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GEORGIA'S FIRST NESTING RECORDS FOR THE RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH

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The southeastern Blue Ridge escarpment gorges support a diverse avifauna, including species of both northern and southern affinities (Simpson 1992). The Chattooga River winds its way down a steep and narrow gorge from Whiteside Mountain in North Carolina to form a rugged boundary between northeastern Georgia and northwestern South Carolina. This area supports extensive forests of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*), mixed with cove hardwoods and rhododendron thickets (Carter 1993). In recent years, bird species previously thought to be restricted to the higher elevations of the Appalachians, such as Red-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta canadensis*) and Golden-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus satrapa*), have been found along the Chattooga River during the breeding season (Oberle and Forsythe 1995, Oberle and Haney 1997, Beaton 2000). The purpose of this paper is to quantify the current status of the Red-breasted Nuthatch along the Chattooga, and I report the first definitive nesting records for Georgia.

Evidence of a substantial population. - During June 2000, I found Red-breasted Nuthatches to be well distributed along the Chattooga River. In the 28 river kilometers between Burrell's Ford (elevation 650 m) to the north and Earle's Ford (elevation 490 m) to the south, a total of 14 individuals was observed at 10 separate locations between 12 and 15 June 2000. Because I spent most of my time on the South Carolina side, 11 of these sightings were in South Carolina and 3 were in Georgia. Although no definite nest was found during this trip, there was some indication that nesting was in progress, with males calling repeatedly on territory. On 12 June 2000 a male Red-breasted Nuthatch was observed possibly collecting

sap from the base of a broken branch in a white pine in Oconee County, South Carolina, at Burrell's Ford. A similar observation was made in Rabun County, Georgia, on 15 June 2000. A male was seen at a broken shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*) branch dripping with sap near several dead pines with suitable nest cavities. Red-breasted Nuthatches predictably coat the surface of the nest hole with conifer resin, possibly as an anti-predator strategy (Kilham 1972, Renfrow 1982, Harrap and Quinn 1995). This latter observation was at the Nicholson Tract (elevation 520 m), an old homestead site located in the West Fork section of the Chattooga National Wild and Scenic River Area within the Chattahoochee National Forest.

First definitive nest record for Georgia. - I returned to the Nicholson Tract in May 2002. On 2 May 2002 I observed a male Red-breasted Nuthatch along an abandoned wagon trace that leads north from GA 28, to the west of Burrell's Ford Road. This individual foraged along lichen-encrusted twigs and branches of small oak saplings, successfully capturing inchworms and other insects. I heard a somewhat muffled call from the direction of the standing trunk of a dead shortleaf pine. The male was then observed going back and forth 3-4 times over the next 30 min to a small oak on the opposite side and adjacent to the pine snag. Upon closer examination I found a 25-mm diameter hole about 6 m in height, which was coated with pine resin along the lower edge of the hole.

After waiting about an hour with no sign of the nuthatches, a female Red-breasted Nuthatch stuck her head out of the nesting cavity, as the male called from nearby. The male then came to the nest hole and appeared to feed the female. The female flew out of the hole, but returned and flew straight back in a few minutes later. The male returned and appeared to work at spreading resin, probably gathered from an adjacent shortleaf pine, along the nest hole edge. He then went to the nearest branch of the adjacent oak and rested while perched on a twig less than 2 m from the nest hole for about 20 min.

I returned to the site on 19 May 2002 and found the nest disturbed. There was a large hole about 30 cm below the original cavity, as well as a wedge-shaped opening about 15 cm below and to the side of the original nest hole. I suspect predation by a Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), and one was calling loudly from close by at the time of this observation. Ghalambor and Martin (1999), list woodpeckers as possible nest predators of the Red-breasted Nuthatch. A male Red-breasted Nuthatch was calling and feeding in shortleaf and pitch (*Pinus rigida*) pines in the vicinity of the nest hole but did not come to the dead pine during about an hour of close observation.

A second nest. - In the late afternoon 20 May 2002, I observed a female Red-breasted Nuthatch acting in a "broody" manner, resting lethargically on a pine branch for about 10 min, at the West Fork

Campground (elevation 540 m) 3 km west of the Nicholson Tract location. On the following morning, I followed a male Red-breasted Nuthatch up the slope from the campground. The bird repeatedly returned to an area near a tall dead double-trunked pitch pine. I discovered a 20-m-high hole copiously coated with sap. This sap was so thick, it had flowed in thick droplets to 1 m below the hole. Based on my previous experience with a similarly coated nest cavity of this species, I believe this nest may have been in use for a number of years (Renfrow 1999a). A male Red-breasted Nuthatch visited this hole twice within a 10 min period the following day. The male went in and out of the nest hole, possibly feeding an incubating female. During the early stages of nesting, the female Red-breasted Nuthatch can spend several hours at a time in the cavity, making observation difficult (Renfrow 1999b).

A third nest. - On 23 May 2002, I returned to the Nicholson Tract and heard a Red-breasted Nuthatch give an unusually loud and low-pitched call in a monotonous 4-5 note series, interspersed with an intermittent tapping. Closer examination revealed a female tapping out a 25-mm deep hole in a standing dead trunk of a shortleaf pine, with the flaky bark still intact. A male was calling from the top of the snag; this call soon developed into an unusually deep and throaty version of the trill or vibratory song (Kilham 1973, Renfrow 1999b), a vocalization which can be used to locate the Red-breasted Nuthatch at the nest (Ghalambor and Martin 1999). While still engaged in the trill, he flew off and returned and fed the female, continuing to trill as she excavated the nest hole. She flew off a few minutes later and the male began tapping energetically at the rapidly developing hole with his wings flicking in tandem with each blow. Upon investigation of a call from another bird, I found a second male in the vicinity of the original nest site, about 120 m distant. As I left the site about an hour later, the male was still engaged in digging out the nest hole. The next morning he was still digging, the hole now much deeper, as he was able to go into the hole up to his wing coverts.

Numbers and distribution. - Everywhere I found Red-breasted Nuthatches in 2000, I also found them in 2002. I also found Red-breasted Nuthatches at several additional locations during the 2002 observations. Based on observations from 2000 and 2002 (omitting overlapping sightings), a total of 34 Red-breasted Nuthatches was found at 17 separate locations. This species was found to be generally distributed along the Chattooga River and its tributaries along the East Fork of the Chattooga at the Walhalla Fish Hatchery to the north, at Oconee State Park to the east, at Earl's Ford to the south and at Earl's Ford Road near Warwoman Road to the west. No Red-breasted Nuthatches were found to the south and west of these limits, although suitable habitat was observed in some of these areas. Areas to the north and east were not checked. Breeding evidence has

already been well established to the north in North Carolina (Oberle and Haney 1997). As the Blue Ridge escarpment rapidly drops off into the lower elevations of the piedmont, a population much farther to the east would probably be unlikely.

