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The Oriole, a quarterly journal of Georgia ornithology, publishes original articles that advance the study of birds in the state of Georgia and adjoining regions. *The Oriole* welcomes submission of articles describing the occurrence, distribution, behavior, or identification of birds in Georgia, as well as scientific studies from all fields of ornithology.

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THE ORIOLE

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THE BIRDS OF THOMAS COUNTY, GEORGIA: REVISED THROUGH 1997

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The first account of the known birds of Thomas County, Georgia was published by Crawford and Dozier (1973). Crawford and Neel (1976) later published a major update, which has been subsequently followed by a series of papers and notes (Crawford 1987, 1988, 1991, 1994; Neel et al. 1991; Watt and Crawford 1978; Crawford and Neel, 1997). This paper provides a revised account of the species list of the birds of Thomas County through 1997. An extensive update is justified because a quarter century has allowed a thorough reassessment of all species, and during that time many changes have occurred and new discoveries have been made.

Terms of relative abundance follow Mengel (1965:3): "with occasional probable lapses, and once in a while with qualified deviations, terms denoting quantity have been used as defined herewith."

Abundant: *considering the conspicuousness, habitat, and spatial requirements of the species* [italicized considerations apply to each below], very many are recorded per unit area of available habitat; *especially for resident species* marginal and even poor habitats, as well as optimum ones, are likely to be occupied. Term rarely used.

Common: large numbers are recorded; all or nearly all optimum, and probably some marginal, habitats are occupied.

Fairly common: small to moderate numbers are recorded; all optimum habitat is not occupied at any given time.

Uncommon: small numbers are recorded; much seemingly optimum habitat is unoccupied at any given time.

Rare: very small numbers are recorded. Many seemingly ideal habitats must be investigated to find the species, but a few may be found each season.

Very rare: may not be recorded at all in one or even in several

consecutive seasons; a few records, however, should accumulate in a decade.

Casual: describes individuals of a species (usually at best very rare) outside of their "normal (typical)" range, but not so far that their occurrence should occasion great surprise. With adequate observation a few records should accumulate in half a century, or perhaps less. With increasing knowledge, species thought of as casual may prove rather to be very rare but of regular occurrence.

No matter how carefully these terms are defined and applied, cases arise that cannot be handled properly without qualification. Also, cases of one or two records are often allowed to define themselves. Permanent resident refers to the species, not necessarily to individuals. A comparison of this and the 1973 paper will reveal changes in several species' status. Many are reconsiderations or result from more careful attention to Mengel's definitions. When changes reflect biology rather than syntax, however, I have tried to point that out by using phrases like "formerly ... but now...", "recently," or "previously." Previously published record documentation has been omitted.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Common Loon *Gavia immer*

A very rare (6 occurrences) spring transient (31 Mar 1981–7 May 1960); one fall record (7 Nov 1972). Usually sighted flying overhead in spring (Crawford and Neel 1976).

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*

A fairly common permanent resident, less frequently seen in summer. Volant juveniles appear in July (4 Jul 1988, 17 Jul 1991). The species undoubtedly breeds, but no dependent downy young have been recorded.

Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Casual (20 Nov 1972, 30 Dec 1962).

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*

Formerly casual, now an uncommon resident, more frequent in winter. There is no direct evidence of local breeding.

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*

A fairly common resident; nests with eggs found on 16 Mar 1972.

American Bittern *Botaurus lentiginosus*

Very rare, or rarely detected, in winter (2 Sep 1960–5 May 1945).

Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis*

Only one recorded (22 Jul 1984), but undoubtedly more frequent in summer.

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*

A common permanent resident. Like the Anhinga, and some other ardeids, usually seen as solitary, scattered individuals. Nests with young found on 26 Apr 1972. Apparently territorial, at least towards the Great Egret, for I saw a Great Blue, neck extended, chase a Great Egret all about a farm pond on 19 Dec 1992. Another Great Blue found a small (2 x 4 m) goldfish pond in a suburban neighborhood of Thomasville in the mid-1980s; over several days, the heron systematically devoured all the costly fish. The longevity record (24 yr) for this species belongs to Thomas County (Crawford and Neel 1997).

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

A common permanent resident. Nests with eggs found on 26 Apr 1972. Usually solitary, but I have counted 65, with other birds, at a small receding farm pond (10 Sep 1995).

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

A fairly common summer resident (14 Apr 1962–12 Sep 1959); there is no direct evidence of breeding.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*

A resident, uncommon in summer and rare in winter. Nests with young on 27 Apr 1972. Formerly more frequent.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*

Formerly casual, but now a rare and perhaps increasingly frequent summer resident (14 Apr 1996–10 Sep 1987; one 13 Nov 1959). Fully alternate-plumaged birds suggest local breeding.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

A resident, abundant in summer, but very rare in winter. Unknown locally prior to May 1959. Nests with eggs on 27 Apr 1972.

Green Heron *Butorides virescens*

A common summer resident (28 Mar 1987–24 Oct 1959). Casual in winter (27 Dec 1981, 21 Dec 1982).

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Casual in winter (four records, 22 Dec 1963–11 Apr 1972).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*

Rare in spring and summer (31 Mar 1973–4 Jul 1995). No direct evidence of breeding.

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*

A resident, common in summer and rare (but increasing?) in winter. No direct evidence of breeding. Virtually all winter birds have been immatures.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

Casual (18 and 30 Jun 1960 [different sites]; 24 Sep 1994).

Roseate Spoonbill *Ajaia ajaja*

Casual (9 Aug–10 Sep 1995). This individual, in early Basic II or late Basic I plumage (with a slight feathering of the head that was lost during its stay), was at a receding farm pond, usually with a large mixed flock of Wood Storks, Black Vultures, and Great Egrets.

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*

An uncommon summer resident, perhaps year-round (10 Feb 1981–21 Nov 1990). Nests with young found on 29 Apr 1992.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*

Fairly common resident; no direct evidence of breeding.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

Common resident; no direct evidence of breeding. Recently seen often within Thomasville, including the remarkable sight, on 3 Nov 1992, of a Turkey Vulture in the middle of busy Gordon Avenue, eating a dead Gray Squirrel in front of Archbold Memorial Hospital.

Fulvous Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*

Casual, but the one occurrence consisted of large flocks (11 Jan–6 Feb 1974; Neel and Crawford 1974). A more recent occurrence was in adjacent Brooks County, Georgia, on 28 Nov 1983 (taxidermy mount seen).

Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Casual (? Mar 1958, two on 12 Dec 1977). The latter two photographed, with many observers.

Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Casual (two on 5–11 Jan 1986). Photographed.

Snow Goose *Chen caerulescens*

White phase: Casual: "a large flock" on ? Oct 1924 (Burleigh 1958:128), 23 Dec 1975.

Blue phase: Casual: 5 Dec 1959, 7–17 Nov 1996.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Rare in winter (16 Oct 1962–7 May 1959). More frequent recently, but status is clouded by widespread introductions.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

A common permanent resident. Pair formation and nest-site selection begins in February (pairs in habitat; 12 and 18 Feb 1989, 15 Feb 1997, 17 Feb 1991). Downy young seen on 27 Apr 1972. On 12 Mar 1989 a Wood Duck caused considerable soot damage to a house in Boston, Georgia, after it flew down a house chimney. Although well-documented, the habit of these birds to nest far from a suitable rearing pond, insuring a perilous trek by mother and downy young, is still amazing to see. I have three records of such family groups seen among Thomasville's busiest streets and neighborhoods: 28 May 1993 (one chick), 29 May 1991 (with four chicks in a motel swimming pool), and 19 Jun 1995 (nine chicks).

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca*

A fairly common winter resident (24 Dec 1960 and 1967–6 Feb 1974). Almost certainly, the extreme dates for this duck and others are inadequate.

American Black Duck *Anas rubripes*

A very rare winter visitant (21 Dec 1975–26 Apr 1972).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

An uncommon winter resident (22 Nov 1959–26 Apr 1959). There is at least one breeding record of an apparently feral pair (with 4 young, 18 May 1988).

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

A fairly common winter resident (2 Sep 1958–6 Feb 1974).

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*

An uncommon winter resident, but more frequently seen in migration than most other ducks (16 Aug 1973 and 1996–30 Apr 1979).

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Rare in winter (29 Nov 1966–6 Feb 1974).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Very rare in winter (22 Dec 1974–5 Feb 1975).

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

Fairly common in winter (17 Dec 1978–11 Mar 1989).

Canvasback *Aythya valisineria*

Casual in winter (5 Dec 1974–7 Mar 1960).

Redhead *Aythya americana*

Casual in winter (3 Nov 1996–29 Dec 1964).

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

Common in winter (3 Nov 1995–20 May 1952). One, probably crippled, was seen 30 Jun 1960.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Uncommon in winter (24 Oct 1959–28 Apr 1962).

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Casual in winter: 22 Nov 1997 (hunting kill seen), 18 Dec 1977, 21 Dec 1975, and 30 Dec 1969. Carney et al. (1975) report seven additional records, but with no dates.

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola*

Rare in winter (30 Nov 1973–? Mar 1958).

Hooded Merganser *Lophodytes cucullatus*

Rare in winter (20 Oct 1959–16 May 1959).

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Casual in winter (8 Nov 1974 [3], 6 May 59).

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Rare in winter (8 Aug 1993–9 Apr 1984). The enigmatic August record was of two alternate-plumaged males, seen only once, even though the pond was scanned weekly for months prior to and after the sighting. The early date, the plumage, and the recent southward extension of the species' breeding range (Stevenson and Anderson 1994:142) suggest post-breeding dispersal rather than migration.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare in winter (24 Aug 1980–3 May 1997). More frequent recently.

Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus*

Only known locally since 1980, now very rare in summer, and perhaps increasing (8 Mar 1980–9 Aug 1994).

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis*

An uncommon summer resident (27 Apr 1962–23 Aug 1997), with successful nests reported. More frequent recently, especially within Thomasville's wooded neighborhoods. In the late 1990s, sightings indicated at least three and possibly four pairs in town each year.

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Formerly casual, now a rare and perhaps an uncommon resident. Nest with young seen on 24 Jun 1997, a rather late date for this species. In 1997, sightings and newspaper reports indicated four pairs in Thomas County, and two other pairs just across the borders of adjacent counties.

Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Fairly common in winter (20 Aug 1959–31 May 1958).

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*

Fairly common in winter, and previously thought to occur sporadically in summer, but that latter notion was undoubtedly erroneous. Well-known identification problems within this genus have contributed to the confusion, and have resulted in some rather weak extreme dates (25 Oct 1961–26 Apr 1987).

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*

Fairly common in winter, and very rare in summer. Undoubtedly breeds, but evidence is anecdotal.

Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*

A common resident; undoubtedly breeds, but direct evidence is lacking.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*

A fairly common summer resident (7 Apr 1960–11 Oct 1959); probably breeds, but no direct evidence.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

A common permanent resident, which undoubtedly breeds, but there is no direct evidence. There are two records for "Kriders" Red-tailed Hawk (14 Jan 1969 [specimen] and 31 Dec 1989–17 Jan 1990).

Rough-legged Hawk *Buteo lagopus*
One record (February 1925).

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*
Two records of collected birds (27 Dec 1939 and 31 Mar 1963).

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*
Common in winter and very rare in summer, the latter supported only by anecdotes with no sure evidence of breeding. One seen 31 Jul 1994 probably reflects the earliest arrival of winter birds from the north.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Very rare in winter (7 Oct 1961 and 1989–18 Apr 1960).

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Casual, perhaps very rare in winter (20 Jan 1957, 16 Jan 1960, 29 Nov 1964).

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*
A permanent resident, probably uncommon, but its wary nature and extreme population swings caused by periodic disease outbreaks and other factors fog the picture.

Northern Bobwhite *Colinus virginianus*
An abundant permanent resident in the carefully maintained hunting lands of the Red Hills Physiographic Region, which occupies the southern half of the county; uncommon and apparently decreasing in the heavily settled and cultivated northern portion.

King Rail *Rallus elegans*
Rare, and probably resident, but summer records are from the late 1950s, and are anecdotal. Most records are from Christmas Bird Counts.

Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola*
A rare winter resident (21 Nov 1959–3 May 1964).

Sora *Porzana carolina*
Very rare in winter (19 Sep 1949–9 May 1940).

Purple Gallinule *Porphyryla martinica*
Uncommon in summer, with one winter record (19 Dec 1976).

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Fairly common permanent resident; downy young seen 9 Sep 1964.

American Coot *Fulica americana*
A permanent resident, common in winter and uncommon in summer. There is no direct evidence of breeding.

Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis*
Prior to 1973, unknown in the county, and in adjacent Grady County as well (Stoddard 1978). First recorded here on 17 Nov 1973 (4), the species is now fairly common in winter (7 Nov 1987 [100]–11 Mar 1989 [50]). This is a real change in the birds' behavior. Patterson's (1978) review showed few records from SW Georgia, and it is inconceivable that so keen an observer as Stoddard would have overlooked these extremely conspicuous birds.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*
One record (25 Apr 1977).

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*
A permanent resident, uncommon in summer and common in winter. Adults with downy young seen at separate sites on 31 May 1990 and 2 Jun 1990.

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*
One record (16–17 Aug 1994).

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*
One record (24–26 Sep 1994).

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*
Not known from the county prior to 1971, the species has proven to be a fairly common transient, and uncommon in winter (9 Jul 1975–6 May 1995).

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*
An uncommon transient (4 Mar 1995–6 May 1991; 21 Jul 1986–12 Nov 1994). There are two winter records (11 Feb 1995 and 29 Dec 1996).

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*
A fairly common transient (8 Mar 1997–7 May 1994; 9 Jul 1975–9 Oct 1991).

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*

A fairly common transient (26 Mar 1988–16 May 1959; 21 Jul 1976 and 1996–27 Nov 1991). Very rare in winter (30 Dec 1962), and one (apparently the same) individual recorded 4 Nov–27 Dec 1987. This is a consistent pattern among shorebirds, that one or a group (never marked uniquely) will apparently be present at a site for days or weeks, as if they were pausing during their passage.

Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda*

One record (11 Apr 1975 [18]).

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*

A rare transient (5 May 1991–10 May 1992 [4] and 1995; 2 Aug 1995–2 Oct 1993). The individual noted last apparently lingered 11 Sep–2 Oct 1993.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*

An uncommon transient (10 Apr 1984–24 May 1992 [3]; 14 Jul 1990–27 Aug 1995).

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*

A fairly common transient (19 Mar 1995 [2]–12 May 1958; 14 Jul 1996 [15]–27 Oct 1991 [6]). Rare in winter (23 Dec 1984, 29 Dec 1991, 13 Jan 1984 [8]; 27 Feb 1993).

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*

One record (11 May 1988 [2]). These birds were compared side-by-side with Least and Western Sandpipers.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

A transient, uncommon in spring but fairly common in fall (22 Mar 1997 [8]–11 Apr 1975 [2]; 9 Jul 1975–20 Nov 1991 [2]).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Very rare (three records): 10 May 1989, 2–10 Nov 1991, and 8 Nov 1976.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*

A rare fall transient (26 Jul 1995–10 Nov 1991); one spring record (three on 22 Apr 1995).

dowitcher *Limnodromus* sp.

One record (19 Mar 1995) of an unidentified bird in basic plumage that gave no call.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

A common winter resident (12 Sep 1993–3 May 1960).

American Woodcock *Scolopax minor*

A resident species, perhaps very rare (formerly more frequent?). Downy young seen on 6 Apr 1977.

jaeger *Stercorarius* sp.

