8 July at the same location.

GREAT WHITE HERON - This white race of the Great Blue Heron is quite rare in Georgia, there being fewer than 15 records, so one seen on 10 June at the ASWMA was quite an event (Paul Raney).

GREAT EGRET - Of note for the Atlanta area was a pair of adults with two young seen at Cochran Shoals, CRNRA, on 4 July by Mark Davis. In Clayton Co. on 17 July, Carol Lambert discovered about 100 in a marshy area being cleared for a new reservoir.

LITTLE BLUE HERON - This species is rare in the mountains, so four seen during July at a pond north of Dahlonega were noteworthy (Kent Ford).

There were several reports from the piedmont area, the highest count being seven in Greene Co. on 5 July (Giff Beaton).

REDDISH EGRET - This species was reported twice in June with a very rare white phase bird being reported from Gould's Inlet between St. Simons and Sea Islands on 14 June by Jeff Sewell and Pierre Howard and a dark phase bird seen in the ARE on 29 June by Brad Winn. Two were seen at Ossabaw Is. on 2 July by Brad Winn, three at St. Catherines Is. on 22 July by Emil Urban and Royce Hayes and eight at Ossabaw Is. on 28 July by Brad Winn and Jim Ozier. This last number is the highest count ever for Georgia on one day at one location.

CATTLE EGRET - Chris Eberly discovered a heronry of about 100 nesting pairs in southeast Harris Co. during the period.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - Very unusual for the Atlanta area was an immature at the ELHLAF on 20 and 21 July (Carol Lambert and Kevin Danchisen).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - Two birds seen in Floyd Co. on 2 July by Gordon Hight apparently nested. Gordon had an adult there beginning in late May through June and later saw an adult and one immature. Also, two were seen during June at the CRNRA, Cobb Co. (Jeff Sewell) and one on 24 June in Greene Co. (Paul Sykes).

WHITE IBIS - Unusual were the reports from the Atlanta area where one bird was seen in the Dunwoody area of DeKalb Co. in late June by Jack Carusos and an immature in NE Atlanta on 6 July by Jerry Brunner. Four immatures were seen in Greene Co. on 2 July by Paul Sykes and Billy Dunbar and three were seen in Jones Co. on 27 June by Paul Johnson.

GLOSSY IBIS - On 14 June, 12 were seen at the ASWMA by Pierre Howard, Jeff Sewell and Malcolm Hodges. Malcolm said that no nests had been located this summer.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL - Various numbers, up to three, were reported in the marshes near the Jekyll Is. Causeway during the first half of June (m.ob.). One was seen on 20 June in Camden Co. (Paul Sykes) and one bird was seen at Ossabaw Is. on 2 July by Brad Winn.

WOOD STORK - This was indeed a very good year for this species! John Robinette of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service reported 117 nests at Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., with an average of two young per nest (fide Charles Seabrook, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 16 June). Tommy Patterson reported two on 12 July and eight on 23 July at different locations in Laurens Co., where they are no longer unexpected after the breeding season.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - Carol Lambert had a very rare sighting of a female plumaged bird at the ELHLAF on 13 June. This is much later than the *Annotated Checklist* late departure date of 24 April.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - Two surprising reports came from the Atlanta area: one was seen on 18 June at the ELHLAF by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert and then another was seen in the same place on 29 July by Patrick Brisse and Jeff Sewell.

MOTTLED DUCK - Thirty-five were reported from the ASWMA on 14 June by Jeff Sewell and Pierre Howard. Other observers have described these birds as American Black/Mottled Ducks without specifying their belief as to the identification. However, until just the past few years I

don't remember any reports of "Black" ducks from the coastal areas so I'm sure all these sightings emanate from the South Carolina releases. What we don't know and would appreciate some information on, is the extent of interbreeding between this population and whatever population of nesting American Black Ducks there is in North and South Carolina.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL - Two males were seen on 14 June at the ASWMA by Jeff Sewell, Pierre Howard and Doris Cohrs. One male was seen in Laurens Co. on 14 and 16 June by Tommy Patterson. The *Annotated Checklist* states the species is accidental in the summer in the piedmont and gives no summer records on the coast.