Habitat. - All three Georgia nests were located in southern hard pines, such as shortleaf and pitch, up slope from the more mesic riparian forest. Red-breasted Nuthatch populations at these lower elevations of the Appalachians seem to use both the hemlock-white pine habitat in the lower areas, as well as the xeric oak-pine habitat on the slopes and ridge tops. I have observed similar habitat preferences in this species at the Red River Gorge in Wolfe County, Kentucky where individuals are frequently found feeding in Virginia and pitch pines on the ridge tops (Renfrow 1999b, 2001). Carter (1993) lists this species as rare in summer in pitch and Virginia pines in northwestern South Carolina. Burleigh (1958) mentions that seed from the shortleaf pine cones are a favored food source for wintering Red-breasted Nuthatches in Georgia. In fact the male Red-breasted Nuthatch at the first Nicholson Tract nest site was observed extracting and eating seeds from the shortleaf pine cones in between trips to the nest.

Conclusions. - Oberle and Haney (1997) suggest a number of explanations for the occurrence of summering northern species in northeastern Georgia. One of the more intriguing suggestions is that some of these birds may represent "long-established, persistent populations inhabiting relict fragments of old growth forest." There is a 10 June 1910 record of a Red-breasted Nuthatch at Oconee County, South Carolina (Post and Gauthreaux 1989), as well as an 11 May 1947 record at Rabun County, Georgia (Burleigh 1958). These records would seem to lend considerable weight to the idea of an overlooked population, as opposed to that of a recent range expansion as suggested by several authors (Matthysen 1998, Ghalambor and Martin 1999). The case of an overlooked population could not be better exemplified than by that of the Swainson's Warbler (*Limnithlypis swainsonii*), which was not discovered along the Chattooga until the latter half of the twentieth century (Simpson 1992).

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DIRECT BAND RECOVERIES FROM WOOD DUCKS BANDED IN GEORGIA IN 2000

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Waterfowl banding information is extremely important. From an administrative aspect, banding data can provide information such as harvest rates, recovery rates, and reporting rates (Nichols et al. 1991, Bellrose and Holm 1994) that should be considered when making decisions concerning harvest management. From a biological perspective, banding data provides information on survival rates (Brownie et al. 1985), and both spatial and temporal migratory patterns (Bellrose 1980). All of these data are useful to biologists and managers to assure that the best possible decisions are made for the conservation of our waterfowl resources.

The Atlantic Flyway Council, the Mississippi Flyway Council, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are working cooperatively to complete a harvest strategy for Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*) that will be used to set hunting regulations for Wood Ducks in the future. Band recovery data provide the basis upon which the strategy is being developed. Banding data will be important not only in the continued development of the strategy but also in long-term monitoring and evaluation once the harvest strategy is in place. Because of the importance of Wood Ducks as a waterfowl resource in Georgia, and the interest in Wood Ducks from the Flyway Councils and the USFWS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, has placed renewed emphasis on banding locally-breeding Wood Ducks.

Methods

Wood Ducks were trapped and banded at 14 different banding stations across the state. The sites were on both private and public lands. Banding sites on public lands were located on the following Wildlife Management Areas: Clarks Hill in McDuffie County, Arrowhead in Floyd County, Big Lazer Creek in Talbot County, and Altamaha in McIntosh County. Banding sites on private lands were in White (two sites), Forsyth, Rockdale, Morgan, Walton, Muscogee, Houston, Emanuel, and Pierce counties.

Assistants and I captured Wood Ducks in funnel traps baited with corn. Trap design and size varied among the banding stations. Traps normally were placed on a clean bank near the water's edge or in shallow water. The trap site was baited with corn prior to placement of the trap to attract local

ducks. Once the trap was erected on site, the funnel was removed to allow ducks to move freely into and out of the trap to feed on the bait. After several days to permit the ducks to acclimate to the trap, the funnel door was set in place. The funnel allowed ducks to enter the trap to feed, but prevented them from leaving. Ducks were normally captured early in the morning and/or late in the evening. Ducks were never left in the trap overnight because of potential predation. Trapping only occurred during the preseason banding period of 1 July through 20 September to target locally breeding Wood Ducks.

Once the ducks were captured, a standard USFWS band was placed on each bird's leg. I recorded band number, date, age, sex, and location in the standard format required by the U. S. Geological Survey, Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service 1991). All data were entered into a computer database using the "Band Manager" software program developed by the BBL. Data files were forwarded to the BBL for compilation and inclusion in their master database.

Recovery information came from the "Periodic Report to Bander" that is mailed from the BBL directly to the bander whenever a band is recovered. The report contains information on how, when, and where the band was recovered, as well as banding date and location. A band recovery is termed a "direct recovery" if it occurs during the waterfowl hunting season immediately following the banding period in which it was placed on the bird (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service 1991). Direct recoveries are considered to be more valuable than indirect recoveries for estimating harvest rates and movement patterns. The data included in this paper were taken from periodic reports received through 23 February 2001.

Results

A total of 336 Wood Ducks was banded during the 2000 preseason banding period. The total number of birds banded included 56 adult males, 81 adult females, 113 juvenile males, 84 juvenile females, and two juvenile birds of unknown sex. During the 2000-2001 waterfowl hunting season, 17 bands were directly recovered and reported to the BBL for a recovery rate of 5.06%.

Of the 17 direct recoveries, 13 (76.5%) were recovered within the state of Georgia (Fig. 1), and four (23.5%) were recovered outside the state (Fig. 2). Three of the four out-of-state recoveries were juvenile males, and one was an adult female. These four recoveries seem to indicate a migration pattern toward the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Two of these recoveries were from birds that were banded at a site just outside of

Columbus, Georgia. One of these two bands was recovered in Pine Hill, Alabama, and the other was recovered in New Hebron, Mississippi. These two sites are on a direct line from Columbus, Georgia, to the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley. The other two out-of-state recoveries were from birds that were banded on Clarks Hill WMA and Arrowhead WMA. One of these bands was recovered on Bayou Pierre, Mississippi, and the other was recovered in Natchez, Mississippi. Both of these recovery sites are within the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley.

Discussion

Wood Ducks that breed in the northeastern United States are early migrants and usually appear in Georgia prior to Thanksgiving. Wood Ducks from the mid-Atlantic states migrate fairly early in the winter as well. Southern Wood Ducks, however, are normally assumed to be nonmigratory. According to Bellrose and Holm (1994) substantially all of the Wood Ducks breeding south of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Little Rock, Arkansas are nonmigratory. Given this information, the results from this year's banding efforts were quite surprising. Of the direct band recoveries, 23.5% were from out-of-state, and they all indicated an apparent migration pattern toward the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley. All four of these birds were banded in the Piedmont physiographic province or above. None of the Coastal Plain birds were recovered out-of-state.

One possible explanation would be that these birds were forced to leave their normal range because of the unusually cold weather during November and December of 2000 and early January 2001. Closer examination of the band recoveries indicates that of the 12 recoveries from birds banded above the Fall Line, four were out-of-state, six were fairly close to the banding site, and two were a relatively long distance away, but within the state (from Clarks Hill to Cairo, and from Madison to Vidalia). If weather had played a strong role in motivating the birds to move, then it seems that a greater portion of the birds banded above the Fall Line would have moved south and been recovered in southern Georgia or Florida. Of the five recoveries from birds banded in the Coastal Plain, all were fairly close to the banding site (<50 km).