One unidentified record: 16 Aug 1994 (Crawford 1994).

Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla*

A rare visitor, usually after storms: 9 Apr 1984 (7), 11 Apr 1975 (10), 13 Apr 1994, 26 Jul 1995, 16 Aug 1994 (2), 27 Sep 1976 (2), 2 Oct 1994 (2).

Bonaparte's Gull *Larus philadelphia*

One record (18 Dec 1974).

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*

Previously considered casual, the species is now rare in winter (10 Nov 1997–11 Apr 1975). A maximum of 140 was counted on 3 Mar 1991 in a flooded field after a night of rain.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Three records (7 and 23 Dec 1958, 23 Feb 1965).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

One record (26 Aug 1976).

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*

Two records (2 Mar 1991, 30 Dec 1994).

Least Tern *Sterna antillarum*

One record (16 Aug 1994 [2]).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Two records (15 Aug 1974 [5]; 16–17 Aug 1994 [8]).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

An abundant permanent resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

First recorded on 2 Jul 1995 (2); the species is now (1998) a fairly common resident, especially in open, urban settings. It is rare or absent in wooded neighborhoods and uncommon in rural areas.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*
One record (11 Apr 1975).

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*
An abundant permanent resident.

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina*
A fairly common permanent resident.

Black-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*
A rare fall transient (14 Aug 1959–24 Oct 1959).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*
A fairly common summer resident (21 Mar 1959 – 1 Nov 1958).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*
A rare permanent resident. Young in nests found on 4 Feb 1978 and 21 Apr 1997.

Eastern Screech-Owl *Otus asio*
A common permanent resident. Young in nest on 7 May 1980.

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*
A common permanent resident.

Barred Owl *Strix varia*
A common permanent resident. Nest with one egg found on 13 Feb 1972.

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*
An uncommon summer resident, perhaps formerly more frequent (22 Mar 1963–3 Nov 1961). Nest with egg and young found on 21 May 1986.

Chuck-will's-widow *Caprimulgus carolinensis*
An uncommon summer resident: 23 Mar 87–6 Sep 65. Nest with two eggs found on 11 May 97.

Whip-poor-will *Caprimulgus vociferus*
A very rare winter resident (21 Aug 1980–22 Apr 1978).

Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica*
A common summer resident, with abundant evidence of breeding (12 Mar 1965–14 Nov 1959). Burleigh (1958:340) discusses a possible Vaux's Swift (*C. vauxi*), an entirely likely winter visitant.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris*
A fairly common summer resident (3 Mar 1989–25 Nov 1958). Bird on nest seen 23 Apr 1964.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus*
Very rare in winter and virtually confined to feeders. Neel et al. (1991) summarized this species' status in Thomas County, and their account remains valid. There is one unambiguous record, a dead bird found on 3 Apr 1991, but otherwise the picture is clouded by the possibility of confusion with Allen's Hummingbird (*S. sasin*), and there are also reports of birds claimed to be Black-chinned Hummingbirds (*Archilochus alexandri*). Likely extreme dates for Rufous Hummingbirds are 22 Sep (1990) into March. Hill et al. (1998) recently reviewed the status of Rufous Hummingbirds in the southeastern United States and reported on their efforts to trap and identify wintering hummingbirds. Of well over 1500 records, 96.5% were Rufous; there were only eight Allen's. Thus Allen's, while a possibility, seems a remote one.

Belted Kingfisher *Ceryle alcyon*
A permanent resident, common in winter and fairly common in summer. Apparently breeds, as birds are frequently seen attending holes in banks (two sites known, both with Rough-winged Swallow colonies). Bird seen flying from hole on 12 Mar 1995. On 27 Feb 1997, two birds called as they flew south over downtown Thomasville.

Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*
A common permanent resident, but numbers in winter can vary, supposedly in response to the local mast crop (Stoddard 1978). Feeding vocal young on 29 May 1992.

Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus*
A common permanent resident. Nest with vocal young on 25 Apr 1987; begging young on feeder with adults on 18 Aug 1987.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius*
A common winter resident (7 Oct 1989–7 Apr 1960).

Downy Woodpecker *Picoides pubescens*
A common permanent resident. Begging young with adults on 29 May 1995.

Hairy Woodpecker *Picoides villosus*
An uncommon, almost rare permanent resident. Usually solitary, there are no breeding data, and I can recall seeing two together only

once (15 May 1993).

Red-cockaded Woodpecker *Picoides borealis*

Despite its Endangered status, a common permanent resident. Common because southern Thomas County is blessed with abundant habitat for this species, especially about 890 ha of old-growth longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) in the Red Hills Physiographic Region, a natural treasure (Means 1996). A 1993 survey (Engstrom and Baker 1995) found 134 active colonies in Thomas County, an ecological density perhaps unequaled for the species (Engstrom and Mikusinski 1998).

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*

A permanent resident, uncommon in summer and common in winter. Female apparently incubating on 22 May 1997.

Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus*

A common permanent resident, but with no direct evidence of breeding.

Ivory-billed Woodpecker *Campephilus principalis*

Extinct, or at least extirpated. One record, heretofore unpublished, by the late Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr. In the spring of 1952 (the exact date appears to be lost), Stoddard saw two female Ivory-bills together in southern Thomas County. Although he and Leon Neel searched for them assiduously in the following days, he only saw them that one time. Stoddard kept this occurrence secret to protect the birds, and the account was related to me independently, first in the summer of 1970 by Stoddard's associate, the late E. V. Komarek, Sr., and later in the 1970s by Neel. On 18 Jun 1990, Neel reviewed and confirmed the few details for me.

Eastern Wood-Pewee *Contopus virens*

A common summer resident (7 Apr 1960–14 Nov 1959). Nest with eggs found 13 Jun 1960.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris*

One record, a collected specimen (Crawford 1974): 21 Sep 1972.

Acadian Flycatcher *Empidonax virescens*

A common summer resident (10 Apr 1960–24 Oct 1959) with no direct evidence of breeding.

"Traill's" Flycatcher *Empidonax* sp.

One record (19 Sep 1964). This was either a Willow (*E. traillii*)

or Alder Flycatcher (*E. alnorum*); at the time, the two species were not recognized.

Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus*

One record (7 Sep 1986). This bird was compared directly with a migrating Acadian Flycatcher.

Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe*

A common winter resident (23 Sep 1972–1 Apr 1959).

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus*

A common summer resident (21 Mar 1960–24 Oct 1959). They nest commonly in bird boxes and newspaper tubes.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*

Casual in fall: 6–11 Nov 1971 and 16–18 Sep 1984.

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*

A common summer resident (25 Mar 1962 and 1992–12 Sep 1959).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus*

One record, a bird collected 11 Oct 1962.

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*

A common permanent resident, and especially so in town lately. Bird on nest seen 22 Apr 1989; flying young begging and being fed in downtown library parking lot on 25 May 1993.

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus*

A permanent resident, common in summer and uncommon in winter.

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius*

A fairly common winter resident (8 Nov 1958–18 Apr 1960).

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons*

A common summer resident (11 Mar 1989–31 Oct 1959). Adults attending nest on 26 Apr 1987.

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus*

Casual in fall (17 and 31 Oct 1959, 12 Oct 1969).

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*

A common summer resident (26 Mar 1960–31 Oct 1959). I have

seen post-breeding wanderers or early migrants out of habitat and giving their distinctive fall "yew" call as early as 25 Jul (1996).

Blue Jay *Cyanocitta cristata*

A common permanent resident.

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*

An abundant permanent resident.

Fish Crow *Corvus ossifragus*

A permanent resident, abundant in summer, and uncommon in winter.

Purple Martin *Progne subis*

An abundant summer resident (25 Jan 1985–16 Oct 1958), doted on by people in both town and country, who provide them with a wonderful array of artificial nesting cavities ("apartments," gourds, milk cartons, etc.).

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*

A common migrant, very rare in winter (12 Nov 1971–9 Apr 1984 [100]).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*

An uncommon summer resident, somewhat more frequent in migration (19 Mar 1960–31 Oct 1959). Two nesting colonies are known, both in red-clay banks, one along a railroad cut and the other along a country road. Both have Belted Kingfishers nesting among the swallows. I have seen swallows active at one of these sites as early as 23 Mar 1996.

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*

An uncommon fall transient (1 Aug 1964–17 Oct 1959). One spring record (30 Apr 1960).

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A common summer resident (2 Mar 1963–24 Oct 1959). Not known to breed locally until 1977 (Watt and Crawford 1978), they are now ubiquitous at bridges and culverts.

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

A fairly common fall transient (1 Aug 1964–19 Oct 1958). One spring record (11 May 1988).

Carolina Chickadee *Poecile carolinensis*

A common permanent resident.

Tufted Titmouse *Baeolophus bicolor*

A common permanent resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*

A periodic irruptive in winter, always rare (7 Oct 1989–14 May 1964).

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*

A common permanent resident.

Brown-headed Nuthatch *Sitta pusilla*

A common permanent resident. Newly fledged young on 14 Apr 1991.

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*

A rare winter resident (14 Oct 1961–1 Apr 1960).

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus*

An abundant permanent resident.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*

Formerly a rare winter resident (14 Nov 1959–19 Mar 1960), but not recorded since 30 Dec 1962.

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*

A common winter resident (5 Oct 1958–28 Apr 1962).

Winter Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A rare winter resident (25 Oct 1961–12 Mar 1960).

Sedge Wren *Cistothorus platensis*

An uncommon winter resident (14 Nov 1973–29 Apr 1964).

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris*

A rare winter resident (23 Oct 1972–5 Jan 1986).

Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*

A periodic irruptive in winter, usually uncommon (15 Oct 1988 [5]–3 Apr 1960).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*

A common winter resident (6 Oct 1958–26 Apr 1992).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Poliophtila caerulea*

A permanent resident, fairly common in summer, uncommon in winter. Nest with young on 10 Apr 1960.

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis*

A permanent resident, common in summer and very common in winter. Adult perched on nest box on 16 Feb 1989. On the cold (34 F) morning of 7 Jan 1996, I saw five on my feeder eating millet, a unique instance in my experience.

Veery *Catharus fuscescens*

A fairly common fall transient (30 Aug 1959–17 Oct 1959). One spring record (11 May 1960).

Gray-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*

An uncommon fall transient (17 Sep 1959–17 Oct 1959). One spring record (11 May 1960).

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*

An uncommon transient (19 Apr 1958–16 May 1960; 17 Sep 1959 and 1989–21 Oct 1959).

Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*

An uncommon winter resident (14 Nov 1959–27 Apr 1962).

Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*

A fairly common summer resident (24 Mar 1959 and 1960–31 Oct 1959). Nest with eggs found on 25 Apr 1949.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*

A permanent resident, very rare in summer and common (sometimes abundant) in winter. First local nest found on 2 Jun 1969.

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*

A permanent resident, whose summer numbers are increasing and whose winter numbers seem to be decreasing. The first local nest was found on 2 Jul 1975.

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*

A permanent resident, abundant in towns but rare in woodlands in summer; numbers are augmented everywhere by a winter influx (I recorded birds at two sites on 13 Oct 1990 that I am sure were not there on 6 Oct 1990).

Brown Thrasher *Toxostoma rufum*

A fairly common permanent resident, more frequent in fall. Begging bob-tailed young out of nest on 8 Apr 1994.

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A fairly common permanent resident, common in winter. Begging young seen on 21 May 1991.

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

A fairly common, sometimes erratic winter resident (29 Oct 1995 [2]–6 Apr 1960).

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*

A common, though sometimes erratic, winter resident; often becomes abundant in March–May as flocks gather at fruiting trees (25 Oct 1961–19 May 1962).

Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora pinus*

A fairly common fall transient (3 Aug 1960–20 Sep 1959); two spring records (16–17 Apr 1959).

Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera*

A fairly common fall transient (15 Aug 1959–27 Sep 1959).

Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrina*

A fairly common fall transient (12 Sep 1958–1 Nov 1964).

Orange-crowned Warbler *Vermivora celata*

An uncommon winter resident (21 Nov 1959–12 Apr 1959).

Northern Parula *Parula americana*

A common summer resident (27 Feb 1962–8 Nov 1958).

Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia*

A transient, fairly common in spring (26 Apr 1960–15 May 1959), rare in fall (11 Aug 1996 [2]–26 Sep 1993).

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica*

A fairly common fall transient (25 Aug 1959–27 Oct 1959). One spring record (18 Apr 1960).

Magnolia Warbler *Dendroica magnolia*

A fairly common fall transient (3 Sep 1958–1 Nov 1959 and 1992).

Cape May Warbler *Dendroica tigrina*

A fairly common spring transient (16 Apr 1960–15 May 1962).

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Dendroica caerulescens*

A rare transient (13 Apr 1960–9 May 1960; 30 Sep 1961–16 Oct 1943).

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Dendroica coronata*

An abundant winter resident (11 Oct 1964–9 May 1964). One late spring record (13 Jun 1967).

Black-throated Green Warbler *Dendroica virens*

A rare fall transient (13 Oct 1963–31 Oct 1959).

Blackburnian Warbler *Dendroica fusca*

A transient, rare in spring (28 Apr 1962–9 May 1960) and fairly common in fall (10 Sep 1958–26 Oct 1959).

Yellow-throated Warbler *Dendroica dominica*

A permanent resident, uncommon in summer and rare in winter.

Pine Warbler *Dendroica pinus*

An abundant permanent resident. Locally at least, the species sings in all months except July. The latest I have recorded singing in summer is 28 June (1986), and the earliest I have heard it resume is 2 August, also in 1986.

Prairie Warbler *Dendroica discolor*

An uncommon summer resident, more frequent in migration (7 Mar 1959–31 Oct 1958).

Palm Warbler *Dendroica palmarum*

A common winter resident (17 Sep 1959–27 May 1996).

Bay-breasted Warbler *Dendroica castanea*

A fairly common fall transient (29 Sep 1972 [2]–14 Nov 1959).

Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica striata*

A fairly common spring transient (2 Mar 1974–18 May 1979).

Cerulean Warbler *Dendroica cerulea*

An uncommon fall transient (1 Aug 1995–14 Sep 1961).

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*

An uncommon winter resident, more frequent in migration (9 Jul

1959–9 May 1958). One late spring record of 13 Jun 1962. The notion of summering individuals expressed in Crawford and Dozier (1973), for which I am responsible, could be charitably attributed to youthful enthusiasm, and is hereby firmly withdrawn.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*

A common transient (7 Apr 1960–29 May 1988; 25 Jul 1990–30 Oct 1959). Another late spring record from 12 Jun 1967.

Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*

An uncommon summer resident (31 Mar 1962–4 Oct 1959).

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorus*

An uncommon fall transient (29 Jul 1988–8 Oct 1959). One spring record (3 May 1964).

Swainson's Warbler *Limnithlypis swainsonii*

Very rare, and apparently sporadic in summer (5 May 1991–24 Jun 1990).

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapillus*

Very rare in winter, uncommon in migration (16 Aug 1959–6 May 1959).

Northern Waterthrush *Seiurus noveboracensis*

An uncommon transient (12 Apr 1964–3 May 1964; 11 Jul 1989–17 Oct 1959).

Louisiana Waterthrush *Seiurus motacilla*

A rare and sporadic summer resident, uncommon in migration (10 Mar 1990–22 Sep 1959). Nest with eggs found on 30 Apr 1960.

Kentucky Warbler *Oporornis formosus*

An uncommon summer resident (26 Mar 1960–10 Oct 1959). Young seen flying on 9 Jul 1959.

Connecticut Warbler *Oporornis agilis*

One record (25 Apr 1964).