GADWALL - On 2 June, Carol Lambert discovered a female plumaged bird at the ELHLAF. This is only the second Georgia summer record, the other being from the coast (*Oriole* 53:53).

RING-NECKED DUCK - A male spent the entire months of June and July at the ELHLAF (m.ob.).

HOODED MERGANSER - A surprising number of sightings of this species were received. One female was at the DeKalb Reservoir, DeKalb Co., on 2 June (Jeff Sewell). Two birds were seen in Floyd Co. on 4 June (Gordon Hight). Another immature was seen at the ELHLAF on 20 and 21 June by Carol Lambert.

BLACK VULTURE - The *Annotated Checklist* states that this species is rare or accidental in the mountains, so one seen on 18 June at Rabun Bald, Rabun Co., was noteworthy (Bill Blakeslee).

OSPREY - Two birds remained at Blalock Lake (part of the ELHLAF) through the summer following the destruction of their nest in May by high winds (Patrick Brisse).

MISSISSIPPI KITE - One bird was seen in the Athens area on 3 June by Paul Sykes. Another bird was seen in north Atlanta (along I-285) on 5 July by Giff Beaton and Kevin Danchisen. This species is seen almost annually in the Atlanta area now. Other inland sightings include one in Houston Co. on 3 July (Dan Guyann), one in Laurens Co. on 12 July (Tommy Patterson), and two near Macon in late July (Ken Clark). Shiela Willis reported that two nests near Waycross were reported to her during the period.

BALD EAGLE - One bird was seen in the Duluth area, Gwinnett Co., on 1 June by Margaret Hatfield, another was seen several times in the vicinity of the ELHLAF during June and July (fide Carol Lambert) and an adult was seen at Little Cumberland Is. on 19 June and an immature on 2 July at Ossabaw Is., both by Brad Winn.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK - This species, rarely seen in summer, was well reported with eight sightings from the Atlanta and Macon areas. Very unusual was the report by Sara Denham that a resident of north Fulton Co. brought in two fledglings to the Chattahoochee Nature Center on 22 June. These birds were cared for and released later in the summer. This is only the third certain evidence of nesting in Georgia I can find even though it seems that every summer we have a few sightings north of the Fall Line. I hope a note will be sent to *The Oriole* to document this important event.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK - One of the two birds seen in Greene Co. on 17 June by Jeff Sewell was a very rare dark morph. Only about one bird in 50,000 is said to be a dark morph per *Hawks in Flight* (Dunn et al.,

Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988). This species, a very rare breeder in coastal areas, was seen on 9 June near Midway (Paul Sykes).

AMERICAN KESTREL - This species is now considered to be a rare breeder in Georgia. Noteworthy sightings were a pair at Berry College in Rome on 5 June (Nelson Dobbs) and four birds in Newton Co. on 16 June where they bred last year (Billy Dunbar). In Turner Co., one seen on 3 June above a DNR nest box indicates the nest box program may be helping.

MERLIN - Extremely unusual for this time of year was a bird seen at the ELHLAF on 18 June by Jeff Sewell. This would appear to be the first summer record of this species in Georgia.

PEREGRINE FALCON - Single birds were seen in downtown Atlanta on 15 June by Russell Wigh and in Rabun Co. on 17 June (Paul Raney).

WILD TURKEY - Unusual for an urban area was a bird heard near the marsh at Kennesaw Mt. on 17 June by Giff Beaton.

BLACK RAIL - A marsh in Greene Co. hosted as many as seven during the period. This was the high count on 24 June (Paul Sykes, Bill Blakeslee).

KING RAIL - At least one bird was seen or heard at a marsh in Greene Co. during the period (Paul Sykes, Giff Beaton, Bill Blakeslee).

VIRGINIA RAIL - One bird was heard at the CRNRA on 3 June by Jeff Sewell. Two others were heard on 17 June at the Kennesaw Mt. marsh by Giff Beaton and three were heard the same day at the Greene Co. marsh by Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Billy and Brenda Dunbar and George Griffith. At the Greene Co. marsh, six were heard on 5 July by Giff Beaton and Kevin Danchisen.