Another possible explanation would be that a given portion of Georgia's Wood Ducks migrate to the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley every year, but these movements have never been noticed nor published in the past. This migration pattern may be especially common to Wood Ducks raised above the Fall Line. Of the 12 recoveries from birds banded above the Fall Line, four (33%) were headed toward the Mississippi Alluvial Valley, while none of the five recoveries from birds banded below the Fall Line moved any significant distance. These sample sizes are too small to draw any real

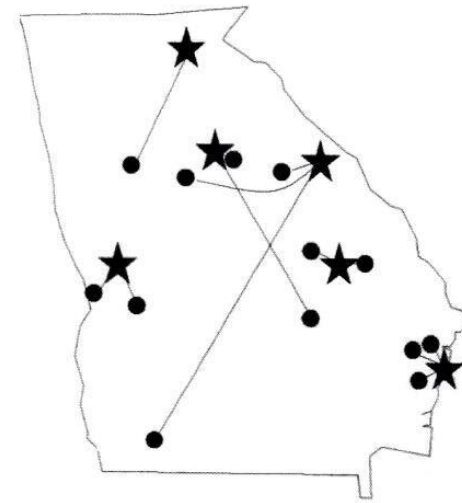


Figure 1. Approximate banding locations (stars) and recovery locations (circles) of the 13 in-state direct Wood Duck band recoveries during the 2000-2001 waterfowl hunting season.

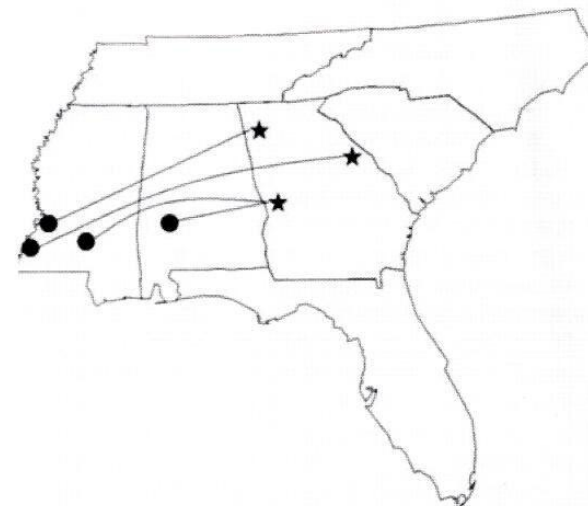


Figure 2. Approximate banding locations (stars) and recovery locations (circles) of the four out-of-state direct Wood Duck band recoveries during the 2000-2001 waterfowl hunting season.

conclusions, but these data show an interesting trend that needs to be explored further. Future banding efforts will determine the importance of the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley as a wintering area for Wood Ducks that normally spend the spring and summer in Georgia. Analysis of future banding data also will determine if there are any differences in the migration patterns of Wood Ducks banded above the Fall Line compared to birds banded below the Fall Line.

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BREEDING RECORDS OF HOODED MERGANSERS IN GEORGIA, 1967-2002

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Hooded Mergansers (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) naturally nest in tree cavities near freshwater swamps, lakes, and rivers in North America, especially in the northern United States and southern Canada and parts of the Mississippi River Valley (Bellrose 1976). However, because of their secretive nesting habits and their generally low breeding densities over most of their range (Dugger et al. 1994), the breeding status of Hooded Mergansers has not been properly surveyed (Heusmann et al. 2000). The fact that older snags providing cavities have long been depleted in forested wetlands and bottomlands in most areas of North America makes it difficult to be certain of their historic nesting range or densities (Dugger et al. 1994).

Recent use by Hooded Mergansers of artificial nest boxes (Zicus 1990), erected primarily for Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*), has possibly allowed the species to reclaim some of its former nesting range, or may have allowed the species to expand into new nesting areas (Heusmann et al. 2000). Alternatively, it may simply have allowed a more accurate assessment of the species' nesting range, which was previously poorly known. Burleigh (1958) reported no breeding records of Hooded Merganser in Georgia, but he did report a few summer sightings of individuals and pairs in the coastal region. Haney et al. (1986) referred to breeding records from four localities in the piedmont and coastal plain of Georgia. In contrast to the few published records from Georgia, Stevenson and Anderson (1994) reported breeding records from 14 counties in the northern half of Florida.

We report a total of 21 instances of breeding by Hooded Mergansers in the piedmont and coastal plain of Georgia over the past four decades, based on breeding-season observations (Table 1). In addition, we report six instances of prior duck-box use by laying Hooded Merganser hens during 2000 and 2001 nesting seasons, based on winter inspections of boxes on state wildlife management areas (WMA). Seven of the breeding-season records are from the literature (or, in one case, from unpublished refuge

records) prior to 1985, and the other 14 are reports of breeding since 1992, most of them previously unpublished. All but one are on or near state or federal refuges with active management programs employing artificial nest cavities for Wood Ducks. About half of these are records of egg clutches found in the nest boxes; Hooded Merganser eggs can be readily distinguished from Wood Duck eggs by their thicker shells and nearly spherical shape (Dugger et al. 1994). The remaining records are of broods of pre-fledgling ducklings swimming with Hooded Merganser hens (Table 1). The breeding-season records come from 14 counties in the coastal plain and piedmont, but no records were found from the coastal region (i.e., tidewater).

The 1993 and 1999 records from a small private lake in Adel, Cook Co. (Table 1; Nos. 9, 15a, 15b) represent one or more females laying in the same duck box in different years, something rarely recorded on larger management areas (Zicus 1990). The 1999 record (Table 1; No. 14) suggests the possibility of an intraspecific group nest, as two females were being courted by a male on 14 March, and two females were in the nest box on 28 March (D. Bryan, pers. comm.). Record No. 7 represents the only certain interspecific nest and the smallest merganser clutch; otherwise, the range in egg clutch size is typical for the species (Bellrose 1976; 4-21). Dugger et al. (1994) suggest that the maximum clutch size for a non-dump nest is no more than 13, suggesting that records 5 and 7 could represent cases of egg dumping by more than one female, but this cannot be concluded.

We know of one other potential record lacking sufficient detail to include in Table 1. A hen merganser with six chicks was reportedly observed in a small borrow pit on the Oaky Woods Wildlife Management Area in Houston Co. in the late 1970s or early 1980s (L. Ross, pers. comm.). A reference is made in Haney et al. (1986) to a breeding record from Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, and it is possible this is the 1967 unpublished refuge record (Table 1; No. 1).

Of 1156 Wood Duck nest boxes on state WMAs checked after the end of the 2000 nesting season (mostly in December and early January), two contained evidence of nesting by Hooded Mergansers; these were both on the Ocmulgee WMA in Bleckley Co. (G. Balkcom, pers. comm.). After the 2001 nesting season, 5 of 1355 boxes checked contained evidence of nesting Hooded Mergansers; 3 of these were on Ocmulgee WMA and were inspected on 27 Feb 2002, which is into the start of the nesting season, and 2 were on Beaverdam WMA in Laurens Co., checked on 4 Jan 2002 (G. Balkcom, pers. comm.). Four of these 5 boxes contained from 3 to 6 eggshell membranes each, which was evidence of a successful hatch the previous nesting season. In one of these four, there were also 2 unhatched

eggs. In the fifth box, there were 11 unhatched eggs, which, given the late date, was assumed to be a newly laid clutch (Table 1; No. 21).