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*

A common permanent resident.

Hooded Warbler *Wilsonia citrina*

A fairly common summer resident (25 Mar 1962–1 Nov 1988).

Wilson's Warbler *Wilsonia pusilla*

Casual: 14 Apr 1962, 11 Nov 1989, 29 Dec 1991, and 30 Dec 1994.

Canada Warbler *Wilsonia canadensis*

Two records: 17 Sep 1958 and 9 May 1959.

Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*

A fairly common summer resident (12 Apr 1959–19 Sep 1958). One winter record (17–18 Jan 1988).

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*

A common summer resident (27 Mar 1983–25 Oct 1958). Nest found completed on 26 Apr 1959.

Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*

A fairly common transient (23 Apr 1959–10 May 1960; 25 Sep 1964–20 Nov 1991). The last, a very late date for the state, was carefully observed at a bird feeder.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana*

Casual in winter (24 Oct 1972–24 Apr 1972).

Eastern Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*

An abundant permanent resident. Non-volant young with adults seen on 20 Jun 1986.

Bachman's Sparrow *Aimophila aestivalis*

A fairly common resident, but difficult to detect when not singing. I have heard singing as early as 1 Mar (1997).

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*

A common winter resident (21 Oct 1964–10 May 1958 and 1959). One summer record (31 Jul 1921).

Field Sparrow *Spizella pusilla*

An uncommon permanent resident. Young seen on 1 Jul 1961. Initiation of spring songs recorded on 17 Feb 1985, 18 Feb 1986, and 17 Feb 1990.

Vesper Sparrow *Poocetes gramineus*

An uncommon winter resident (31 Oct 1959–18 Apr 1964).

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*

One record (7 Apr 1958).

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*

A common winter resident (15 Oct 1961–9 May 1959).

Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*

Very rare in winter (14 Dec 1963–30 Dec 1962 and 1994).

Henslow's Sparrow *Ammodramus henslowii*

Very rare in winter (21 Nov 1980–9 Jan 1960).

Le Conte's Sparrow *Ammodramus leconteii*

One record (19 Dec 1976).

Fox Sparrow *Passerella iliaca*

Rare in winter (30 Nov 1991–20 Mar 1966).

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*

A common winter resident (23 Oct 1959–3 Apr 1960).

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolni*

One record (30 Dec 1994).

Swamp Sparrow *Melospiza georgiana*

A common winter resident (21 Oct 1989 [2]–9 May 1959).

White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*

A common, formerly abundant, winter resident (15 Oct 1959–14 May 1958).

White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*

A rare winter resident (2 Nov 1991 [7]–3 Apr 1980 [2]).

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*

An uncommon, somewhat erratic winter resident (14 Nov 1959–18 Apr 1960).

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*

An abundant permanent resident.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*

An uncommon transient (8 Apr 1993–20 May 1978; 16 Sep 1961–19 Oct 1959). One possible winter record (Crawford and Dozier 1973).

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*

Two records, from feeders: 12 Apr 1963 (collected); 8 Feb 1964.

Blue Grosbeak *Guiraca caerulea*

A fairly common summer resident (3 Feb 1960–1 Nov 1958). One winter record (two on 17 Dec 1988).

Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*

Apparently, now a permanent resident; abundant in summer but very rare in winter.

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris*

A casual winter visitant (31 Aug 1991–23 Apr 1958).

Dickcissel *Spiza americana*

A very rare, perhaps casual transient (27 Mar 1964–2 Apr 1964; 22 Oct 1959–24 Oct 1959). One winter record, 26 Dec 1968, which is also the last recorded for the county.

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

A common spring transient (21 Apr 1991 [30]–16 May 1959).

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*

An abundant permanent resident. Winter flocking begins in summer (100, virtually all basic-plumaged males, seen on 11 Aug 1990).

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna*

A permanent resident; uncommon in summer, common in winter.

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*

One record (28 Dec 1969).

Rusty Blackbird *Euphagus carolinus*

An uncommon, apparently decreasing, winter resident (29 Nov 1958–5 Mar 1959). The late spring record from Apr 1959 (Crawford and Dozier 1973) is hereby withdrawn.

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*

Casual in winter (16 Dec 1973 [4]–25 Mar 1954).

Boat-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus major*

Status in flux. In winter, the species is erratic and variable in numbers; absent in some years, in other years flocks of 300 may occur. Very rare in summer: 16 Jun–7 Jul 1991, one or both members of a pair present; 30 May 1993 (male); 3 Jul 1993 (male); 5 Mar–29 Jun 1997 (2–3 displaying males).

Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*

A permanent resident; fairly common in summer, and abundant in winter. Flock of 100 seen on 18 Jul 1985.

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*

A common permanent resident. The first summer record did not occur until 1973.

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*

A fairly common summer resident (21 Mar 1962–3 Sep 1961). Adult carrying food on 9 Jun 1990.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*

A rare winter resident, virtually restricted to feeders, but occasionally seen afield (27 Aug 1969–15 May 1969).

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii*

Casual in winter (26 Dec 1965–29 Mar 1971).

Purple Finch *Carpodacus purpureus*

An erratic, sometimes common, winter irruptive (17 Nov 1972 [2]–11 Apr 1962).

House Finch *Carpodacus mexicanus*

A common permanent resident, first recorded in 1987 (Crawford 1988). First nest recorded 11 May 1991.

Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus*

An erratic, sometimes uncommon winter irruptive (20 Nov 1977 [15]–13 May 1969).

American Goldfinch *Carduelis tristis*

A somewhat erratic winter resident, usually fairly common. May breed, but not documented (25 Aug 1993–23 Jun 1987).

Evening Grosbeak *Coccothraustes vespertinus*

An extremely erratic winter irruptive (13 Dec 1966–30 May 1969), but not recorded since 5 May 1986. Occurred in extraordinary numbers around 9 Feb 1969 (tens of thousands).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

A permanent resident, formerly abundant, but now uncommon.

Discussion

Since Dozier began regular bird counts and a species list for the county in 1958, several species have been added to the list as we gained better knowledge of how to find them. For example, since 1975 virtually all records for the Charadriiformes, especially the rarities, have been recorded from "Stegall's Pond" about 6 km south of Thomasville, just east of U. S. 19 on the Lower Boston Road (Crawford 1994). Similarly, the addition of Swainson's Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow probably do not reflect change on the birds' part (Crawford 1987). Real changes have occurred, however, and species that have appeared because of range changes or introductions include Cattle Egret (1959), Fulvous Whistling-Duck (1974), Swallow-tailed Kite (1980), Sandhill Crane (1973), Eurasian Collared-Dove (1995), House Finch (1987), and Evening Grosbeak (1966). Newly recorded breeding species include the Wood Stork, Mississippi Kite, Bald Eagle, Barn Swallow, Gray Catbird, American Robin, and Brown-headed Cowbird. Species occurring more or less regularly now in winter are Green Heron, White Ibis, Ring-billed Gull, Wilson's Warbler, and Indigo Bunting. Double-crested Cormorants and Tricolored Herons, formerly casual species, are now more frequent, especially the former. No change, however, is so gratifying to report than the positive outcome for our hawks. A cultural change has occurred here. It is no longer customary to shoot hawks or eagles (or vultures) on sight. Now, and I believe as a result, buteos, kites, American Kestrels, accipiters, and the Turkey Vulture, are commonly seen within the city limits of Thomasville, and they seem to be more evident (and less wary) in rural areas as well. Whether this cultural change masks biological changes for these species is another matter.

On the debit side, we have lost only the winter-resident Bewick's Wren, but the Rusty Blackbird may be next. Nevertheless, we have gained much more than we have lost; Thomas County is richer ornithologically now than in the recent past.

Acknowledgments

This has been a cooperative effort, and to a large extent, I have been merely a note-keeper for others. D. Jack Dozier's field efforts in the late 1950s and early 1960s are the backbone of the accounts; virtually all the records from 1958–1962 are his, and he continues to contribute observations. During those early years, Dozier was aided by Julius Ariail. Leon Neel has, since the first publication, worked determinedly to expand our knowledge of local birds, and he has been ably assisted

by his wife Julie Neel and his business partner Paul Massey. Professional ornithologists W. Wilson Baker, E. Todd Engstrom, and Noel O. Wamer have given valuable suggestions and records. Others deserving mention, many of them participants in the Thomasville Christmas Bird Count (1961–1994), include John A. Bracey, Jim Cox, Beth Crawford, Steve Jones, Roy Komarek, Roswell Mason, Katie NeSmith, Jane Rodrigue, Charles H. Watt, Jr., and a host of feeder watchers numbering in the dozens who, over the years, were generous with their time and patient with my inquiries.

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FROM THE FIELD

August-November 1997

This fall will be remembered by many as the fall of the Virginia's Warbler seen for 3 days in September at Kennesaw Mountain near Marietta. Arguably, this is Georgia's bird of the decade. There are only about ten records of the bird east of the Mississippi River. Perhaps its appearance in Georgia was related to the El Nino event in the Pacific Ocean as, across the region, many western species showed up this fall. However, no unusual weather event in north Georgia was directly associated with its appearance here.

This fall was quite mild and pleasant with few good cold fronts or off-shore storms to provide excitement. In spite of this, however, record numbers of species were found during August and September. Terry Moore's compilation showed that 201 species were seen in August across the state, smashing the previous August high of 194 (average = 177). In September, Georgia birders recorded a record 209 species (average = 190). About average numbers were reported in October and November. These increases are surely related in some degree to the increasing popularity of birding. The best example of this is the Virginia's Warbler, which was discovered by three birders on a Wednesday morning and subsequently sought after by scores of birders on the following two weekdays.

Reports across the eastern U.S. indicate many late-departing passerines and many western birds that strayed east. Looking over the Georgia reports, we can see some evidence of this, such as the three reports of Black-headed Grosbeaks and a report of Bullock's Oriole (both of these species require documentation to the Checklist and Records Committee). However, except for a few others I could mention, I did not think western strays were above average in Georgia. By the way. Red-breasted Nuthatches made a strong showing in October but were not accompanied by comparable numbers of Purple Finches, Pine Siskins, or Evening Grosbeaks.

Other observations of note to look for as you read the species account: a good flight in November of Horned Grebes, perhaps a spill-over of a major southward movement noted through the interior of the continent; the continued slow, but steady, increase of Reddish Egrets on the coast; a strong flight of Merlins along the Atlantic Coast that was noted in Georgia, too; a later than usual Sandhill Crane migration; the proliferation of Great Black-backed Gulls on the coast; further colonization of the state by the Eurasian Collared-Dove; an average year for western hummingbirds (is the thrill wearing off?); the spread of Cliff Swallows across the state; and a good flight for Nashville and Wilson's Warblers.

Many of you will be startled to see, as was I, that many species, indeed, in some cases, families of species, have been juggled in the taxonomic order. The list you are about to read is based on the taxonomic order in the new 7th edition of the American Ornithologists' Union check-list.

Finally, I cannot close out the account of this season without mentioning my favorite memory of this fall, which was a wonderful pelagic trip in October on a fishing boat out of St. Simons Island. After several dull pelagic trips in the early 1990s, I was blown away this time to see good numbers of shearwaters, jaegers, and pelagic terns. I hope more such trips will be organized after this success.

Many thanks to Georgann Schmalz for typing "From the Field" and to Mim Eisenberg for proofreading this document.

Abbreviations used include: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, ARE - The Altamaha River Estuary, ASWMA - Altamaha State Waterfowl Management Area, BIAS - Butler Island Altamaha Station, CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, EGTF - East Georgia Turf Farm, ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility, KMT - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, NWR - National Wildlife Refuge, SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park, and WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- COMMON LOON** - Apparently the state experienced a wide movement on 13 November when 21 were seen on a lake in Haralson Co. (Michael Bell) and 9 in Laurens Co. (Tommy Patterson). On 22 November, 20 or so were seen at Lake Lanier (Michael Bell). A few other scattered sightings were reported - all in all, a rather average showing.
- PIED-BILLED GREBE** - This species is a rare breeder in the piedmont. Two pairs raised at least two broods, which were seen into August and September, in Macon (Ty Ivey, Paul Johnson). One bird in breeding plumage at Lake Horton, Fayette Co., on 11 August was also unusual (Jim Flynn).
- HORNED GREBE** - Two males in breeding plumage seen on 30 August in Augusta smashed the ACOBG early arrival date. They stayed until 16 September (Anne Waters). More expected was the influx in November with some impressive numbers from Lake Lanier, where 43 were counted on 10 November and 51 were counted on 13 November (Bob Zarembo).
- EARED GREBE** - This once accidental species returned this fall in impressive numbers. The earliest arrivals were seven seen for two days beginning on 1 September in Laurens Co. (Tommy Patterson). Two arrived at ELHLAF on 10 September (John Paget, Jack Carusos), increased to four the next day, and stayed four days (many observers). Small numbers appeared in November at four sites in the Atlanta area, including Lake

- Lanier, where three stayed all month beginning on 16 November (Giff Beaton, Jeff Sewell).
- CORY'S SHEARWATER** - A total of 360 were counted on 21 October from a fishing boat out of St. Simon's Is. (Pierre Howard, Giff Beaton, Jeff Sewell, Brad Winn). This may be the highest Georgia count ever for this species.
- GREATER SHEARWATER** - Another amazing inland crash landing by this pelagic species occurred in July in Sandersville. Lynn Schlup, a bird rehabilitator, kept the bird alive until 6 August. Eight were seen on the previously mentioned 21 October pelagic trip off St. Simon's Is.
- AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER** - Four were seen on 21 October off St. Simon's Is.
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** - This species is accidental in the interior of the state. On 9 November three flew over the Walter F. George Dam, Clay Co. (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Kevin Danchisen, Shawn Reed).
- AMERICAN BITTERN** - Most unusual was an injured juvenile found at Panola Mountain State Park, DeKalb Co., in early August. After rehabilitation, it was released on 4 September at the Wetlands Center, ELHLAF, and not seen thereafter (Carol Lambert). Also seen were two at the ASWMA on 22 October (Giff Beaton) and one at Paulk's Pasture WMA, Glynn Co. on 29 November (Jeff Sewell).
- GREAT EGRET** - Anne Waters reported that by late November, 65-70 had gathered to winter at the Augusta brickyard ponds.
- SNOWY EGRET** - Over the last several years, a few post-breeding wanderers have spent a month or two at ELHLAF. This year, one arrived on 11 August (Jim Flynn) joined by another later in the month (24 August; Carol Lambert).
- REDDISH EGRET** - After an off-year last fall, numbers of this once rare species were up again on the coast. The 11 seen on 6 August on an island in the ARE is the most ever reported in one place in Georgia (Brad Winn). As many as three were seen on Cumberland Is. during August (Sheila Willis). A rare white morph bird was reported at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is. on 14 September (Jeff Sewell), and two other locations hosted singles during August.
- GREEN HERON** - A late departure for the area was one last seen on 14 November at the Wetlands Center, ELHLAF (Carol Lambert).
- BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** - This species seems to be pushing farther into the piedmont in fall and winter. In Macon, one was seen on 30 August (Paul Johnson, Nancy Gobris) and another on 30 November. At Lake Sinclair, one was noted on 7 November (Lewis Maddox, fide Paul Johnson). As of 17 November, several had arrived in Augusta at the brickyard ponds (Anne Waters).
- GLOSSY IBIS** - The numbers at the Savannah Airport grew from two on 4 August to six on 23 October (Giff Beaton), and at Andrews Is. in Brunswick, two were observed on 9 August (Mike Chapman).
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL** - At their most reliable spot in the state, the U.S. 17 causeway south of Brunswick, three were seen on 4 August (Giff Beaton), peaking at 20 on 4 September (Pierre Howard), with the last sighting of one late departure on 22 October (Giff Beaton).