AMERICAN COOT - One bird was seen during the entire months of June and July at the DeKalb Reservoir (DeKalb Co.) by Jeff Sewell. Another spent the entire months of June and July at the ELHLAF with two birds being seen there early in June (Carol Lambert). Doris Cohrs reported one from Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., on 12 June. Another bird was seen at the ASWMA on 14 June by Jeff Sewell and Pierre Howard.

PIPING PLOVER - I was surprised when I checked the *Annotated Checklist* that the 28 July sighting of two on Ossabaw Is. by Brad Winn did not beat the early arrival date of this rare winter coastal resident, the earliest date being 18 July.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER - The sight of 46 on 24 July in the ARE must have been spectacular (Brad Winn).

BLACK-NECKED STILT - Three seen on 3 June near Valdosta (Kevin Danchisen) continue a spate of recent inland sightings, though there are still fewer than ten inland sightings for Georgia.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS - Early arriving fall migrants were one on 11 July in Laurens Co. (Tommy Patterson), one on 15 July at the ELHLAF (Jeff Sewell) and 12 in Macon on 22 July (Paul Johnson, Ty Ivey, Nancy Gobris, et al.). All of these beat the *Annotated Checklist* early date of 28 July.

YELLOWLEGS (sp.) - Rare for the time of year was a yellowlegs of unknown species seen at the ELHLAF on 10 June by Billy and Brenda Dunbar. Four other birds, of unknown species, were seen at the ELHLAF on 6 July by Carol Lambert.

WILLET - This rare inland transient was spotted at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co. on 26 July (Terry Johnson).

WHIMBREL - Seven sightings were reported for the period with at least 10 birds being seen (minus probable repeat sightings). High counts were three on 4 June at Jekyll Is. (Kevin Danchisen), three on 8 July at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is., (Brad Winn) and five on 24 July at the ARE (Brad Winn). The *Annotated Checklist*, published in 1986, lists no summer records.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW - Very rare for the summer was a bird seen in the ARE on 29 June and 7 July by Brad Winn.

MARbled GODWIT - Nine birds were seen in the ARE on 29 June and 7 July by Brad Winn for a rare summer sighting. Whether these birds were summering or were early migrants is impossible to say. The *Annotated Checklist* mentions no summer records.

RUDDY TURNSTONE - Four birds seen at Jekyll Is. on 10 June by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert were noteworthy as the species is not common in the summer.

RED KNOT - As with several shorebird species mentioned here, this is a species whose migratory movements along our coast are poorly known. Brad Winn, a DNR biologist, has access to places most of us never go, such as the ARE where on 14 June he counted 300 and then on 24 July he tallied 1000+. Like the Whimbrel and Marbled Godwit summer records mentioned above, whether the June knots were headed north or south or were non-breeders that had stopped there for the summer can only be speculated.

SEMI-PALMATED SANDPIPER - Unusual for the Atlanta area were two birds at the ELHLAF on 13 June (Carol Lambert) and one there on 18 June (Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert). This last bird was in a very worn, faded plumage. More usual was a fall arrival in Laurens Co. on 20 July (Tommy Patterson).

LEAST SANDPIPER - Also unusual for Atlanta was a bird at the ELHLAF on 24 June (Patrick Brisse).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - Most records of this species in Georgia are of fall immatures so a truly rare event was the adult plumaged bird seen by Hunter Patterson on 23 July on St. Catherines Is.

DUNLIN - One bird seen at Jekyll Is. on 10 June by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert was unusual.

DOWITCHER (sp.) - A rather surprising count of 450 of unknown species, but probably Short-billed, was made in the ARE on 14 June by Brad Winn.

AMERICAN WOODCOCK - Although it is a breeder over much of the state, it is rarely reported during the summer and then generally from the more northern areas. Brad Winn saw one near Darien on 29 June for a rare coastal summer report.

PARASITIC JAEGER - One bird at St. Simons Is. on 17 June was a rare summer sighting (Brad Bergstrom fide Doris Cohrs).

LITTLE GULL - What was apparently the same bird which was seen in May, was found at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is., on 6 June by Malcolm Hodges and last seen there on 10 June by Paul Raney. Please see *Oriole* 60:37-38 for details of this first well documented sighting for Georgia.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - This is another coastal species usually not seen during the summer. On 10 June and again on 14 June, one was seen at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is. (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).