As to the phenology of breeding by Hooded Mergansers in Georgia, given that incubation averages a little over 30 days (Bellrose 1976), these records indicate initiation of nesting from mid-February to early May. From what we can determine, however, juvenile Hooded Mergansers have only been seen in Georgia during the six-week period from very late April to mid-June (Table 1).

Table 1. Records of Hooded Merganser breeding in the Piedmont and Coastal Plains of Georgia, 1967-2002. All egg clutches found in Wood Duck boxes during active nesting season; other evidence is of pre-fledgling ducklings.

No.	Date ^a	County ^b	No. Eggs	No. Young	Hen on Eggs	Notes
1	1 Mar 67	Charlton	n/a	10	n/a	seen with adult female
2	1 May 67	Jasper	n/a	8	n/a	young about 4 wks old
3	3 May 67	Jasper	n/a	3	n/a	
4	??? 1969	Jasper	11	11	yes	all eggs hatched
5	"Jun" 1977	Bleckley	11	n/a	yes	
6a	22 Feb 79	Dougherty	5	n/a	no	4 eggs hatch by 16 Apr;
6b	26 Mar 79	Dougherty	14	n/a	no	2 snakes ate others
7	16 May 84	Bleckley	3	n/a	yes	11 Wood Duck eggs also
8	31 Mar 92	Lowndes	15	n/a	yes	
9	12 Mar 93	Cook	?	n/a	yes	storm destroyed box after ca. 26 days incubation
10	4 Jun 96	Lanier	n/a	4	n/a	seen with adult female
11	4 Mar 97	Stewart	n/a	?	yes	
12	16 Feb 98	Lanier	12	n/a	no	
13	16 Feb 98	Lanier	7	n/a	no	
14	19 May 98	Ben Hill	n/a	8	n/a	
15a	28 Mar 99	Cook	8	n/a	yes	male courting two females 14 Mar;
15b	7 May 99	Cook	n/a	7	n/a	seen with adult pair
16	8 May 99	Laurens	n/a	5	n/a	seen with adult male
17	30 Apr 00	Jasper	n/a	5	n/a	
18	9 May 00	Irwin	n/a	2	n/a	
19	11 Jun 00	Cobb	n/a	4	n/a	seen with adult female
20	early Jun 01	Wilcox	n/a	6	n/a	seen with adult pair
21	27 Feb 02	Bleckley	11	n/a	no	

^a Observers or references [site^b]: 1) J. Hall and W. Cone fide S. Alcher [N Prong Billy's Lake, Okefenokee NWR]; 2&3) Julian (1967) [Piedmont NWR]; 4) Odom (1970) [Piedmont NWR]; 5) T. Johnson in LeGrand (1977) [Ocmulgee WMA]; 6) Ruckel (1979) [Albany Nursery WMA]; 7) Watson (1984) [Ocmulgee WMA]; 8) T. Hon (unpubl.) [Grand Bay]; 9) D. Bryan fide T. Hon (unpubl.) [Bear Lake, Adel]; 10) B. Bergstrom (unpubl.) [Grand Bay Creek, impoundment]; 11) C. Manlove fide T. Schneider (unpubl.) [Eufala NWR, Bradley Unit]; 12, 13) T. Hon (unpubl.) [Rat Bay (Grand Bay WMA)]; 14) T. Hon (unpubl.) [Bowen's Mill Hatchery, Pond #3]; 15) D. Bryan, T. Hon, B. Bergstrom (unpubl.) [Bear Lake, Adel]; 16) T. Patterson fide G. Beaton (unpubl.) [Bracewell's Pond]; 17) J. Flynn (unpubl.) [Charlie Elliott Wildl. Ctr. (Muskrat Pond)]; 18) M. Hopkins (in Bell 2000) [Osierfield]; 19) E. Tomer (unpubl.) [Chattahoochee R., Johnson's Ferry S.]; 20) J. Stokes fide T. Hon. (unpubl.) [Pond near House Creek, Bowen's Mill]; 21) G. Balkcom (unpubl.) [Ocmulgee WMA].

The average clutch size for our 10 records is 9.7, which is less than the 10.6 average for 191 nests reviewed by Bellrose (1976). The average clutch for 102 nests in Missouri was 11.0 eggs (Dugger et al. 1994), and 92 nests in Minnesota averaged 13.0 (Zicus 1990). In the latter study, half of all boxes contained merganser eggs, but this particularly high clutch size, compared to other studies, was attributed to a lower than average density of nest boxes. It is not possible for us to know the comparative densities of available nest boxes over the wide area and time represented by these 27 records, but, conservatively, hundreds of active Wood Duck boxes in Georgia have been checked for each recorded use by Hooded Mergansers (0.3%, or 1 in 360, were used, based on the sample of wintertime inspections of nest boxes on WMAs from the past 2 years).

Clearly, then, breeding densities in Georgia are a small fraction of those in more northerly parts of the range such as Minnesota and Massachusetts (Heusmann et al. 2000). Given that 13 of the 21 breeding-season records and 19 of 27 total records occurred within the past 5 years, it could be that the small and scattered breeding population in Georgia is increasing somewhat due to the Wood Duck nest-box program, much as it appears to be doing in some northern states where the species has always been a much more common breeder. As of the 2001 nesting season, there were 2,068 Wood Duck nest boxes on all state WMAs (more than 90% were in the piedmont and coastal plain), 1,400 of which were erected during a partnership program with Ducks Unlimited in 1990-91 (G. Balkcom, pers. comm.). In the past 4 years, 1,200 nest boxes have been

erected on private lands in Georgia, and although it is likely that Hooded Mergansers have used and will use some of these boxes for nesting, they are not systematically checked by state biologists, as are those on WMAs. Consequently, we are unaware of any records from these private boxes (G. Balkcom, pers. comm.).

It is also plausible that this relative concentration of records in recent years reflects increased effort at monitoring boxes, increased skilled-amateur observer effort, overall, and enhanced communication among the community of birders, ornithologists, and game biologists. Statewide sharing and compilation of data on duck-box use on WMAs did not begin until after the 2001 season (G. Balkcom, pers. comm.). At any rate, the small and scattered breeding population of Hooded Mergansers in Georgia will likely be preserved if not enhanced by the continued installation and maintenance of artificial nest boxes. Many of the boxes erected for Wood Ducks in Georgia are placed in open marsh and pond habitats, whereas those situated under the tree canopies of riparian and palustrine wetland forests may be more attractive to nesting Hooded Mergansers (Dugger et al. 1994).

Acknowledgments

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GENERAL NOTES

FIRST RECORD OF SCOTT'S ORIOLE FROM GEORGIA - We report the first record of a Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) from Georgia. The bird was first seen on 3 November 2002 at 17:00 in Thomaston, Upson County, Georgia by Richard Beohm. It was preening in a small plum tree before being chased to another tree by a Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). The oriole was in view for several minutes before being chased away by the mockingbird.

Michael and Eric Beohm relocated the bird the following day. It was feeding on ripe fruit about 6 m (20 ft) high in a large persimmon tree (*Diospyros virginianum*). It continued to feed in this tree for three days until it was enticed to bird feeders by placing sliced oranges in suet cages. Some of these oranges fell to ground, and the Scott's Oriole seemed to prefer to feed on the ground. We erected a blind near the feeder in order to obtain photographs (Fig. 1) and video.