WOOD STORK - This once rare species seems to be doing well in Georgia. It is hoped that this is not simply due to Florida birds fleeing development there. Small numbers appeared inland at several locations in the piedmont, but not as many as last year. The high count was 19 in Macon on 30 August (Paul Johnson, Ty Ivey, Jerry Amerson). In Laurens Co. in the upper coastal plain, 40 were counted on 15 August (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell) with nine remaining to the late date of 3 October at Ben Hall Lake (Tommy Patterson). South of Brunswick, along U.S. 17 and the Jekyll Is. causeway, 51 were tallied on 25 September (Carol Eldridge fide Anne Waters).

TURKEY VULTURE - The migration of this species drew more attention this year. Carol Lambert spotted 55 over the ELHLAF on 7 August, much earlier than usual. In the more expected migratory time period, on 19 October, 26 were counted sailing past KMT (Bob Zaremba, Jim Flynn, et al.) and later that day 79 were tallied over a yard in DeKalb Co. (Jeff Sewell). In Union Co., 25 were seen on 25 October (Dot Freeman).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - For a species that rarely shows up in our state except in small numbers, 13 was an excellent sighting, seen on 9 November at the Eufaula NWR, Bradley Unit, Stewart Co. (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Kevin Danchisen, Shawn Reed).

SNOW GOOSE - A few scattered reports were received, not as many as in the last several years. A record early blue-morph seen in Baldwin Co. on 1 September (Barbara Edwards fide Paul Johnson) was so early as to raise the possibility it had summered there. Reports of singles in November came from Fayette Co. (Joe Schlemmer), Gwinnett Co. (Jennifer Simpson), and Laurens Co. (Tommy Patterson). The high count was of three on 26 November at the EGTF (Ray Chandler).

GADWALL - The most notable reports were of 16 at SCSF on 22 November (Pierre Howard) and 20 on 30 November in Carroll Co. (Michael Bell). No reports were received from several usually reliable locations.

AMERICAN WIGEON - Garden Lake in Rome again hosted its usual wintering flock with the arrival of 35 on 23 October (Marion Dobbs). Michael Bell had 40 on 30 November in Carroll Co.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - Only one report was received, that of a single bird on 11 November in Forsyth Co. (Jim Flynn).

MOTTLED DUCK - A few reports of the species were received from the ASWMA, with a peak of three on 30 August (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen, Jim Flynn, Shawn Reed). This species was introduced in the 1970s on the South Carolina coast by the wildlife management department of that state.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL - Some good reports were received but nothing like the numbers from last year. Paul Sykes counted 400 at the ASWMA on 27 September and Pierre Howard had 51 on 30 September in Bartow Co. Of the small flock that spent much of the fall at ELHLAF, one male remained until the rather late date of 28 November (Giff Beaton).

CINNAMON TEAL - A well-described male was seen for one day, 2 October, in Augusta, the first there since 1980 (Clarence Belger, Anne Waters).

NORTHERN SHOVELER - Eight seen at ELHLAF on 7 September were early (Jeff Sewell).

NORTHERN PINTAIL - This uncommon inland transient was reported from only two locations: ELHLAF, where on 21 October a female was seen (Jim Flynn) and where a male stayed a few days after being seen on 6 November (Jeff Sewell); and Augusta, where two males were noted on 26 November (Anne Waters).

CANVASBACK - Smaller numbers were seen this year than last. Two on 23 October at Garden Lake, Rome, were a bit early (Marion Dobbs); five at Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co. on 9 November was the high count (Giff Beaton et al.); one at ELHLAF on 16 November (Jim Flynn) remained over a week; four were spotted in Augusta on 29 November, and one was seen at Andrews Is., Brunswick, on 29 November (Mike Chapman, Lydia Thompson, Gene Kerferl, Jeff Sewell).

REDHEAD - This is another fall transient we see only in small numbers, and this year was no exception. The only reports received were 12 on 9 November at Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co. (Jim Flynn et al.); seven on 14 November at Lake Buchanan, Haralson Co. (Michael Bell), four on 14 November at Garden L., Rome (Marion Dobbs); and 10 at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co. (Joe Greenberg fide Joel Hitt).

GREATER SCAUP - Perhaps observer expertise is responsible for the increase in sightings of this once rare duck. This fall one was reported on 15 November at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co. (Dan Gwynn, Jr.) one was seen at the Smith Reservoir, Clayton Co., on 17 November (Jim Flynn), and four were noted at ELHLAF on 28 November (Giff Beaton).

LESSER SCAUP - Two record early birds appeared at the Augusta brickyard ponds on 30 August (Anne Waters). The ACOGB shows an early date of 15 October, though there are records of their summering here.

COMMON EIDER - The male discovered in July off Sapelo Is. by Brad Winn remained into fall, last being seen on 12 October (Helena Woods).

SURF SCOTER - An excellent count for Georgia was the 19, including two adult males, seen on 28 November off Jekyll Is. (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - This species is rare, but regular, inland. On 28 October one was found at ELHLAF (Art Smith). It stayed two days (Carol Lambert, Jim Flynn). On 28 November, seven, including one adult male, were seen off Jekyll Is. with the above-mentioned flock of Surf Scoters and about 500 Blacks (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).

BLACK SCOTER - Five females were seen on 9 November at Lake Eufaula, Clay Co., near the Walter F. George dam (Giff Beaton, Shawn Reed, Jim Flynn).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - The best inland count received was 36 at Clark Hill Res. on 17 November (Giff Beaton).

RUDDY DUCK - The Augusta brickyards had an all-time high of 84 on 17 November (Anne Waters).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - Ray Chandler reported that the amazing congregation over a small field in Tattnall Co., first seen in July, still had 25 on 19 August, but none on 28 August. One was seen on 12 Aug. near Elmodel, Baker Co. (Michael Krough fide Terry Moore).

MISSISSIPPI KITE - This species seems to be spreading north and becoming more numerous. At the field in Tattnall Co. mentioned above, 20 were seen on 2 August (Bruce Dralle). They, too, were gone by the end of the

month. Two were seen on 10 August in north Fulton Co. (Jack Carusos), one was seen in Peachtree City on 18 August (Art and Jan Smith), and in Macon, at the northern edge of its breeding range, a pair nested, raising at least one fledgling, which was seen during August. One of the adults stayed until 10 September (Paul Johnson).

BALD EAGLE - Inland sightings increased this fall across Georgia, and there were the usual reports from the coast, all evidence that the recovery of the species is proceeding well.

NORTHERN HARRIER - An early migrant was seen by Doris Cohrs on Sapelo Is. on 6 August. The date of 18 October was a more normal migration date, but the location was unusual - KMT (Jeff Sewell).

BROAD-WINGED HAWK - Fairly poor numbers were reported for the fall migration. David Cree had 10 at Peachtree City on 15 September. Kevin Danchisen had 17 over Cobb Co. on 16 September. Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert had 43 on KMT on 21 September. Paul Raney had 15, also at KMT, on 29 September. The only report of decent numbers was 180 in the Roswell area on 23 October (Mim Eisenberg fide Terry Moore), which is a rather late date for this many birds still moving south.

AMERICAN KESTREL - A female seen in Bartow Co. on 2 August may have been a rare local nester, or an extremely early migrant (Joe Greenberg, Lolly Lederberg). Lowndes Co. had an early arrival on 2 September (Brad Bergstrom). A count of eight on 13 October on Jekyll Is. was good (Pierre Howard), and so was the nine in Bartow Co. on 5 November (Joe Greenberg).

MERLIN - Bibb Co. had an early arrival on 20 September (Jerry and Marie Amerson) and Bulloch Co. had one on 27 September (Ray Chandler). Jim Flynn found an adult male in north Fulton Co. on 30 September on a busy road. Pierre Howard had a wonderful day on 12 October when he counted 11 at Jekyll Is. moving ahead of a line of storms, and back at ELHLAF, Jim Flynn saw one on 16 November. In Laurens Co., one was noted on 20 November (Tommy Patterson).

PEREGRINE FALCON - This species, too, is on the increase. The number of inland sightings was especially noteworthy. KMT led the way with five sightings in September and October, and two were seen in Laurens Co. in September and October (Tommy Patterson). The high count from the coast was three on 27 September on Sapelo Is. (Paul Sykes, Billy Dunbar).

PLAIN CHACHALACA - The eight seen on Sapelo Is. on 2 August indicate that the population there is doing well (Jim Flynn, Jeff Sewell).

BLACK RAIL - Two birds were heard in Greene Co. on 30 August (Giff Beaton et al.).

CLAPPER RAIL - On 4 October, Ray Chandler found a dead bird under a hotel window in downtown Savannah. Its plumage suggested that it may have been a migrating bird of the race *crepitans*.

VIRGINIA RAIL - Several marshes in the piedmont are doing quite well. One wonders what the population of the species is, given that much of their habitat is found on private land. For example, a small marsh on a farm in Greene Co. produced seven on 19 October (Marion Dobbs).

SORA - Highlight of the Sora report was one found in a Home Depot parking lot in Morrow, Clayton Co., on 23 September and captured. It died at a rehabilitator's a few days later (Carol Lambert). Paul Sykes had an excellent count of 50 in McIntosh Co. on 27 September. A few other reports of singles were received.

PURPLE GALLINULE - Two found at Lott's Pond, Lowndes Co., on 27 September were considered noteworthy (Brad Bergstrom).

COMMON MOORHEN - For the second straight year, two pair raised several broods, which were seen into October, at the Macon brickyard ponds (Paul Johnson et al.). This site now establishes the northernmost outpost of their breeding range in middle Georgia.

AMERICAN COOT - Several summered in the Atlanta area: one at Lake Horton, Fayette Co. (Jim Flynn), one at ELHLAF (Carol Lambert), and one at the DeKalb Reservoir (Jeff Sewell). On 13 November, one bird was spotted hiding under a bush in a downtown Atlanta park (Tim Nassar).

SANDHILL CRANE - As best I can tell from the reports, a normal migration was seen. The most unusual report was of about 50 on the early date of 29 September in Forsyth Co. (Ciree Hitt fide Joel Hitt). Peak sightings dates were 16-17 November and 26 November. High counts were the hundreds over Roswell on 9 November and 307 on 16 November in Houston Co. (Dan Guynn, Jr.).

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER - As usual, a few turned up at sod farms around the state. At ELHLAF one stayed a few days beginning on 12 September (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). The big numbers came from a pasture in Laurens Co., where beginning on 1 September with one, Tommy Patterson saw numbers increase to 11 on 19 September, decreasing thereafter. This may be the most ever seen in Georgia at one place.

WILSON'S PLOVER - Ten was a good count on 27 November on Jekyll Is. (Bill Blakeslee).

PIPING PLOVER - Two birds, first seen in July, were seen again on 4 August on St. Simons Is. (Giff Beaton). Steve Calver reported the high count, four, on Wassau I. on 31 October.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER - In what may be the highest count ever for Georgia, about 200 were counted on Wolf Is. in the ARE on 19 September (Brad Winn, Jeff Sewell).

AMERICAN AVOCET - Avocet Pond, in a pasture in Laurens Co., again hosted its namesake with one on 14-16 October (Tommy Patterson). This species is rare away from the coast.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER - Late for the Atlanta area was one at SCSP on 8 November (Michael Bell).

UPLAND SANDPIPER - Reports returned to a more average number after a great fall 1996. Coincidentally, this fall looks almost exactly like the fall of 1995: one at the EGTF in Bulloch Co. on 28 and 30 August (Ray Chandler, Jim Flynn, et al.) and one in Laurens Co. on 9 August (Tommy Patterson).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW - Better coverage of the more-remote islands is turning up more of this rare transient. On 11 September, one was seen on Ossabaw Is. (Brad Winn), and one was spotted on Cumberland Is. on 16 November (Sheila Willis).

- MARbled GODWIT - The more-remote islands also harbor more of this species than we find on over-peopled beaches, witness the excellent count of 75-80 on Sapelo Is. on 27 September (Paul Sykes, Billy Dunbar).
- RUDDY TURNSTONE - Rarely seen inland, one was reported on 27 September at ELHLAF (Joe Greenberg). It stayed for two days (Brock Hutchins).
- RED KNOT - Two good reports were received: on 19 September about 200 were counted on an island in the ARE (Brad Winn, Jeff Sewell), and 400 were tallied on Sapelo Is. on 27 September (Paul Sykes, Billy Dunbar).
- SANDERLING - This species, which, as I recall from my early birding days, was almost never seen inland, nowadays seems to turn up every fall. One bird spent four days at ELHLAF beginning on 11 September (Patrick Brisse).
- WESTERN SANDPIPER - A few trickled through ELHLAF during August, with a high count of eight on 23 August (Jeff Sewell). The high count came from the coast, where on 19 September, 3000 were counted on Egg Is. Bar (Brad Winn, Jeff Sewell).
- LEAST SANDPIPER - This species was notable this fall for the lack of reports at inland locations. On Egg Is. Bar on 19 September, 1000 were tallied (Brad Winn, Jeff Sewell).
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - It was an excellent fall for this rare transient. One was seen at ELHLAF on 23 August (Shawn Reed) and one was seen in Laurens Co. during August (Tommy Patterson). These reports pale next to the report of six at a sod farm in Peach Co. (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). This may be the highest count in Georgia.
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER - Huge numbers moved through the EGTF in Bulloch Co. from August-October, with the high reaching 253 on 21 August (Ray Chandler). Carol Lambert had a good count of 51 for ELHLAF on 7 August. A late bird was seen there on 1 November (Michael Bell).
- PURPLE SANDPIPER - Five seen at their usual spot on Tybee Is. on 23 October were quite early (Giff Beaton).
- DUNLIN - Three reports of this uncommon inland transient were received. At least one could be found at ELHLAF throughout the period beginning on 28 September, with a peak of six on 1 November (both by Michael Bell). In Laurens Co., as many as 15 stayed from mid-October through November (Tommy Patterson), and five were seen in Sumter Co. on 4 November (Terry Johnson).
- STILT SANDPIPER - At ELHLAF, one could be found from 3 August (Patrick Brisse) through 20 September (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). Three were seen there on 30 August (Shawn Reed, Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn). In Laurens Co., Tommy Patterson had 1-3 during September, and the Bulloch Co. sod farm hosted two on 14 November (Bob Zaremba).
- BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER - This sod farm specialist made an excellent showing this fall, with too many reports to list. At the Bartow Co. sod farm two were seen on 9 August (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott), for the earliest arrival date. At the EGTF, two arrived on 13 August (Ray Chandler), with the last report received from there being five on 29 September (Andy Kinsey). At the Peach Co. sod farm, three were seen from 23 August through 16 September (Jerry and Marie Amerson, Nancy Gobris, Paul Johnson). One seen in Laurens Co. on 6 September was the only non-sod-farm sighting (Tommy Patterson).

- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - Another species notable this fall for the few reports received. Only one was seen at ELHLAF, that on 9 August. (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott), there was a report of three from Andrews Is. in Brunswick on the same day (Mike Chapman), and four from the EGTF on 10 September (Ray Chandler).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER - In a reversal of the usual, more Long-billeds were reported this period than Short-billeds: six from Laurens Co. on 16 October (Tommy Patterson) and two on 22 October from Andrews Is., Brunswick (Giff Beaton).
- WILSON'S PHALAROPE - A good find was one seen at Andrews Is., Brunswick, on 16 August (Aubrey Scott).
- POMARINE JAEGER - Six were counted on 21 October on a pelagic trip out of St. Simons Is. (Pierre Howard et al.).
- PARASITIC JAEGER - Above average numbers were reported. On 27 September, Jerry Amerson et al. spotted one off South Beach, Jekyll Is., and on a 21 October pelagic trip one was spotted (Pierre Howard et al.). A jaeger sp. was seen off the north end of Jekyll I. on 29 November (Carol Lambert).
- BONAPARTE'S GULL - One was extremely early at Sapelo Is. on 4 August (Giff Beaton) and the 27 seen on 17 November at Lake Lanier was about average for that location (Jim Flynn), but very unusual was the one Flynn had on the same day at ELHLAF.
- HERRING GULL - An immature seen in Augusta on 26 November was quite unusual for the location (Anne Waters).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - Again, this species was reported in small numbers from coastal islands. The earliest reported arrival was one on Jekyll Is. on 4 September (Pierre Howard). One was on St. Simons Is. in mid-September (many observers), three on Wassau Is. on 26 September (Steve Calver), five on Sapelo Is. on 21 September (Mark Oberle), and one adult at Tybee Is. on 15 November (Mike Fowles).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - Two reports suggest a huge increase in this species, which can be a predator at colonies of smaller seabirds, especially terns. On 18 September, 31 were counted at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Is. (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), and 40-50 were tallied on Sapelo Is. on 21 September.
- GULL-BILLED TERN - Andrews Is., Brunswick, hosted five on 9 August (Mike Chapman), and an adult was seen there on 16 August feeding a fledgling (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell).
- TERNS - Note the report of Sheila Willis from Cumberland Is. on 31 Aug. as you read through the terns. Quite a day for terns!
- CASPIAN TERN - Good numbers of this uncommon species were received from the usual coastal locations. On Cumberland Is. on 31 August, 41 were counted (Sheila Willis). Jeff Sewell had impressive numbers at three locations: 42 on Jekyll Is. on 17 September, 54 on St. Simons Is. on 18 September, and 81 on Egg Is. Bar on 19 September (with Brad Winn).
- ROYAL TERN - On 31 August, Sheila Willis counted 2020 on Cumberland Is. Is this a high count for Georgia?
- SANDWICH TERN - Another tern well reported this fall, with the high counts being the 219 seen on 29 August on Wassau Is. (Steve Calver) and the

- 152 on Cumberland Is. on 31 August (Sheila Willis). The 65 Sheila tallied on Cumberland Is. on 16 November were quite late in departing.
- COMMON TERN** - This species was impressive, as excellent numbers were seen this fall. On Wassau Is. on 29 August, 65 were seen (Steve Calver), Sheila Willis had 74 on Cumberland Is. on 31 August, Brad Winn had 700 on Egg Is. Bar on 7 September, and Jeff Sewell saw 75 on Jekyll Is. on 17 September and 125 at St. Simons on 18 September. Inland the species is unusual, so the eight seen at ELHLAF on 27 September were noteworthy (Carol Lambert).
- FORSTER'S TERN** - Only six were counted on Cumberland Is. on Sheila Willis's big tern day on 31 August. One seen on 9 November at Lake Spivey, Henry Co., was rare inland (Jeff Sewell).
- LEAST TERN** - An excellent count of 27 was reported from Cumberland Is. on 31 August (Sheila Willis).
- BRIDLED TERN** - On the pelagic trip on 21 October from St. Simons Is., 11 were counted (Pierre Howard et al.).
- BLACK TERN** - Fewer than usual were reported from inland locations this fall. Tommy Patterson said he saw only two this fall in Laurens Co. (9 September), and only one was reported from ELHLAF, it being seen for two days beginning on 16 August (Patrick Brisse, Jim Hanna). On the coast some fairly good numbers were reported. On 18 August, 83 were seen moving south along Tybee Is. beach (Ray Chandler). On 29 August, 58 were counted on Wassau Is. (Steve Calver); on 31 August, 181 were seen on Cumberland Is. (Sheila Willis); and on 19 September, 200 were observed sitting on the beach at Egg Is. Bar (Jeff Sewell, Brad Winn).
- EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** - This recent invader was found to be nesting in Macon in August, the first for Bibb Co. (Paul Hoinowski).
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** - About average for the fall, one was seen on 28 September at KMT (Roy Hester).
- COMMON NIGHTHAWK** - The best count received was my own of about 400 seen in a large swirling kettle over DeKalb Co. on 12 September. Late birds were seen on 8 October at KMT (Giff Beaton) and on 22 October in Hapeville and 30 October in Atlanta (both Aubrey Scott).
- CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW** - This species seems to disappear after 1 August, so a report of one from KMT on 6 September was notable (Bruce Dralle et al.).
- CHIMNEY SWIFT** - Several interesting reports were received. On 13 October David Cree reported "thousands" at Peachtree City; Georgann Schmalz estimated a flock over Savannah on 23 October to contain about 1700 birds; and a late departure was seen on 1 November in Macon (Jim Ferrari fide Paul Johnson).
- RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** - Several reports were received of birds still around through October, the last report being of two in LaFayette on 7 November (Giff Beaton). An albino was banded in Columbus on 14 September (Terry Johnson).
- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** - Several were discovered around the state but not as many as in recent years. Has the thrill worn off or does this represent a real decline? At their most reliable Georgia location, the feeder of Ibey

- and Flynn Gregory in Clay Co., one showed up on 3 September, three were there on 5 October, and one banded by Terry Johnson was a recapture from last year. Here are the other reports: one in Norcross in August, not banded (fide Karen Theodorou), two in Hahira (Terry Johnson), an adult male banded in Blairsville by Bob Sargent (fide Dot Freeman), and a first year male banded in Alpharetta on 13 November (Bob and Martha Sargent fide Buddy Rowe).
- ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD** - It seems that we have managed to find at least one Allen's every fall nowadays. This year one turned up in LaFayette and was banded on 31 October by Donna and Dwayne Berger, but was gone the next day (Giff Beaton).
- HAIRY WOODPECKER** - One seen in Emanuel Co. on 7 September was noteworthy as they are scarce in this part of the state (Ray Chandler).
- RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER** - Charles Seabrook wrote in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution on 30 August that the manager at the PNWR reported another good nesting year due to the increased use of artificial nest boxes, there now being 36 colonies. He also reported that a banded female from the PNWR was recaptured at Ft. Benning more than 160 kilometers away.
- YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** - Good numbers were found this fall. On 27 August one was seen in Jones Co. (Jerry and Marie Amerson), and KMT hosted two sightings, one bird on 17 September (Pierre Howard) and one on 19 September (Giff Beaton et al.). In Dublin one was noted on 3 October (Tommy Patterson), and a rather late bird was seen at the CRNRA on 11 October (Michael Bell). The only report of more than one was from the state's most reliable location for them, Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon. On 20 September three were counted along a trail here (Jerry and Marie Amerson).
- WILLOW/ALDER FLYCATCHER** - One was seen at ELHLAF on 12 September (Patrick Brisse) and several were seen in Early Co. on 20 September (Brad Bergstrom).
- LEAST FLYCATCHER** - Rarely heard on migration, one was heard at Harris Neck NWR on 31 August by Giff Beaton et al. Other single birds were reported from the CRNRA on 27 September (Jack Carusos) and from Tucker on 28 September (Jeff Sewell).
- WESTERN KINGBIRD** - Jeff Sewell had a rather early bird at the St. Simon's Is. airport on 14 September.
- EASTERN KINGBIRD** - Some impressive migratory movements were noted this fall. On 30 August, 140 were counted moving over the Jekyll Is. Causeway (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Lex Glover), and on Cumberland Is. on 31 August Sheila Willis saw 130. On 17 September, 45 were counted overhead as they began the flight from Jekyll Is. to Cumberland Is. (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** - This rare species was found by Joyce Harrison near Byron in Peach Co. on 4 August and was last seen on 6 August by Jerry Amerson.
- VIREOS** - In what is probably a first state record, Aubrey Scott saw all six species of vireos on the Georgia checklist at CRNRA on 4 October.

- WARBLING VIREO** - This rare transient was spotted twice in the Atlanta area. One was seen on 19 September at KMT (Bruce Hallett) and one was seen at the CRNRA on 4 October (Aubrey Scott). On the coast, one was reported from the Brunswick area on 20 October (Carol Eldridge fide Anne Waters).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** - One was banded at JIBS on 6 October, only the fourth in 18 years (Nancy Gobris).
- PHILADELPHIA VIREO** - Too many reports to list! This previously uncommon migrant seemed common enough this fall, at least in the Atlanta area. The first report came from KMT on 12 September (one bird by Giff Beaton) where a total of five were seen ending with one on 11 October (Karen Theodorou). The CRNRA hosted six on 6 October (Pierre Howard, Aubrey Scott, Brock Hutchins), which is, I think, a state record. Four other birds were reported during September and October in the Atlanta area. On the coast, a juvenile male was observed near Brunswick on 20 October (Carol Eldridge fide Anne Waters).
- COMMON RAVEN** - A sighting of one at Russell's Bridge, Rabun Co., on 5 October was notable for the low elevation (Mark Oberle), but one on Blood Mtn., Lumpkin/Union Co. on 24 October was at a more usual elevation (Joel Volpi fide Joel Hitt).
- HORNED LARK** - The population at the Peach Co. sod farm seems to have grown. On 31 August, 20 were seen (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). Elsewhere, Anne Waters counted 11 at the Bulloch Co. sod farm on 4 September and four in Augusta on 17 November.
- TREE SWALLOW** - Interesting inland sightings were from Laurens Co., where Tommy Patterson noted migratory movements on 28 September and 16 October of well over 100 each. At ELHLAF on 27 and 28 October about 200 were counted over the ponds (Carol Lambert). Late for the Atlanta area were two seen at ELHLAF on 22 November (Jim Flynn) and two at L. Spivey, Henry Co. the same day (Jeff Sewell).
- BANK SWALLOW** - I usually expect to see no more than 1-2 here and there during their passage through the Atlanta area, so the 400 reported from Laurens Co. on 9 August (Tommy Patterson) and the "several thousand" reported from Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., were astounding (Carol Eldridge fide Anne Waters).
- CLIFF SWALLOW** - This species has been expanding its breeding range southward into the state for some years now. This fall, in addition to the usual scattered reports of migrants, an interesting report was received of a new nesting site. On 23 August, Aubrey Scott found 10-12 nests on the Ga. Highway 136 bridge over Talking Rock Creek at the Gordon and Murray Co. line.
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** - A good flight for the period began on 3 October with the report of one in Roswell (Terry Moore). Thereafter, many reports were received from north Georgia during October, but sightings tapered off in November. Most interesting were the reports of three in Dawson Co. on 6 and 10 October (Jim Flynn) and one that stayed in a Macon yard for three days in November (fide Paul Johnson).
- WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** - One bird near his home in Macon on 11 August was unusual for this area of the state (Paul Johnson).

- SEDGE WREN** - Two birds found at the Bitsy Grant Tennis Center near downtown Atlanta were quite a surprise on 29 September (Pierre Howard). This species could be found in the KMT marsh during October with the peak count of two on 18 and 19 October (Giff Beaton et al.). The peak count for November was three on 3 November (Michael Bell) and again on 15 November (Giff Beaton). Another bird was seen in the Griffin area on 3 November by Giff Beaton and Jim Flynn.
- MARSH WREN** - This species was recorded from the KMT marsh during the month of October, with the peak count of three on 4 October (Giff Beaton et al.). On 18 October one was seen at the CRNRA (Mark Davis), two spent two weeks beginning on 3 October in Macon, furnishing Bibb Co.'s first fall record (Paul Johnson), and in Green Co. on 19 October 3 were seen (Marion Dobbs).
- RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** - The first arrival, though not a record, was on 20 September in Early Co. (Brad Bergstrom et al.).
- THRUSHES** - The thrush report was about average from recent years - that is to say, not many. The pre-dawn counts at KMT continued to produce amazing numbers, contrasting greatly with the daytime reports. Once again, actual sightings of Gray-cheeked exceeded those of Veery. Few reports were received except from the Atlanta area, so I hope everyone around the state is seeing their share.
- AMERICAN PIPIT** - Besting the ACOGB early arrival date by eight days was one spotted in Early Co. on 20 September (Brad Bergstrom).
- CEDAR WAXWING** - In Gwinnett Co. on 29 September a juvenile was seen by Marcie Diaz in her backyard. One wonders how far from its nest it was? A flock of 25 in Quitman on 7 November was somewhat unusual for the area (Brad Bergstrom).
- WARBLER MIGRATION** - Several observers reported an excellent warbler migration, including Tommy Patterson in Laurens Co., Brad Bergstrom in Valdosta, Sheila Willis on Cumberland Is., and Steve Calver who reported the best fallout in years in Savannah from 16-19 October.
- GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** - After birding the Lowndes Co. area extensively for most of this decade, Brad Bergstrom discovered his first Golden-winged on 27 September. This trans-Gulf migrant is rarely seen in southeast Georgia.
- LAWRENCE'S WARBLER** - Remarkably, this fall produced two records of this rare Blue-winged x Golden-winged hybrid, both in the Atlanta area. On 19 September one was spotted at KMT (Giff Beaton, Bruce Hallett), and not far away in east Cobb Co., Jack Carusos saw one in his yard on 29 September.
- TENNESSEE WARBLER** - Two late birds were seen, one in Roswell on 2 November (Terry Moore) and one in Cobb Co. on 30 November (Kevin Danchisen). A great yard report was received from David Cree: 25 on 18 October at Peachtree City.
- NASHVILLE WARBLER** - Intense coverage of KMT during migration has shown this species, once considered rare, to be a regular, though still uncommon, visitor. This season was slightly above average compared to the last two years. Singles were seen on 7, 8, 16, 21, 26, and 29 September. Two were seen on 22 and 23 September and 11 October.

Away from KMT, the wetlands center at ELHLAF produced one on 20 September and two on 6 October (both by Aubrey Scott), and Kevin Danchisen saw one in Cobb Co. on 16 October.

VIRGINIA'S WARBLER - At KMT on the morning of 17 September, a single Virginia's Warbler was located near the top by Pierre Howard, Shawn Reed, and Larry Edmonds. This caused a huge rush of area birders to the mountain just north of Atlanta. Amazingly, the bird was relocated the next day by Pierre, Chuck Hunter, Bob and Deb Zaremba, and Russ Wigh. Even more miraculously, it was seen again briefly the following day (Giff Beaton, Shawn Reed). Several score other birders were unable to find it. This bird has been seen east of the Mississippi River only about ten times.

CAPE MAY WARBLER - A good fall count was had at KMT on 18 October when five were seen (Giff Beaton et al.).

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER - An excellent count of 21 was made on 26 September at KMT (Paul Raney).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER - On 5 October one of the *albiflora* (western) race was noted at KMT (Giff Beaton). A late bird was spotted in Banks Co. on 11 November (Jack Carusos, John Paget).

CERULEAN WARBLER - KMT's high count was 16 on 7 September (Bruce Dralle et al.).

AMERICAN REDSTART - A huge count of 44 was tallied on 27 September at the CRNRA, Cobb Co. (Chris Lambrecht). Steve Calver reported that 19 at Savannah on 16 October was excellent for that area, and Brad Bergstrom reported good numbers in Lowndes Co. this fall.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH - A good count was the 12 at Andrews Is., Glynn Co., on 31 August (Giff Beaton et al.), and a late bird was banded at the BIAS, McIntosh Co., on 1 November (Doris Cohrs).