CASPIAN TERN - One bird was seen along the Chattahoochee River near Roswell on 30 July by Eran Tomer for the only inland report.

COMMON TERN - Unusual for the summer were one at Jekyll Is. on 10 June (Paul Raney) and five at St. Simons Is. on 14 June (Pierre Howard, Jeff Sewell). The late date in the *Annotated Checklist* is 21 May.

FORSTER'S TERN - One bird was seen at the ELHLAF on 13 July by Brock Hutchins for the only inland report.

BLACK TERN - The only report came from the ARE beginning with 10 on 29 June with 130 on 24 July and 150 on 28 July (Brad Winn). It is unusual that no inland reports were received. Did anyone fail to report your sightings of this species inland?

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE - This species continues to increase in the Brunswick area and several other areas around the state. A new location was Americus where two were seen by Mark Oberle on 4 June. Hunter Patterson saw one at Sapelo Is. on 2 July for the first sighting there.

BURROWING OWL - At least one bird was still in the Bainbridge area on 3 June (Kevin Danchisen). A pair was discovered here in March, but no evidence of nesting was found and at the time of this sighting it was thought that only one bird remained. This sighting, though not the first in Georgia, should result in this species being moved from the Provisional Species List to the Regular List.

WHIP-POOR-WILL - One bird was heard calling in McIntosh Co. on 11 June for a very unusual summer report (Brad Winn). Tom Patterson had three birds calling in Laurens Co. on 17 July but no Chuck-Wills-Widows were calling. Perhaps they had already departed the area or have Chuck-will's-widows been displaced by Whip-poor-wills?

WILLOW FLYCATCHER - One bird was at the marsh in Greene Co. on 17 June (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert, Billy and Brenda Dunbar and George Griffith) and again on 5 July (Giff Beaton and Kevin Danchisen). On 15 June, Bruce Hallett located one nest at the species' usual location near Dillard, Rabun Co.

LEAST FLYCATCHER - The first Georgia nest in many years was found on 14 June in Rabun Co. near the North Carolina line (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen). In early June, young were being fed by the adults (Joel Hitt).

GRAY KINGBIRD - One seen on 8 June at a new location, Camden Co., was heartening news (Paul Sykes).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - A bird was seen on one day only, on 15 June, in the Valdosta area by Kristi Avera.

HORNED LARK - Occurring south of its normal range, a singing bird was seen in Decatur Co. on 15 June (Richard West fide Ricky Davis).

CLIFF SWALLOW - On 8 July, Jeff Dixon counted 25, including juveniles, at Carter's Lake, Gilmer Co.

BARN SWALLOW - A colony of over 40 nests was found on a concrete pier on 8 June in Camden Co. (Paul Sykes). This is the southernmost nesting locale on the coast reported to date.

COMMON RAVEN - Reports of up to three were received from both of our reliable locations, Rabun Bald, Rabun Co., and Brasstown Bald, Union Co., but no nest was reported this year.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - Two very intriguing reports came from Rabun Co., both on the same day, 18 June. On Rabun Bald, Bill