Figure 1. Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*), 8 November 2002, Thomaston, Georgia. Photo by Eric Beohm.

The Scott's Oriole was slightly longer than a Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) - probably 23 cm (9 in) long - with a typical oriole shape and a long, pointed black bill that was slightly downcurved on the upper mandible. The bill was longer in proportion to the head than that of a Baltimore Oriole (*I. galbula*). The crown was greenish with black spotting. The greenish coloration extended down the sides of the neck, and black extended from the eye to the chin and down the breast, forming a black bib that was mottled in appearance along the lower edge. The sides of the face were gray, and this together with the bib created the appearance of a hood. The belly, flanks, sides, crissum, rump, and lesser coverts at the bend of the wing were lemon yellow. The tail was greenish yellow and dark on the lower half (giving a faint redstart-like pattern, opposite that of a male Baltimore Oriole). There were white dots on the end of the rectrices. The lower wing bar was white and thinner than the upper one. The greater coverts and flight feathers were black and reflected a bluish cast in direct light. The call note was a harsh "chuck."

The bird frequented the feeder until 8 November, after which it was not seen again. It was overcast on 5 November, windy and foggy on 6 November, and sunny and windy on 7-8 November. The temperature during the bird's stay ranged from 9-21°C (48-70°F).

The Scott's Oriole is found primarily in the southwestern United States and adjoining regions of Mexico. It has rarely been documented east of the Mississippi River, and this record appears to be the eastern-most yet documented (American Ornithologists' Union, 1998, *Check-list of North American Birds*, 7th ed.).

We thank Eric and Rose Beohm for their painstaking efforts to photograph the bird during its stay here.

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SIGNIFICANT POPULATION OF SOUTHEASTERN AMERICAN KESTRELS IN SOUTH-CENTRAL GEORGIA - We report a significant and previously unrecognized population of Southeastern American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius paulus*) from a series of major power lines in south-central Georgia. Kestrels have been casually observed for the past three years during the spring and summer months along power lines northeast of Douglas (Coffee County). During surveys conducted between mid-August and early September 2001, 139 kestrels were counted at limited-access points along a 150-km length of power line from Offerman (Pierce County) westward to Tifton (Tift County). Whereas only two kestrels were seen between Offerman and Alma (39 km), 35 were seen between Alma and

Douglas (37 km). A total of 58 kestrels was present between Douglas and Ocilla (42 km), and 44 were found between Ocilla and Tifton (32 km).

The power poles on this power line have two hollow, horizontal pipes that serve as cross arms about 15 m (50 ft) high on the two vertical poles supporting the power lines. The hollow cross arms each taper to approximately 15 cm (6 in) in diameter at their open ends, which are half-covered. It is likely that kestrels are nesting in one of the four available openings of the two hollow pipes at the towers. Because kestrels do not construct nests they are probably using nest material already within the pipe, presumably nests of European Starlings (*Sturnis vulgaris*) which are common along the power line. Starlings have been shown to provide nesting materials for kestrels nesting in other sites (T.F. Breen and J.W. Parrish, 1997, *Florida Field Naturalist* 25:129-138).

A second power line with solid horizontal cross bars parallels the power line with hollow, cross arms and creates an open habitat about 60-m wide for the kestrels. A large open hunting area is important for nesting kestrels (B. Stys, 1993, Florida Nongame Wildlife Program Technical Report No. 13). The paucity of kestrels at the eastern end of the line, between Alma and Patterson, may be attributable to this segment's narrower right-of-way (ca. 30 m). This segment also passes through extensive pine plantation areas, and the only two kestrels seen were observed where the line crossed an agricultural field.

As our survey extended into September 2001, some kestrels observed might be those of the northern, migratory race (*Falco sparverius sparverius*). However, surveys along other power lines across southern Georgia failed to detect kestrels in other locations, except in areas where small populations of southeastern kestrels were known to breed. Also, the gregarious behavior of many of the kestrels along the lines with the hollow cross arms suggested family groups. Careful monitoring of the kestrels in subsequent springs and summers will be required in order to delineate the true extent of this population because, due to limited access, we examined less than 50% of the power line. The eastern end of the hollow-piped lines occurs at Offerman, whereas the western terminus ends at Plant Mitchell (Dougherty County), south of Albany.

This south-central Georgia population of the southeastern subspecies of kestrels appears to exceed that of other known populations in the state (T.F. Breen and J.W. Parrish, 1997, *Florida Field Naturalist* 25:129-138). The present data suggest that the Southeastern American Kestrel has a more secure future in south-central Georgia than we had previously thought. More importantly, the discovery of this kestrel population demonstrates that with adequate nesting sites along with adjacent, open hunting territory, *F. s. paulus* is maintaining sustainable populations in a previously undocumented area of southern Georgia.

The assistance of Milton Hopkins, Jr. and Malcolm Hodges, both seasoned ornithologists, is gratefully appreciated.

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EARLY WINTERING BALTIMORE ORIOLES IN PECAN ORCHARDS IN BULLOCH COUNTY, GEORGIA ñ Following our initial discovery of more than a dozen Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) in pecan orchards in the late winter 2001 in Bulloch County, Georgia (Oriole - *In press*), I further investigated their arrival and presence in the subsequent Fall 2001. Fall orioles were first found around pecan orchards in the county by mid-October. Eight orioles were seen through the end of October, and eleven orioles were sighted in the county through the end of November. During a search of more than 50 pecan orchards between 20-31 December 2001, an astounding total of 32 orioles was located around pecan orchards in Bulloch County. Of those 32 birds, 14 were adult males, five were immature males, six were females, and the remaining were all isolated, fall-plumaged orioles (National Geographic Society. 2002. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 4th Ed.). As was observed in the previous late, winter oriole surveys, the majority of the orioles (20) were found in pecan orchards in close association with hoofed animals (horses, cattle, or sheep). Also, similar to last spring, orioles departed the county by mid-March 2002. Oriole arrived in the county earlier in 2002 (2 Oct), were last seen 4 November. The absence of wintering orioles in 2002 was likely due to the drought, as pecan crops were present only in orchard that were irrigated.

Orioles were never seen in orchards of less than about 45-50 pecan trees, nor in small pecan orchards in which the pecans were cleanly harvested. The present report confirms that larger numbers of Baltimore Orioles often winter in Georgia than was previously thought. However, I again did not find any orioles in the two largest pecan orchards in Candler and Screven Counties (each about 100 acres). These data appear to further confirm that pecans may be a major winter food source, although other resources such as invertebrates and fruit might be available in, and around, pecan orchards, as well. Crawford (1996, *Oriole* 63:1-28) reported orioles as rare winter residents, restricted to feeders in Thomas County. Other reports indicate small numbers of wintering orioles are not unusual in Georgia: two at Kennesaw Mountain in November 1995 (*Oriole* 61:28); one at the Atlanta Zoo, December 1995, and one in Valdosta in 1995-1996 (*Oriole* 62:70); five in Bellville, and one at Callaway Gardens in January 1999 (*Oriole* 64:38); and a total of seven, in Marietta, Macon, St.