HOODED WARBLER - A notable 16 was tallied at the CRNRA on 4 October (Aubrey Scott).

WILSON'S WARBLER - Birders in the Atlanta area may have set a record for sightings of this elusive migrant. Between 5 September and 18 October seven sightings of singles were reported. The only report outside of metro Atlanta was a single on 11 September in Monroe Co. (Joe Greenberg fide Karen Osborne).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT - A record late bird was found at Dyars Pasture WMA, Greene Co., on 27 November (Mary Case). It would be good if record early or late migrants were written up for *The Oriole* in order to establish the date for the future compilers of the Annotated Checklist.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - This fall's sighting came not from the coast but from the Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co., where on 9 November an immature was seen (Giff Beaton et al.).

LARK SPARROW - Sheila Willis spotted the only one reported, an immature, on Cumberland Is. on 1 September.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - Late, but not a record, was one seen near Griffin on 3 November (Jim Flynn, Giff Beaton).

HENSLow'S SPARROW - Paul's Pasture WMA, Glynn Co., the best known location for this rare sparrow, yielded only one this fall (Lydia Thompson, Gene Kerferl, Mike Chapman).

VESPER SPARROW - Six on 3 November was a good count for Lake Horton, Fayette Co. (Jim Flynn).

SONG SPARROW - This species, whose push south through the state seems to have slowed over the last decade, was discovered nesting in Bibb Co., the first for the county. The pair was discovered in a subdivision and remained through August (Paul Johnson).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW - Two reports were received, both of singles. One was seen on 1 November at the KMT marsh (Shawn Reed) and on 5 November near Cartersville (Joe Greenberg).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - The only report of more than one came from Augusta, where four were seen on 17 November (Anne Water et al.).

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK - This accidental western winter visitor turned up in amazing numbers this fall. Two reports received were followed by a detailed description: two in Rabun Co. on 19 September (Louis Schweizer) and one in Rome on 9 October (Bill Allen). A report from Macon is omitted for lack of details.

PAINTED BUNTING - Two late departures for the location were noted: two on 9 October in Augusta (Anne Waters) and one in Savannah on 31 October (Ray Chandler). There are records of this species wintering on the coast.

DICKCISSEL - The only report was of six in Bartow Co. (Joe Greenberg). This is an excellent count for the state.

BOBOLINK - Few reports of this migrant were received, the best count being 35 at Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., on 30 August (Carol Eldridge fide Anne Waters).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - This species is becoming difficult to find. Six were seen at KMT marsh on 15 November (Giff Beaton), and six others were seen in the Fayetteville area on 24 November (Brock Hutchins).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - Birders in Augusta discovered a huge flock on the early date of 6 September (Anne Waters). This species is rare in the area and usually seen in numbers of fewer than 10.

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE - On 27 September several birds of the light-eyed Atlantic race were found in Lowndes Co. This is unusual, as it is the darker-eyed Gulf Coast race that is usually seen there (Brad Bergstrom).

ORCHARD ORIOLE - This species usually departs by early August, so single birds at KMT on 9 August (Giff Beaton, Shawn Reed, Bruce Dralle) and at Sod Atlanta on 24 August (Jim Flynn) are worth mentioning.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE - Several good reports were received this fall, the best being the nine counted in his subdivision in Macon between 5 and 14 September (Paul Johnson).

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE - One report was received of this accidental visitor to Georgia (there are fewer than ten reports in ACOGB). On 1 October, Jack Carusos saw one in his yard in east Cobb Co., but a detailed description has not been received.

WINTER FINCHES - A few reports of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins were received, but no large numbers. There were no reports of Evening Grosbeaks.

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FROM THE FIELD

December 1997–February 1998

For much of the country, the weather system known as El Nino was the controlling weather event for the period, resulting in weather in many regions of the country that could best be described as strange. Most of the country was warmer and wetter than normal with many areas reporting their warmest winters on record. The weather here in Georgia fit this pattern, but not so much so as to distinguish it from the many warmer than average winters we have had this decade. In such a warm winter, one would expect many lingering migrants. This was true in the eastern states to our north, where almost every state had record numbers of warblers, but here in Georgia we had only a few examples of this effect. Several observers commented on the numbers of White-eyed Vireos seen, a Yellow-breasted Chat was the first in winter for the Macon area, and a Blue Grosbeak in Augusta represented one of fewer than ten seen in Georgia during the winter, but overall the number of wintering passerines was not unusual.

Several duck and gull species migrate only when they have to, so in a year in which Presque Isle Bay on Lake Erie did not freeze over, who would have predicted that our most outstanding rarities this season would be ducks and gulls from the far north? Only six months after having our first documented Common Eider, a second spent several days off Jekyll Is. in January, and this only a few days after a King Eider was seen off St. Catherine's Is. in December, there being fewer than ten Georgia records for this species. Gull species were not to be outdone as we posted the state's second documented Little Gull, from West Point Lake in west Georgia. There is only one other inland record in the Georgia/Carolina region. In addition to the first two-eider record, several gull records were posted. Two Iceland Gulls were seen during the period, this for a species with only five entries in the Annotated Checklist (1986). Although they are being seen with more frequency in the 1990s, it is most unusual to have two Glaucous Gulls in one period. Then there is Steve Calver's sighting of eight gull species in one place at the same time, surely also a first record for Georgia.

Also unexpected for such a warm winter is a good season for winter finches, but several species did appear in average numbers, though often with spotty distribution. Red-breasted Nuthatches staged a good flight, with many reporting that singles stayed at their feeders all winter. It was a good winter, too, for Purple Finches, but less so for Evening Grosbeaks as these erratic finches appeared at

only a few reliable feeders. Pine Siskins appeared in decent enough numbers and were well spread around the state, but in nowhere near the numbers many long-time birders recall from years past. To our north, the big invader this winter was the Red Crossbill, which staged its greatest southward movement in many years. Here in Georgia, more than the usual three or four were reported, but this could have been because of the effort this winter of several birders I know who scoured the Betty Gap area in the Cohutta Mountains looking for them. It is, I think, impossible to say, based on our limited knowledge of this species, or species complex, whether the invasion up north reached Georgia. Because the crossbills reported here all come from the same general area, perhaps the additional birder effort simply resulted in the same individuals being seen over and over. Kenn Kaufman noted this crossbill invasion north of us in the "Changing Seasons" in *Field Notes* (Vol. 52).

Kaufman also notes the steadily increasing numbers of Ross' Geese and Lesser Black-backed Gulls in recent years in eastern North America. Reports in Georgia this winter do not reflect this trend, but perhaps we can look for it in the future. Certainly Ross' Goose has catapulted onto the Georgia scene this decade, although there are still only about five sightings. The Lesser Black-backed Gull has been slowing increasing along the coast as a wintering bird, but numbers seem to have leveled off over the last 3–4 years. The black-backed gull that has really exploded on our coast is, of course, the Great Black-backed Gull. We are all excited about the appearance of a new species on the scene, but such occurrences are not always welcomed by the resident species that are impacted by the arrival of a new potential predator. As to its effect on native avifauna, less clear so far is the impact of the Eurasian Collared-Dove. Initial reports showed that it favored feeding sites not exploited by its cousins, the Rock Dove and the Mourning Dove.

Finally, I invite readers to look for their own trends and patterns as they read through the species accounts that follow. Please note that the list of species follows the new taxonomic order of species as published in the Check-list of North American Birds, 7th Edition, by the American Ornithologists' Union (1998). I thank Georgann Schmalz for typing these field notes, Mim Eisenberg for proofreading them, and Carol Lambert for final corrections.

Abbreviations used include: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, ARE - The Altamaha River Estuary, ASWMA - Altamaha State Waterfowl Management Area, BIAS - Butler Island Altamaha Station, CBC - Christmas Bird Count, CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, EGTF - East Georgia Turf Farm, ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility, KMT - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, NWR - National

Wildlife Refuge, PNWR/RCWMA - Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge/Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area, SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park, SGRBA- South Georgia Rare Bird Alert, and WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- RED-THROATED LOON** - The high count came on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December, when 23 were tallied (fide Emile Urban). There was the about-average one inland sighting, this one on 17 January at Lake Lanier (Jeff Sewell, Patrick Brisse). Other double-digit sightings were the 10 at Sapelo Is. on 18 January (Paul Johnson et al.) and 13 at Tybee Is. on 6 February (Pierre Howard). At the end of the period, on 26 February, two were seen off Sapelo Is. (Brad Bergstrom).
- COMMON LOON** - Although good counts were had at West Point Lake (52 on 1 January by Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert and 15 on 21 February by Aubrey Scott and Michael Bell), Anne Waters commented on their scarcity: none were reported on the St. Catherines Is. and Sapelo Is. CBCs and only one was seen at the Savannah Recovery Site CBC on the Georgia-South Carolina border on 19 December.
- HORNED GREBE** - On 1 January a count of 246 was made at West Point Lake (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), which may be the highest ever seen in the state. This site proved reliable through February as reported by Aubrey Scott and Michael Bell who visited it several times during the month, ending with 50 or so on 26 February. At Lake Lanier, as many as 12 were seen during January (Jeff Sewell).
- EARED GREBE** - We now expect a few of this species each fall and winter on inland lakes. On 1 December two were seen on Lake Lanier off Vann's Tavern Park, Forsyth Co. (Jim Flynn). On 28 December, two were seen near the Buford Dam (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), where they stayed until 10 January (Michael Bell). On 22 December, one was found on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC (Paul Sykes, Mike Chapman), one was seen on 16 January at Lake Juliette (Michael Bell), and two were seen on 10 January at ELHLAF (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott).
- NORTHERN GANNET** - Several good counts were made, including 91 on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December (fide Emile Urban), and 121 on 19 January off Cumberland Is. (Ray Chandler). Anne Waters reported that only 26 were totaled on the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January.
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** - The usual winter flock was seen again this winter. On 19 January, 36 were seen from the Cumberland Is. Ferry (Ray Chandler) on the Georgia side of the St. Mary's River, Camden Co.
- BROWN PELICAN** - Unusual inland was one seen on 28 February at Lake Walter F. George (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). A worker said that it had been there for several days (fide Aubrey Scott).
- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT** - Two huge counts were received. On 27 December, 652 were tallied at the Augusta brickyards (Anne Waters), and on 28 February, 600 or so were noted at Lake Walter F. George (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell).

- ANHINGA** - This species has increased in recent years as a winter resident in two places at the northern extreme of its range. At Augusta, 12 were counted in the brickyards on 27 December (Anne Waters), this being yet another high count, and in Macon, one was seen on 2 January, where a few are expected to winter nowadays (Michael Bell).
- AMERICAN BITTERN** - One at the brickyard ponds in Augusta on 31 January was a good find (Steve Wagner).
- GREAT BLUE HERON** - Aubrey Scott and Michael Bell counted over 30 nests at the Bradley Unit, Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co. on 28 February.
- GREAT EGRET** - At the same site on the same day as above, five or so nests of this species were counted (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell).
- CATTLE EGRET** - Rare so far north in winter was one that was first seen on 3 January in the Macon brickyards and last seen on 21 February (Paul Johnson et al.).
- BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** - Fifteen spent the winter at the August brickyards, which is about average for recent winters (Anne Waters).
- WHITE IBIS** - This species seems to be doing well on the coast, as the 113 on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December and the 264 on the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January attest (fide Anne Waters).
- GLOSSY IBIS** - This species is rare in winter in Georgia, so the three on 31 December and the five on 24 January at the ASWMA are noteworthy (Michael Bell).
- WOOD STORK** - Three CBCs provided heartening news of this species' status: the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December totaled 77, the Sapelo CBC had 12 on 3 January, and the Harris Neck NWR count totaled 143 on 2 January (fide Paul Sykes).
- TURKEY VULTURE** - On 18 December, Pierre Howard counted 86 in the air in one spot in Monroe Co.
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** - This rather rare visitor to our state was reported only once, about average, with two reported on 3 January on the Albany CBC (fide Paul Johnson).
- SNOW GOOSE** - The population of this species has exploded in recent years, so perhaps we will be seeing more of it in Georgia. On 8-10 December, Ike English reported seven in Butts Co. (fide Mimi Tessler), one was seen on the Atlanta/Marietta CBC on 21 December (fide Bill Blakeslee), one was seen in Lowndes Co. on 29 December (Zak Zakarias/SGRBA), two were in Laurens Co. on 4 January (Jerry and Marie Amerson), two near Eatonton on 7 January stayed for two weeks (Billy Dunbar), four were on Ossabaw Is. on 19 January (Giff Beaton), and eight were at the Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co. on 31 January (Shawn Reed).
- TUNDRA SWAN** - This rare winter visitor to our state was seen near Reidsville, 19-25 December (Larry Carlile).
- GADWALL** - A flock of 20 or so wintered at the ELHLAF, a good number for the area (Carol Lambert). At Dalton on 20 December, 98 were counted on the CBC (fide Paul Sykes), and an excellent count was made on 5 January at Pigeon Mountain, Walker Co. (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen).
- AMERICAN WIGEON** - Good numbers were reported from several reliable locations. On 22 December, 81 were counted on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC, a new high for the count (fide Paul Johnson). A count of 21 was

about average for Garden Lake, Rome, on 17 January (Michael Bell), and 200 was a good number for the Augusta brickyards on 30 January (Steve Wagner).

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - This species can be hard to find, especially away from the coast. On 5 December one was seen in Walker Co. (Giff Beaton), on 23 December Carol Lambert saw three at the ELHLAF, and on 2 January Jim Flynn spotted three on Lake Lanier. Richard Ellenburg reported a flock at the ASWMA on 18 January and on 14 February Kevin Danchisen saw eight at the Blanton Creek WMA, Harris Co.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL - This species is rare in winter in the Atlanta area, so one seen on 4 December at the ELHLAF is noteworthy (Michael Bell). It is also quite uncommon in the Macon area, so several there on 7 December gets a mention (Jerry Amerson, et al.) and four were spotted on the Augusta CBC on 27 December (Anne Waters). Perhaps the mild winter was a factor in some teal wintering north of their usual range.

NORTHERN SHOVELER - On 21 February, 65 were counted along Lower Poplar St., Macon, a high count for there (Paul Johnson). A flock of about 25 wintered at ELHLAF (Carol Lambert).

NORTHERN PINTAIL - This uncommon duck was noted a few times this winter. A female was spotted on 4 December at the ELHLAF (Michael Bell), one was noted on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December (fide Anne Waters), 12 were seen on the PNWR/RWMA CBC on 22 December (fide Paul Johnson), two males spent three days at ELHLAF beginning on 6 January (Carol Lambert), and in Augusta the high count was two on 30 January (Steve Wagner).

GREEN-WINGED TEAL - Several good numbers were reported. A flock remained at ELHLAF for most of December and January with the high count being 60 on 6 December (Michael Bell). On the PNWR/RWMA CBC on 22 December, 55 were tallied, this being a count record. The Dalton CBC on 20 December had 44 (fide Paul Sykes).

CANVASBACK - Lake Seminole must be the place to find large numbers of this rather uncommon duck. On 14 December Giff Beaton had eight there, then on 24 January had a whopping 75, then 67 on 9 February. Elsewhere, eight were seen in Macon on 7 February (Ken Clark et al.), but Anne Waters reported that she saw none in Augusta all winter.

REDHEAD - This uncommon duck seemed even more uncommon this winter. Two were seen at SCSP on 4 December (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott), three were seen near Cordele on 25 January (Giff Beaton), and eight were noted in Macon on 7 February (Ty Ivey, Ken and Arlene Clark).