- Blakeslee had a female and at Burrell's Ford on the Chattooga River, Donna and Dennis Forsythe located a territorial pair.
- WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** - This species, for some unknown reason, is rare in central Georgia, so one seen on 3 June in Gray is noteworthy (Betty Perry fide Paul Johnson).
- WINTER WREN** - Once again, the species was located on Rabun Bald, Rabun Co., where on 17 June Bill Blakeslee had two birds singing in separate locations.
- GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET** - An exciting report that may indicate nesting of this species in the state was a singing territorial male found by Donna and Dennis Forsythe on 18 June at Burrell's Ford on the Chattooga River, Rabun Co. Nesting of this species has already been confirmed just a few miles away in South Carolina.
- VEERY** - An encouraging note was received from a location where the species is known to nest. On 17 June at Brasstown Bald, Union/Towns counties, Bill Blakeslee counted 12 birds.
- CEDAR WAXWING** - Further evidence of its breeding in the mountains was reported. On 4 July, a nest was located at Brasstown Bald, Union Co. (Billy and Brenda Dunbar). Dot Freeman found two nests: one on 6 July in Lumpkin Co. (adults feeding four young) and on 10 July near Helen, White Co. (two adults building nest).
- SOLITARY VIREO** - On 11 June, on their breeding bird survey route, Jerry and Marie Amerson counted five along a stretch of road in the Piedmont NWR, an amazing number so far away from the mountains. An early migrant or perhaps a rare local breeder was seen on 16 July at Kennesaw Mt. (fide Bruce Dralle).
- BLUE-WINGED X GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** - A hybrid was seen on 29 June in Augusta for a first summer record for either of the species (Richard Lux).
- NORTHERN PARULA** - More than the usual number of reports came from the Atlanta area during June with singing males near Stockbridge on 3 June (Terry Moore and Patrick Brisse), near Stone Mountain from 15 June through the end of July (Patrick Brisse) and near Marietta on 18 June (Giff Beaton). This species is a rare breeder in the Atlanta area.
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** - One bird in the Darien area on 2 June was quite late (Doris Cohrs).
- BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** - The first migrants were two birds seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 6 July by Giff Beaton. A total of 59 birds were reported from Kennesaw Mt. during the month of July with the high count of 8 on 30 July (fide Bruce Dralle).
- BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** - The first fall arrivals seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 19 July beat the early arrival date there by two days (Giff Beaton).
- PRAIRIE WARBLER** - One seen on 2 July on Sapelo Is. was very unusual there (Hunter Patterson).
- CERULEAN WARBLER** - The first migrants were three birds seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 9 July (fide Bruce Dralle). A total of 20 birds were reported from Kennesaw Mt. during the month with the high count of 5 on 28 July (fide Bruce Dralle).
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** - Tom Patterson had three birds in Laurens Co. on 12 July which he believes to be very early migrants and not nesting birds.

- AMERICAN REDSTART** - The first fall migrant was a bird seen in southeastern Cherokee Co. on 16 July by Terry Moore.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER** - Single birds at the Oaky Woods WMA (Houston Co.) on 10 June (Dan Guynn and Larry Ross) and another bird at the Piedmont NWR on 11 June (Jerry and Marie Amerson) were unusual and may represent isolated breeding populations.
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER** - Several reports of single birds were noted, but the most unusual report was of one in the Darien area heard and seen throughout the period (Don and Doris Cohrs). The *Annotated Checklist* says the species is absent from the immediate coastal area.
- SCARLET Tanager** - Once again, reports were received from the Atlanta area furthering speculation that it nests in that area. Even farther south, Terry Johnson saw one on 21 July in the Rum Creek WMA, Monroe Co., and Lisa Hurt saw an adult male feeding a fledgling on 1 July at Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park on Pine Mountain in Harris Co. These reports are the most southerly summer sightings that I recall. The species seems to be expanding its breeding range southward in the state.
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** - Fewer than the usual numbers were tallied by Bill Blakeslee et al. on the 17 and 18 June trips to Brasstown (Union/Towns counties) and Rabun Balds (Rabun Co.). J.W. Lipscomb reported a pair at his feeder in south Fulton Co. on 28 June. It is hoped details of this sighting will be submitted to *The Oriole*.
- DICKCISSEL** - One was reported in Floyd Co. in mid-June by Bill Harbin and another, on 7 June, was seen in Greene Co. (Pierre Howard). No nests were found this year.
- BACHMAN'S SPARROW** - New locations were discovered: on 16 and 22 July a singing territorial male was found in Oglethorpe Co. (Marion Dobbs) and while doing research in Talbot and Harris counties, Chris Eberly had several sightings of the species. On the other hand, Jane Rodriguez of Albany expressed concern that she did not find any this year while working her breeding bird atlas area.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE** - The isolated breeding population near Macon continues to do well with four singing males on 1 June including a pair feeding young (Pierre Howard). One was seen at the CRNRA on 4 July by Mark Davis for a very unusual summer record for this species in the Atlanta area.

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

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Once again I am indebted to Rose Payne for compiling the data for the Author and Species indices which appear in this issue. Her efforts on behalf of *The Oriole* and the GOS are truly appreciated. Without the help of GOS volunteers like Rose, this job would be much more difficult than it already is.

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