Catherines Island, and McIntosh County in December 1999 and January 2000 (*Oriole* 65:37). Whether larger numbers of orioles are wintering in other areas of Georgia, as I found them in Bulloch County, requires further investigation. Pecan orchards, certainly, should be an early place to begin looking for them.

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FROM THE FIELD MARCH-MAY 2002

A number of observers across the state commented on the low numbers of migrants seen during the season, possibly due to extended periods of fair weather across the Southeast. However, there were several reports of rare species, including three potential first records for Georgia. Of these three, only one bird, the White-faced Ibis at the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, remained long enough for photographs to be taken. Unfortunately, no photographs were obtained of the reported Yellow-legged Gull at Gould's Inlet or Inca Dove in Spalding County.

Abbreviations used include: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, 1986, Haney, J.C. et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10; AWEC - Arrowhead Wildlife Education Center in Floyd Co.; AWMA - Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area in McIntosh Co.; CRNRA - the Cochran Shoals Unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area; ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton Co.; ENWR - the Bradley Unit of the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge in Stewart Co.; Kennesaw Mt. - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Cobb Co.; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park in Douglas Co.; WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

RED-THROATED LOON - The best count was 24 at Tybee Island on 7 Mar (Eric Beohm).

COMMON LOON - The high count for this species was 152 in Hart Co. on 13 Apr (Earl Horn). A late bird was reported from ENWR on 30 May (Walt Chambers).

HORNED GREBE - The high count was 49 from Plant Wansley in Carroll Co. on 4 Apr (Eric Beohm, Richard Beohm). Also notable was a count of 16 at Lake Horton on 24 Mar (Dan Demko, Mary Provost).

- EARED GREBE - One was reported from Wilkinson Co. on both 3 Mar (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and 5 Mar (Giff Beaton, Tom Egan, Dot Freeman), and two were at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 24 Mar (Aubrey Scott).
- BROWN PELICAN - One was a good find at Florence Marina State Park on 4 May (Walt Chambers).
- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT - A flock of 125 was seen overhead in Oconee Co. on 11 Apr (Paul Sykes).
- ANHINGA - 65 were seen at AWMA on 26 May (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- AMERICAN BITTERN - Singles were reported from Douglas Co. on 16 Mar (Chris Loudermilk), ENWR on 19 Mar (Walt Chambers), Lake Seminole on 14 Apr (Michael Beohm), Lumpkin Co. on 27 Apr (Greg Gilbert), Ichauway Plantation in Baker Co. on 24 Apr (Chris Borg), and Upson Co. from 4 to 6 May (Eric Beohm, Aubrey Scott). Another single was seen carrying reeds at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. during April for an interesting report (Anne Waters).
- LEAST BITTERN - Good counts were five at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 26 Apr (Ruth Meade) and six at AWMA on 26 May (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- GREAT WHITE HERON - The white morph of the Great Blue Heron was reported from Gould's Inlet on 17 May (Eric Beohm).
- GREAT EGRET - One was seen at Buchanan Lake in Haralson Co. on the early date of 19 Mar (Marion Dobbs), and three birds seen at the ELHLAF on 31 Mar were also early (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell).
- TRICOLORED HERON - Two were seen at ENWR on both 2 Apr (Eric Beohm) and 20 Apr (Walt Chambers).
- REDDISH EGRET - One was reported from Cumberland Island on 1 Mar (Eric Beohm), and one to two were at Gould's Inlet during most of March (Eric Beohm, Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- CATTLE EGRET - Unusual for the Atlanta area were singles at the ELHLAF on 31 Mar (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell), at CRNRA on 22 Apr (Eric Beohm) and in Bartow Co. on 4 May (Bruce Dralle). Approximately 3660 nests were found at a rookery in the Cordele area during May (Paul Raney, Jim Wilson).
- YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - One seen at ENWR on 6 Mar was unusual so early in the year (Walt Chambers). One to two were observed at CRNRA beginning on 22 Apr through the end of the period (Eric Beohm et al.). Singles were also reported from Floyd Co. on 4 May (Stephen Stewart) and at South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserve in DeKalb Co. on 16 May (Stan Chapman).
- WHITE IBIS - A good count of 1000 was made at AWMA on 8 Mar (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle). Approximately 1650 nests were found at a rookery in the Cordele area during May (Paul Raney, Jim Wilson).
- GLOSSY IBIS - One was observed at ENWR from 24 Mar through early April (many observers). An extremely high count of 91 came from the AWMA on 15 Apr (Eric Beohm).

- WHITE-FACED IBIS - One was discovered at ENWR by Walt Chambers on 19 Mar and remained there through at least 20 Apr. This bird, seen by many observers, was well photographed, so it should provide a first record for the state.
- WOOD STORK - Surveys of all the known wading bird rookeries in the Georgia coastal plain during May produced a total of approximately 1190 pairs, according to Brad Winn. The largest counts were of 300 pairs at Harris Neck NWR, a total of 350 pairs at two sites in Brooks Co. and 150 pairs at Chew Mill in Jenkins Co.
- FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCK - A flock of at least 40 was seen overhead in the vicinity of Midway in McIntosh Co. on 12 Mar (Walt Chambers).
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - One was found in Douglas Co. on 7 Apr (Chris Loudermilk) and was last seen on 9 Apr (Jim Flynn).
- ROSS'S GOOSE - There were a few more reports of the bird that has taken up residence in Madison Co. A bird that was first found at SCSP on 13 Mar (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle) and remained through most of April was later determined to probably be a Snow x Ross's hybrid.
- GADWALL - This species is rarely reported from the mountains, so noteworthy were four seen in Habersham Co. on 17 Mar (Betty Belanger, Dot Freeman).
- MOTTLED DUCK - Six were seen at AWMA on 15 Apr (Eric Beohm).
- REDHEAD - Seven were reported from SCSP on 13 Mar (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle, Paul Raney).
- GREATER SCAUP - A high inland count of 53 came from Plant Wansley in Carroll Co. on 5 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm).
- LESSER SCAUP - A good inland count of 750 was made at Plant Wansley in Carroll Co. on 5 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm).
- SURF SCOTER - A single was found at Plant Wansley in Carroll Co. on 11 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm), and possibly the same bird was seen there on 4 Apr (Eric Beohm, Richard Beohm).
- COMMON GOLDENEYE - One was still at Skidaway Island on 10 Mar (Russ Wigh).
- HOODED MERGANSER - A female with four young were found at CRNRA on 20 Apr (Jeff Sewell et al.).
- OSPREY - Two nests were found in the Atlanta area during April. One was at Lake Blalock (Carol Lambert), and one was along the Chattahoochee River near Morgan Falls Dam (Eran Tomer). Four nests were also found in Greene Co. during March (Eugenia Thompson), further evidence that this species is becoming a more regular breeder in the northern half of the state.
- SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - Very early reports were of one seen along the St. Simons Island Causeway on 1 Mar (Eric Beohm) and three near Cox on 5 Mar (David Edwards). One was a nice find in Laurens Co. on 31 May (Michael Beohm).
- MISSISSIPPI KITE - The first report was of one in the Barnesville area in Lamar Co. on 16 Apr (Jim Ozier). The high count for the period was nine in Monroe Co. on 11 May (Dot Freeman).