RING-NECKED DUCK - An excellent count of 1310 for the Macon CBC on 20 December was reported (fide Paul Johnson).

GREATER SCAUP - Not so long ago, this species was considered unusual. This period there are so many reports I hesitate to mention all of them (perhaps another case of more birders), but there are more of us these days who are able to identify them. Let's hope that we are not becoming a bit over eager. Remember, simply seeing a green head is not enough to separate this species from LESSER SCAUP. Please be careful. A male was picked out of the scaup at ELHLAF on 6 December (Patrick Brisse), two males were at the DeKalb Reservoir on 6 December (Jeff Sewell), 20

were seen on 14 December at Lake Seminole (Jim Flynn, et al.), three were at West Point Lake on 1 January (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), three were seen at Peachtree City Lake on 9 January (Brock Hutchins), and back at the ELHLAF, four were reported on 16 January (Pierre Howard) and one on 13 February (Aubrey Scott). Mostly, these birds did not stay long. The big news came from the coast, as you might expect, where on 28 December Darryl Lee counted about 200 off the north end of Jekyll Is., with a much larger number of Lessers.

COMMON EIDER - What a majority of observers believed to be an immature male was first spotted on 4 January off Jekyll Is. (Jerry Amerson, Brad Winn, Lydia Thompson) and seen by various observers through 12 January (Lydia Thompson). One observer noted that the bird did not appear healthy (Brad Winn). This is the second sighting in less than a year of this species, for which there are no previous records. It is rare but regular in the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

KING EIDER - As if the COMMON EIDER were not enough, an adult female KING EIDER was discovered off the south end of St. Catherines Is. on 20 December (Brad Winn) and seen the next day by many there for the CBC. There are only a handful of records for the state.

SURF SCOTER - Numbers for this species seemed above average. The north end of Jekyll Is. is the best place to see scoters as indicated by the following reports: one on 12 December (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Shawn Reed), five on 3 January (Jerry Amerson), and three on 13 February (Brad Bergstrom), to name but a few of the reports from there. The high count, however, came on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December with 27 (fide Emile Urban).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - As usual, a few could be found on the coast, but this year, none were reported inland. Lydia Thompson sent in the first report of one on 11 December at Jekyll Is. Also at Jekyll Is. were three on 3 January (Jerry and Marie Amerson) and two females on 12 January (Lydia Thompson). Sapelo Is. was also productive, with one on 19 January (Paul Johnson, Dan Guynn et al.) and two on 27 February (Brad Bergstrom).

BLACK SCOTER - The mixed flock of mostly this species and Lesser Scaup that gathered off the north end of Jekyll Is. in late November carried over into December. On 12 December, 400 were seen there (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn et al.), but numbers dwindled after that, with only 55 being counted on 25 January (Bill Blakeslee, Jeff Sewell) and 10 on 28 February (Darryl Lee per SGRBA). The St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December produced 400 (fide Emil Urban), but only 12 were counted on the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January (fide Paul Sykes).

OLDSQUAW - Above average numbers of this species were reported this season. On 12 December, one was seen off Jekyll Is. (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn et al.), another single was reported from the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December (Brad Winn), and inland an adult female was found near Buford Dam, Lake Lanier, on 2 January (Jim Flynn), which stayed the next day (Giff Beaton, Jeff Sewell). Back on the coast, Paul Johnson, Jerry and Marie Amerson, et al. had one on 18 January at Sapelo Is.

COMMON GOLDENEYE - On 28 December, two females were seen at Lake

Lanier (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), one was in Athens on 17 December (David Galewski), three were at West Point Lake on 1 January (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), and one was at SCSF on 21 January (Aubrey Scott). These sightings would have made for an average year for the species, but on 13 February Pierre Howard, while birding at the dam at West Point Lake saw 41, in three flocks, fly up the Chattahoochee River and over the dam onto the lake. Several others were there the next day and saw 37 (Kevin Danchisen, Bob and Deb Zaremba). These are the largest numbers of this species reported in the state that I know of.

RUDDY DUCK - Several good counts were sent in. The Columbus CBC totaled 20 on 20 December (fide Paul Sykes), 36 were seen at Rock Eagle near Eatonton on 1 January (Billy and Brenda Dunbar), at SCSF the high count was 63 on 10 January (Michael Bell), and two were in Greene Co. on 21 February were uncommon for the location (Paul Sykes).

OSPREY - The sighting of one near Statesboro on 27 January was unusual there for mid-winter (Ray Chandler). A pair already on a nest was quite early (19 February) at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co. (Terry Johnson). Two late February reports were probably of birds returning from points south: Aubrey Scott and Michael Bell saw one on 21 February at West Point Lake and one on 28 February one at the Eufaula NWR, Stewart Co.

BALD EAGLE - This recovering species was well reported this period, so much so that only the highlights will be listed here. A Brooks Co. landowner reported two adults on a nest on his property in December (fide Pierre Howard), a pair was seen several times during the period at the Augusta brickyards (Anne Waters, Steve Wagner), eight were counted on the St. Catherine's Is. CBC on 20 December, but only three were seen on the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January (fide Anne Waters), eight were counted in the Lake Seminole area on 24 January (Giff Beaton), and an adult was spotted at ELHLAF on 15 February (Malcolm Hodges).

COOPER'S HAWK - One in Valdosta on 16 February was considered rare for the area (SGRBA).

RED-TAILED HAWK - On 28 Dec., Jim Flynn saw a leucistic Red-tailed Hawk in Walker Co., which he described as all cream-colored with a few brown feathers and a brick red tail. A report of a partial albino on 26 January was received from the Athens area (fide Carol Lambert).

GOLDEN EAGLE - Reports of this species away from the old hack site on Pigeon Mt., Walker Co., are rare, so a sub-adult seen at the Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon on 15 January was noteworthy (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). Three on Pigeon Mtn. on 24 January was a good count even if it is the old hack site (Jeff Sewell, Patrick Brisse, Shawn Reed).

MERLIN - Two were spotted on CBCs, both unusual for the locations: one on the Athens CBC on 20 December (fide Paul Sykes) and one on the Augusta CBC on 27 December (Anne Waters).

PEREGRINE FALCON - The Atlanta resident birds were reported only once, this time in Ansley Park on 21 December (Jerry Lutz). Dan Guynn, Jr. saw one on the 28 December in Houston Co.

KING RAIL - One heard by several observers on 20 December in the Macon brickyards was unusual so far north (Paul Johnson, Ty Ivey, et al.). On

25 January two were found in Crisp Co. (Giff Beaton).

VIRGINIA RAIL - The Atlanta/Marietta CBC tallied 13 on 21 December (Giff Beaton), but high water levels at a marsh in Greene Co. kept numbers low, three being the most counted there all winter (on 28 February, Paul Sykes).

SANDHILL CRANE - The time between the sighting of the last southbound flock and the first northbound flock seems to shrink every year. A significant southbound movement was noticed in the Atlanta area 1-3 January, and a few flocks were seen headed north toward the end of the month. A new wintering stopover point was discovered in east Sumter Co. near Cobb (famous for its Short-eared Owls). On 2 January, 120 were seen there on the ground (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell), and by 25 January the number had increased to 1000 (Giff Beaton). At the Grand Bay WMA, Lowndes Co., birds over-wintering peaked at about 1500. These began departing in mid-February, leaving behind the small resident population (Brad Bergstrom). Another spot where they spend the winter is in a swamp near Albany, where 201 were counted on the CBC on 3 January (Paul Johnson).

WILSON'S PLOVER - The ACOGB (1986) described this species as accidental in winter, mentioning only two reports. These days a few can usually be found in winter on the barrier islands. The Cumberland Is. CBC had eight on 20 December (Sheila Willis), the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January had two (fide Anne Waters), and five were tallied on Jekyll Is. on the Glynn Co. CBC on 3 January (fide Mike Chapman).

PIPING PLOVER - This uncommon winter resident was found in good numbers this period. Twenty were counted on four different CBCs (fide Paul Sykes), but the bigger numbers occurred in January. On 19 January, 16 were seen on Cumberland Is. (Ray Chandler), and 23 were tallied on Jekyll Is. on 25 January (Jeff Sewell, Bill Blakeslee).

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER - On 3 January, 27 were noted at Tybee Is., a good number for such a popular beach (Ray Chandler), and 111 on Sapelo Is. on 18 January was an excellent count (Paul Johnson).

AMERICAN AVOCET - The Jekyll Is. area once again hosted a flock of this wintering species. On 18 January, 77 were seen behind the Visitors Center on the Jekyll Is. Causeway (Richard Ellenburg), and on 28 February 61 were counted at the southern tip of Jekyll Is. (Darrell Lee), but these numbers pale in comparison to the 1000+ seen at the dredge site just across the river from Savannah on 17 January (David Galewski). The Glynn Co. CBC had five on Jekyll Is. on 3 January (fide Mike Chapman), and on 3 January the Sapelo Is. CBC reported two (fide Anne Waters).

GREATER YELLOWLEGS - Forty seen on 21 February along Lower Poplar Street, Macon, was a new high count for the location during the winter period (Paul Johnson).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS - As noted earlier, the mild winter resulted in many migrants wintering north of their usual ranges. This species is a good example, although the site mentioned here as evidence is just across the Savannah River in South Carolina. Some 3000 Lesser Yellowlegs were counted at the dredge site near Savannah on 25 February (Steve Calver).

This is believed to be the most ever seen in winter, or at anytime really, along the Georgia-Carolina coast (*Field Notes* 52:159). Georgia lacks a large, accessible dredge site that affords good habitat for this species comparable to the Savannah dredge site. Nevertheless, small numbers were reported on all of the coastal CBCs, the average being 14 for the five coastal CBCs. The species is accidental inland in winter, so the one or two seen in the same location in Greene Co. on 2 and 28 February (same bird?) by Paul Sykes is noteworthy.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER - A few can be found in winter somewhere in the state. This winter one was seen on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC on 22 December (Terry Johnson). ‡

WHIMBREL - This is another species that seems, increasingly, to be found every winter along the coast in small numbers, evidenced this year by the five seen on 17 January on Jekyll Is. (David Galewski) and the four on Cumberland Is. on 19 January (Ray Chandler).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW - Better coverage in recent years of the remote barrier islands has turned up small numbers of this rare species. At a reliable spot on St. Catherines Is., Brad Winn saw one on 20 December and a flock of three was found on 19 January on Ossabaw Is. (Giff Beaton).

MARbled GODWIT - On the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December an outstanding count of 58 was tallied (fide Emile Urban).

RUDDY TURNSTONE - An excellent count of 348 on 19 January was noted at Cumberland Is. (Ray Chandler), the high count for one location.

RED KNOT - Several interesting reports of this species were received indicating overwintering. On 19 January, 102 were counted on Ossabaw Is. (Giff Beaton) and on the same day 429 were tallied on Cumberland Is. (Ray Chandler et al.).

WESTERN SANDPIPER - A big count of 5000 was made on 25 January on the Jekyll Is. Causeway (Paul Sykes).

LEAST SANDPIPER - On the same day and in the same place as the Western Sandpiper, 1000 Least were counted (Paul Sykes). Elsewhere the winter inland high count of 24 was made at the EGTF on 4 January by Ray Chandler, who also had 60 on Cumberland I. on 19 January.

PURPLE SANDPIPER - Once again, as many as six spent the winter at the usual spot on Tybee Is., but the big news this year were the two seen on 19 January at the jetty on the south end of Cumberland Is. (Ray Chandler). This location is just across the St. Mary's River from Ft. Clinch State Park, Florida, where small numbers have wintered for years.

DUNLIN - Reports of this species wintering inland are becoming more common, but only in one or two sites in small numbers. At ELHLAF, one bird spent the entire period (many observers). Two were counted on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC on 22 December (Terry Johnson). Paul Sykes had 600 on the Jekyll Is. Causeway on 25 January, a good number for that location, but the 2127 on Cumberland Is. on 19 January was huge (Ray Chandler et al.).

STILT SANDPIPER - A few winter along the coast, as indicated by the 11 seen on the Harris Neck NWR CBC, McIntosh Co., on 2 January (fide Paul Sykes).

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER - Sightings of this species are becoming more

common. On 19 January, three were seen on Ossabaw Is. (Giff Beaton), and five were noted on the Jekyll Is. Causeway on 25 January (Paul Sykes).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK - Several interesting reports were noted: on 1 December one was heard in Houston Co. near Elko, the earliest that Dan Guynn has heard them there. The SGRBA reported one in Valdosta on 16 February where they are uncommon and, for the second year in a row, one was found in downtown Atlanta, this one near the library on 28 February, and taken to a rehabilitator and later released (Gus Kaufman).

POMARINE JAEGER - Increasing coverage of the coast is turning up jaegers every winter. This period a Pomarine was seen on 25 January off the south end of Jekyll Is. by Jeff Sewell.

GULLS - A Georgia first, Steve Calver's remarkable sighting of eight species of gulls on 19 January on Ossabaw Is. cannot pass without mention. He saw Laughing Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Iceland Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Glaucous Gull, and Great Black-backed Gull.

LITTLE GULL - The state's second documented Little Gull was discovered and photographed on 9 February by Jim Flynn. This was all the more remarkable as it was well inland, at West Point Lake, Troup Co. This second-winter bird remained until 12 February (Kevin Danchisen). This is only the second inland sighting in the Georgia-Carolina region.

BONAPARTE'S GULL - This rather erratic wintering species returned to Lake Lanier in more normal numbers this year after several years of low numbers there. On 2 December, 60 were seen (Michael Bell), and 85 were counted on 17 January (Jeff Sewell, Patrick Brisse). Two were spotted at ELHLAF on 10 January (Michael Bell), 30 were noted at West Point Lake on 1 January (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), and two seen in Greene Co. on 31 January where they are uncommon (Paul Sykes).

RING-BILLED GULL - Many reports were received of flocks of "gulls" in DeKalb Co. usually seen overhead. On 16 January, approximately 2000 were seen over I-285 and Buford Highway (Steve Ehly), on 28 January about 600 were counted in the Decatur area (Georgann Schmalz), and about 300 were seen in DeKalb on 5 February (Jerry Brunner). In Macon, Paul Johnson reported a major movement on 23 January, when around 1300 visited Lake Tobesofkee. The flock stayed until 26 January, and in Rome at Garden Lakes 300 were seen on 17 January (Michael Bell).

HERRING GULL - This species seems to be on the increase inland, as indicated by the following reports: the PNWR/RCWMA CBC recorded a new high of seven on 22 December (fide Terry Johnson), on 30 January, nine were noted at Lake Lanier (Jeff Sewell, Giff Beaton), 5-6 immatures were reported to be with the flock of Ring-billed Gulls at Lake Tobesofkee near Macon on 26 January (Paul Johnson), and at the Walter F. George Lake, 30 were tallied on 28 February (Michael Bell, Aubrey Scott).

ICELAND GULL - Continuing a great gull year, this species, which has not been seen in Georgia for many years, was reported twice. Steve Calver saw a first-winter bird on 19 January on Ossabaw Is. and another first winter, or possibly the Ossabaw bird, was seen on Jekyll Is. on 24 January by Mark Welford, Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell.

- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** - This was an average year for this recent European invader, whose numbers seemed to have stabilized over the last few years. Single birds were reported from Tybee Is., Jekyll Is., Cumberland Is., and Ossabaw Is., with the only report of more than one being that of three at Tybee on 8 and 9 February (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).
- GLAUCOUS GULL** - Two reports this winter was a bit above average. On 3 January a first-winter bird was seen on Jekyll Is. (Jerry and Marie Amerson) and again on 17 January (David Galewski, Andy Kinsey). Steve Calver saw one on 19 January on Ossabaw Is.
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** - This large gull continues to increase on our coast. Anne Waters noted this, pointing out the five seen on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December and the three on the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January, but the big numbers came later, when on 19 January, 21 were counted on Cumberland Is. (Ray Chandler) and 12 on Tybee Is. on 8 and 9 February (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).
- SANDWICH TERN** - The ACOGB calls this species accidental in winter, so one seen on the Cumberland Is. CBC on 20 December was noteworthy (fide Paul Sykes).
- FORSTER'S TERN** - A few inland strays of this species are expected from fall through spring. This winter two were seen at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co., on 22 December (fide Terry Johnson), but the numbers reported from West Point Lake were truly astounding. On 1 January, 23 were seen (Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert), but by 13 February this number had grown to 150+ (Pierre Howard, Jeff Sewell, Carol Lambert).
- EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE** - Our most recent and prolific invader, continues to multiply across the state. On 4 December one was seen near the Atlanta airport by Giff Beaton, who saw 60 in the Bainbridge area on 14 December (with Jim Flynn, Lex Glover, Shawn Reed). This, I believe, is the most I have heard of from one area. Michael Bell reported five in the Albany area on 3 January, 11 in Madison on 16 January, and 50+ on St. Simons Is. on 24 January. Fourteen seen on the Okefenokee NWR CBC on 30 December were new to the count (fide Sheila Willis).
- COMMON GROUND-DOVE** - An impressive count of 29 in the Statesboro area on 4 January was welcomed, as this species has declined in recent years (Ray Chandler).
- GREAT HORNED OWL** - The Atlanta/Marietta CBC tallied an impressive 16 on 21 December (fide Bill Blakeslee).
- SHORT-EARED OWL** - The best sighting of this local winter resident came from the south end of Jekyll Is., where on 12 December one was discovered (Jim Flynn, Shawn Reed, Giff Beaton, Lex Glover). At the usual location near Cobb in Sumter Co., the high count was four on 20 February (Pierre Howard) and 25 February (Kevin Danchisen, Bob Zaremba).
- WHIP-POOR-WILL** - At least one seems to winter on Jekyll Is. these days. On 3 January Jerry and Marie Amerson reported one there.
- SWIFTS** - A *Chaetura* swift was seen on 21 February flying south from the Savannah River dredge site in South Carolina across the river into Georgia (Lex Glover et al.). This is more than three weeks earlier than

- the ACOGB early arrival date for Chimney Swifts (*Field Notes* 52:186).
- RUBY THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** - Hummingbirds appeared in what can now be said to be normal winter numbers. One Ruby-throated Hummingbird was banded in Warner Robbins on 27 December by Terry Johnson, and one was in the same yard as the Allen's in LaFayette (see below, fide Buddy Rowe).
- ARCHILOCHUS HUMMINGBIRD** - Two birds, undifferentiated between Ruby-throated and Black-chinned Hummingbirds, were noted in the Valdosta area (fide Barbara Passmore).
- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** - Buddy Rowe received reports of six Rufous Hummingbirds this winter, some or all of which were on 4 January: one near Blairsville (Dot Freeman), a female in Donaldsonville (Terry Johnson), and on 26 January Bob and Martha Sargent banded one in Marietta, and recaptured a bird they banded last year in the same yard in Duluth. Another banded bird spent most of the winter in Rome (Marion Shaw).
- ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD** - Two Allen's were banded this winter, one in LaFayette on 2 December by Donna and Dwayne Burger and one in Ringgold by Bob and Martha Sargent on 3 December (fide Buddy Rowe).
- EASTERN PHOEBE** - Paul Sykes found a completed nest, but no eggs, on the unusually early date of 28 February in Clarke Co.
- LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE** - Good news for this species that is declining in several locations around the state. On 21 December the Atlanta/Marietta CBC tallied five, where just a few years ago it was a true rarity on the count (fide Bill Blakeslee). The Augusta CBC had an impressive 19 on 27 December (Anne Waters) and one was seen on Lookout Mt. Plateau in Walker Co. on 28 December, where this species is quite rare (Jim Flynn, Shawn Reed).
- WHITE-EYED VIREO** - The mild winter produced a number of reports of this species, as might be expected, but the 11 found on the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January were noteworthy (fide Anne Waters).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** - As the ACOGB (1986) lists only two winter records, the discovery of one on the Okefenokee NWR CBC on 30 December was an excellent find (fide Sheila Willis). This sighting should be documented in *The Oriole*.
- FISH CROW** - This species apparently overwinters inland at several locations at least in mild years. The Athens CBC found four on 20 December (fide Paul Sykes), and the Augusta CBC had two on 27 December (fide Anne Waters). Atlanta area birders noted that they began appearing in the area in mid-February.
- COMMON RAVEN** - Two were seen at the unusually low elevation of 2250 feet in Rabun Co. on 3 January (Joel Hitt), and Mark Oberle had three reports from Blood Mt. in January and February. Greg Gilbert reported seeing three or four near Woody Gap, Lumpkin Co., in January.
- HORNED LARK** - As usual, several reports were received from the Atlanta Motor Speedway near Hampton, Henry Co. On 18 January, 11 were counted (Jeff Sewell).
- PURPLE MARTIN** - One 24 January, a male was spotted just after the gourds were put up at Birdsong Plantation, Grady Co. (Kathleen Brady fide Gail

Menk). Two early arrivals were observed on 25 January at Grand Bay WMA near Valdosta (Brad Bergstrom, Giff Beaton). In Laurens Co. on 25 February Kevin Danchisen and Bob Zaremba counted 24.

TREE SWALLOW - Two early dates for inland Georgia were reported. On 19 February one was seen at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co. (Terry Johnson), smashing the early arrival date for middle Georgia (per Paul Johnson). Also early was the one seen on 28 February at ELHLAF (Jim Hanna, David Galewski). The ACOGB early arrival date for inland Georgia is 3 March.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW - Two birds seen on 30 January in Augusta (Steve Wagner, David Mizrahi) establish a record early arrival date for Georgia. The ACOGB shows 7 March. This sighting should be documented for *The Oriole*. On 28 February one was spotted at the Walter F. George Dam, Clay Co. (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - Another good winter was noted by many observers with about 20 reports coming in from all over the state, though most were north of the fall line. Three were seen on the Atlanta/Marietta CBC on 21 December (fide Bill Blakeslee), and one was seen as far south as Valdosta on 4 December (Barbara Passmore). As usual, most of the reports came from feeder watchers, but the following reports were not associated with feeders: on 10 December Aubrey Scott had five at Carter's Lake, Gilmer Co.; at L. Lanier, Gwinnett Co., two were seen on 14 February (Earl Horn, Rusty Trump); and along a Forest Service road in the Cohuttas Pierre Howard counted three on 25 February.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH - Macon area birders nowadays are consistently finding one or two of this species in their area during the winter where, historically, for reasons unknown, this species has been absent. On 22 December one was counted during the PNWR/RCWMA CBC (fide Paul Johnson), and two were seen in Warner Robbins on 8 February (Betty Perry fide Paul Johnson).

BROWN CREEPER - Unusual for this rather solitary species were the five or six seen on 25 January in a mixed winter flock in the Dawson Forest, Dawson Co. (Joe Greenberg).

SEDGE WREN - This rare inland winter resident has been turning up more in recent years, although this could be due to the recent discovery of several suitable sites. At least three spent all winter in a marsh in Greene Co. (Paul Sykes), a marsh near Kennesaw Mt., Cobb Co., produced three on 21 December (Giff Beaton et al.), and one was seen on 5 January at the Arrowhead Public Fishing Facility in northern Floyd Co. (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen).

MARSH WREN - Unusual for the location was one spotted near Lake Seminole on 24 January (Giff Beaton, Oscar Dewberry), as was the one seen on the Augusta CBC on 27 December (Anne Waters). An interesting report was received from Ray Chandler and Andy Kinsey. Of the eight birds they observed in their area on the St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December, seven were the migrant race *palustris* from farther north on the Atlantic coast and only one was the resident race *griseus*.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER - Two were found this winter, not too unexpected for so mild a winter. One was seen on the Atlanta/Marietta

CBC on 21 December (fide Bill Blakeslee), and Paul Sykes had one on 21 February in Greene Co.

GRAY CATBIRD - Indicative of a mild winter were three reports of this species. One spent all winter coming to a suet feeder in Atlanta (Pat Michaelson), one was seen on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC on 22 December (only the second on that count; fide Paul Johnson), and one was discovered in Greene Co. on 31 January (Paul Sykes).

AMERICAN PIPIT - This species is not that common on the immediate coast, so 100+ seen in Glynn Co. on 15 December was noteworthy (Darrell Lee).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER - For a species that once was a rarity on the Atlanta/Marietta CBC, the five totaled on this count on 21 December was outstanding (fide Bill Blakeslee). The Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January had nine (fide Anne Waters).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER - A male and female Audubon's Yellow-rumped were well seen and photographed during January and February in Thomaston (Michael Beohm).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - More than the usual number of reports were received, perhaps due to the mild weather. Small numbers were reported from the coastal CBCs, but the most unusual sightings came from Lake Seminole on 14 December, where they are rare in winter (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn et al.), and from Wilcox Co. on 25 February (Kevin Danchisen, Bob Zaremba). One was seen at each site.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT - Three seen on 5 January at the Arrowhead Public Fishing Facility in northern Floyd Co. was interesting (Giff Beaton, Kevin Danchisen), as the ACOGB describes them as rare in winter north of the fall line.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT - One found in Jones Co. on the Macon CBC on 20 December established a first wintering record for the Macon area (Jerry Amerson, Giff Beaton). The ACOGB lists it as accidental in winter.

WESTERN Tanager - Two female-plumaged birds were reported on the Augusta CBC on 27 December, but no details from the observers have been received to substantiate this sighting. There are only about ten records of this accidental western vagrant, so I am sure that the Checklist and Records Committee would appreciate a report of this sighting which at some point should be submitted for publication in *The Oriole*.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - For the second year in a row, Giff Beaton found an inland, and this winter's only, Clay-colored Sparrow, this one seen on 20 December in Lamar Co.

VESPER SPARROW - This species is rare, or at least hard to find, in the Atlanta area, so ten seen in Forsyth Co. on 31 January were unusual (Joe Greenberg).

SAVANNAH SPARROW - The pale Ipswich race was reported on 19 January on Ossabaw Is. by Giff Beaton.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - One bird was found singing on the Augusta CBC on 27 December. The species is not that common anymore, especially in winter.

HENSLOW'S SPARROW - Birders are becoming more aware where to find this elusive winterer. The St. Catherines Is. CBC on 20 December and the Sapelo Is. CBC on 3 January each had one (fide Anne Waters), the marsh

near Ft. Pulaski produced one on 28 December (Michael Bell), and at their most reliable spot, Paulk's Pasture WMA, Glynn Co., Mike Chapman flushed three on 21 February.

LECONTE'S SPARROW - Paulk's Pasture WMA is perhaps also the most reliable spot for this rare wintering sparrow. On 21 February Mike Chapman had two there for the only report.

FOX SPARROW - The sighting of one on the Cumberland Is. CBC on 20 December is noteworthy, as it is rare on the coast (Lydia Thompson).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - The five reports received were about average for this hard to find winterer. On 12 December Jim Flynn saw one in Laurens Co., and Giff Beaton found one in Mitchell Co. on 23 January and two in Crisp Co. on 25 January. On 2 February an immature was observed in Walton Co. (Jim Flynn) and on 25 February four were seen in Crisp Co. at the same location as the January sighting (Kevin Danchisen, Bob Zaremba).

BLUE GROSBEAK - A late-departing female, perhaps attempting to overwinter this mild year, was seen at close range by Anne Waters in Augusta on 27 December. The ACOGB mentions only three reports of winter sightings up to 1986.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - For a species that has been hard to find in recent winters, this one really came back strong this winter. These numbers are remarkable: 206 on 22 December on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC, a new high for the count (fide Paul Johnson); a flock of 100+ at the Atlanta Motor Speedway, Henry Co. on 30 January (Pierre Howard); 30 on 13 February near Stockbridge (Pierre Howard); 20 on 7 February in Macon (Ken Clark et al.), and 310 in Greene Co. on the same day (Paul Sykes).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - It used to be that the only place to find them was in a small area in northeast Laurens Co., where on 12 December, 60 were found (Giff Beaton et al.), this being down from recent years. However, this period I received four other reports, all in December. On 13 December, ten were noted in the Rome area (Michael Bell), on the PNWR/RCWMA CBC on 22 December four were tallied (fide Terry Johnson), on 29 December two were spotted in Cobb Co. (Giff Beaton), and on 31 December Jim Flynn discovered 16 in his yard in Forsyth Co.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE - One bird spent most of the period at a feeder in Watkinsville (Billy and Brenda Dunbar), as did a female in East Point (Aubrey Scott) and one in Monroe Co. (Jim Ozier fide Paul Johnson). One was reported from Cumberland Is. on 20 December (Lydia Thompson), but the bird causing the most stir was a very pale female first seen in January at a feeder in Carrollton. At first it was thought that the bird was a Bullock's Oriole, but photographs taken in mid-February showed it to be a Baltimore (Victor and Vicki Williams, Jim Flynn et al.).

PURPLE FINCH - Many reports, mostly of small numbers, were received from all over the state, making this a fairly good year compared to recent years. Many observers reported that the finches were late in arriving at feeders, coming mostly in mid to late February. Perhaps the most interesting report was of 11, this being the high count, seen on 16 February in his yard in Brunswick (Mike Chapman).

RED CROSSBILL - Although we had more reports than usual, it is hard to say whether this was due to the good flight reported farther north or the fact that more than the usual number of birders were out looking for them. The Chattahoochee National Forest Songbird CBC in the Cohutta Mtns. turned up five on 21 December (Johnny Parks). Other observers kept finding them after that in the same general area, centered around Betty Gap. The best reports are were six from Betty Gap on 28 December (Jim Flynn, Shawn Reed), seven from the same area on 18 January (Billy and Brenda Dunbar), and at least ten in the Cohutta Wilderness Area on 1 February (Eran Tomer).

PINE SISKIN - This irregular species outnumbered Purple Finches this year, staging a good showing, especially north of the fall line. The PNWR/RCWMA CBC on 22 December had one bird, at least three feeder operators (Rome, Acworth, Marietta) reported 20 or more, three were seen at Birdsong Plantation, Grady Co. for three days in mid-February (fide Gail Menk), two were seen in Brunswick on 16 February (Mike Chapman), and on 19 February Betty Edmondson of Woodstock reported five, her first in 12 years.

EVENING GROSBEAK - Several sizable flocks were located at different sites in the mountains and a few elsewhere. The Chattahoochee National Forest Songbird M.A. CBC counted 40 on 21 December in the Cohuttas (Johnny Parks, Pierre Howard), and these birds remained in this general area centered on Betty Gap through the period. On 25 December Shawn Reed saw 23 at Cloudland Canyon State Park and four near Ft. Mountain State Park. On 25 January, seven were seen at Testnatee Gap on the Richard Russell Scenic Highway (Mark Oberle). In February, feeder watchers in Madison, Morgan and Bartow Counties reported small numbers. The most reliable spot in all of the state for them, however, seems to be Dianne Wilkie's feeder in Acworth. She had them all winter, peaking at about 15 in late January.

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