- BALD EAGLE - Eight was a good count at Lake Seminole on 14 Apr (Michael Beohm).
- GOLDEN EAGLE - One was reported from Monroe Co. on 11 May (*vide* Terry Johnson), and another bird was seen in Okefenokee Swamp during early March (Howard Hunt).
- AMERICAN KESTREL - Rare nesting reports for the Atlanta area came from Bartow Co. (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle) and near Morgan Falls (Eran Tomer).
- MERLIN - Singles were seen inland in Lumpkin Co. on 7 Mar (Greg Gilbert), at Kennesaw Mt. on 17 Apr (Deb Zaremba et al.), at Indian Springs Park in Monroe Co. on 29 Apr (Eric Beohm) and in Bibb Co. on 4 May (Paul Johnson et al.).
- PEREGRINE FALCON - Three young were raised by the downtown Atlanta pair (Jim Ozier). Other inland reports were of single birds in the Columbus area on 26 Apr (Walt Chambers), in Bartow Co. on both 4 and 5 May (Bruce Dralle) and at the Phinizy Swamp in the Augusta area on 5 May (Paul Champlin).
- PLAIN CHACHALACA - Six were reported from Sapelo Island on 15 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm).
- RUFFED GROUSE - One was a good find in Dawson Forest on 4 Apr (Bill Groce).
- BLACK RAIL - Two were found at the reliable marsh for this species in Greene Co. on 12 May (Eric Beohm, Paul Sykes).
- KING RAIL - Six were counted at ENWR on 30 Mar (Walt Chambers).
- VIRGINIA RAIL - Four were a good find in Douglas Co. on 16 Mar (Chris Loudermilk), and three were counted at ENWR on 30 Mar (Walt Chambers).
- SORA - Four were counted at ENWR on 30 Mar (Walt Chambers).
- PURPLE GALLINULE - Two were noted in the Americus area on 5 May (Giff Beaton).
- AMERICAN COOT - Two adults were seen with six young at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 6 Apr (Calvin Zippler et al.).
- SANDHILL CRANE - The last report of a migrating flock was eight birds seen over Clayton Co. on 13 Mar (Carol Lambert).
- BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER - Rare inland sightings were of single birds in Stewart Co. on 11 May (Walt Chambers) and at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. from 23 to 26 May (Ruth Meade, Anne Waters, et al.).
- SEMIPALMATED PLOVER - Twenty was a good inland count at ENWR on 4 May (Walt Chambers).
- BLACK-NECKED STILT - Twenty were counted at the AWMA on 15 Apr (Eric Beohm).
- AMERICAN AVOCET - The high count was 50+ along Andrews Island Causeway on 1 Mar (Eric Beohm).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER - A count of 35 was made on Blackbeard Island on 19 May (John Seginak, Paul Sykes).

- UPLAND SANDPIPER - Two were seen in Carroll Co. on 4 Apr (Eric Beohm, Richard Beohm), and two were found at East Georgia Turf in Bulloch Co. on 5 Apr (Shan Cammack, Mark Freeman).
- WHIMBREL - A very rare inland report was of 11 seen flying over at ENWR on 28 Apr (Walt Chambers). The best count from the coast was 463 at Gould's Inlet on 6 May (Lydia Thompson, Brad Winn).
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW - An extremely high count of eight came from Sapelo Island on 15 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm).
- MARBLED GODWIT - A high count of 55 was made on Sapelo Island on 15 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm). One was a very rare inland find in Bartow Co. on 5 May (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle, Tom Egan, Bob Zaremba).
- RUDDY TURNSTONE - Rare inland reports were of two in Stewart Co. on 11 May (Walt Chambers) and one at the ELHLAF from 11 to 13 May (Michael Beuerlein, Carol Lambert).
- RED KNOT - Excellent counts were 5000 at Sapelo Island on 15 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm), 3000 at Tybee Island on 15 Apr (Deb Barriero), 1200 at Gould's Inlet on 6 May (Lydia Thompson, Brad Winn), and 1500 on Blackbeard Island on 19 May (John Seginak, Paul Sykes).
- WESTERN SANDPIPER - Fifteen was a good count at the ELHLAF on 11 May (Michael Beuerlein).
- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - The best counts were six at ENWR on 4 May (Walt Chambers), eight at the AWMA on 28 May (Eric Beohm) and seven in Bartow Co. on 29 May (Earl Horn).
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - Rare for spring was a bird reported from Forsyth Co. on 18 May (Jack Carusos, John Paget).
- PURPLE SANDPIPER - One continued to be seen on Jekyll Island through March (various observers), one was found on Cumberland Island on 1 Mar (Eric Beohm), and the best count from Tybee Island was 15 on 28 Mar (Eric Beohm).
- DUNLIN - Fourteen was a good inland count from Bartow Co. on 4 May (Bruce Dralle).
- STILT SANDPIPER - Four were found at the ELHLAF on 4 May (Michael Bender, Dan Demko, Carol Lambert), and nine were seen at the AWMA on 17 May (Eric Beohm).
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - The best count from the ELHLAF was five on 4 May (Michael Bender, Dan Demko, Carol Lambert), and five were seen in Bartow Co. also on 4 May (Bruce Dralle).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER - One was a nice find at the ELHLAF on 5 May (Jim Flynn) and 22 were counted at Andrews Island Causeway on 7 May (Eric Beohm).
- WILSON'S PHALAROPE - One was found in Forsyth Co. on 19 May (Eric Beohm, Tom Egan, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- POMARINE JAEGER - One was seen off Cumberland Island on 1 Mar (Eric Beohm).

- PARASITIC JAEGER - Ten was a good count off Jekyll Island on 7 Mar (Eric Beohm).
- LAUGHING GULL - Single birds were seen inland at West Point Dam on 20 Mar (Eric Beohm), in the Columbus area on 12 Apr (Walt Chambers) and in Emanuel Co. on 29 May (Michael Beohm).
- BONAPARTE'S GULL - A good count of 35 was made at SCSP on 29 Mar (Chris Loudermilk).
- HERRING X GLAUCOUS GULL - A second-year bird seen at Blackbeard Island on 19 May appeared to be a Herring x Glaucous Gull hybrid according to the observer (Paul Sykes).
- YELLOW-LEGGED GULL - A report of this species came from Gould's Inlet on 15 Apr (Eric Beohm). The bird was studied closely for about 25 minutes and was well described. This species has been recorded along the Atlantic coast of North America previously, but due to variation of Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls and the possibility of hybrids, identification is considered problematic at best, even for gull experts.
- BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - One continued at West Point Dam through at least 27 Mar (Bill Lotz, Dan Vickers).
- GULL-BILLED TERN - A good count of 31 was made at the AWMA on 26 May (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- CASPIAN TERN - Inland reports were of a single bird at Chicopee Woods in the Gainesville area on 11 Apr (Karen Theodorou) and two in Greene Co. on 14 Apr (Paul Sykes).
- LEAST TERN - Rare inland reports were of one at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 5 May (Calvin Zippler) and two in the Vidalia area on 19 May (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- BLACK TERN - Inland singles were seen at the ELHLAF on 4 May (Michael Bender, Dan Demko, Carol Lambert) and in Bartow Co. on 5 May (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- BLACK SKIMMER - An excellent count of 1200 was made at Gould's Inlet on 27 Mar (Eric Beohm).
- WHITE-WINGED DOVE - Singles were seen in the Hinesville area in Liberty Co. on both 24 Mar (Nicole Janke) and 27 Mar (Eric Beohm) and in Decatur Co. on 11 May (S.P. McCumhail).
- COMMON GROUND-DOVE - Two were reported from Spalding Co. from 20 Apr through 10 May (Eric Beohm).
- INCA DOVE - A report of a bird that was seen in Spalding Co. on 20 May was received (Eric Beohm). This is the first report for the state.
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - Singles were seen in Tucker on 29 Apr (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell) and in Morgan Co. on 12 May (Eric Beohm).
- BARN OWL - One seen in Dahlonga in Lumpkin Co. on 30 Apr provided a rare report for the mountains (Betty Belanger, Dot Freeman).
- CHIMNEY SWIFT - The first report came from Schley Co. on 19 Mar (Walt Chambers).
- RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD - The first report of this species came from Douglas Co. on 14 Mar (Annette Bittaker).

- BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD - The bird that wintered in the Covington area in Newton Co. was last reported on 4 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm).
- CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD - The bird wintering in the Augusta area was last reported on 31 Mar (Betsy Ristroph), and the bird in Lilburn was last reported on 4 Apr (Tim Rose).
- ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD - The last report of the bird in the Roswell area was made on 9 Mar (Marion Dobbs). Another bird was banded in the Columbus area on 7 Mar was last reported on 18 Mar (Walt Chambers). This bird had apparently been at this location since the previous October.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER - Singles were seen at South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserve in DeKalb Co. from 26 Apr (Jerry Brunner) through 28 Apr (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle), at Kennesaw Mt. on 10 May (Tom Egan) and in Fannin Co. on 25 May (Michael Bender, Paul Mack).
- VERMILION FLYCATCHER - An immature male was seen at the Georgia Botanical Gardens in the Athens area on 23 Mar (Lisa Hurt, Georgann Schmalz).
- WESTERN KINGBIRD - A single was found in Thomas Co. on 6 Mar (Jack Dozier).
- EASTERN KINGBIRD - Thirty was a good count at Kennesaw Mt. on 1 May (*fide* Giff Beaton).
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - By late May a pair was found building a nest in McDonough in Henry Co. for the third successive year (Jim Flynn, Bob Zaremba).
- YELLOW-THROATED VIREO - One seen at Chickasawhatchee WMA on 15 Mar was early (Nathan Klaus).
- RED-EYED VIREO - The first report came from ENWR on 19 Mar (Walt Chambers).
- NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW - The first one reported was at Plant Wansley in Carroll Co. on 5 Mar (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm).
- BARN SWALLOW - Two early birds were seen at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 11 Mar (Anne Waters).
- SEDGE WREN - Seven were counted at ENWR on 2 Apr (Eric Beohm).
- MARSH WREN - Inland reports included two in Floyd Co. on 4 May (Stephen Stewart et al.), one in Spalding Co. on 10 May (Eric Beohm) and one in Greene Co. on 12 May (Eric Beohm, Paul Sykes).
- GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH - A late bird was found at Kennesaw Mt. on 25 May (Giff Beaton). This beats the state's previous late date by one day.
- AMERICAN PIPIT - 170 were seen in Greene Co. on 10 Mar (Paul Sykes).
- BLUE-WINGED WARBLER - Six were observed in Fannin and Towns Cos. on 17 Apr (Giff Beaton, Tom Egan, Dot Freeman), and a count of five was made in Dawson Forest on 22 Apr (Jim Flynn).
- GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER - Three were seen in Fannin Co. on 23 May (Giff Beaton, Pierre Howard). The total for the season at Kennesaw Mt. was only five, which is half of the average number seen for the five previous springs (*fide* Giff Beaton).

- NASHVILLE WARBLER - One was seen in Dade Co. on 20 Apr (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- CAPE MAY WARBER - A very early bird was seen in Camden Co. on 23 Mar (Michael Bell).
- BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER - A count of 25 was made at Pine Log WMA on 15 Apr (Giff Beaton, Deb Zaremba).
- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER - One seen in Spalding Co. on 9 Mar was early that far north (Eric Beohm).
- PRAIRIE WARBLER - The high count was 30 at Pine Log WMA in Bartow Co. on 14 Apr (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- CERULEAN WARBLER - The high counts were five in Union Co. on 20 Apr (Betty Belanger, Dot Freeman, Anne Mursch) and 11 along Ivy Log Gap Road on 12 May (Theresa Hartz, Georgann Schmalz). The total for the season at Kennesaw Mt. was a disappointingly low 21 compared to the average of 93 for the previous five years (fide Giff Beaton).
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - Three males seen in Greene Co. on 17 Mar were rather early (Paul Sykes). A high count of 15 was made at Pine Log WMA in Bartow Co. on 15 Apr (Giff Beaton, Deb Zaremba).
- WORM-EATING WARBLER - One seen in Walker Co. on 29 Mar was early (David Aborn).
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER - One seen in the Athens area on 29 Mar was early (Beth Wright). Good counts included eight at Indian Springs State Park in Butts Co. on 23 Apr (Eric Beohm) and eight in Chattahoochee Co. on 26 Apr (Walt Chambers).
- OVENBIRD - One seen in Colquitt Co. on 17 Mar may have been a wintering bird (Jim Flynn).
- LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH - One found in Ben Hill Co. on 3 Mar was early (Giff Beaton).
- CONNECTICUT WARBLER - This species was very well reported. One was seen at Indian Springs State Park in Butts Co. on 3 May (Eric Beohm, Richard Beohm), two were found at South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserve in DeKalb Co. on 12 May (Jeff Sewell) where one remained through 15 May (Bruce Dralle et al.), two were at the CRNRA on 14 May (Pierre Howard), with one being seen sporadically at that location through 22 May (Tim Rose), and one was found at SCSP on 25 May (Jeff Sewell).
- MOURNING WARBLER - A male was found at Kennesaw Mt. on 23 May (Tom Egan et al.).
- SCARLET TANAGER - One seen at ENWR on 25 Mar was early (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm).
- BACHMAN'S SPARROW - Thirty-four was the high count for Ichauway Plantation in Baker Co. on 15 Apr (Michael Bell).
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - About 40 was an excellent report from the Griffin area on 20 Apr (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm).
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW - Singles were seen at South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserve in DeKalb Co. on 29 Apr (Pierre Howard), in Floyd Co. on 2 May (Marion Dobbs) and in Upson Co. on 5 May (Michael Beohm).

- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW - Seven was a decent count at the Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center on 13 Apr (Tim Keyes), and seven were also seen in Upson Co. on 26 Apr (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm). A bird was still in the Alpharetta area on 6 May (Leslie Curran).
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK - A pair seen at a feeder in the Griffin area on 9 Mar may have been wintering locally (Eric Beohm).
- BLUE GROSBEAK - An excellent count of 40+ was made at Oxbow Meadows in the Columbus area on 26 Apr (Walt Chambers).
- INDIGO BUNTING - One seen at ENWR on 2 Apr was rather early (Eric Beohm).
- DICKCISSEL - One was seen at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 23 Apr (Carol Eldridge), another single was found at the Merry Ponds in Augusta on 26 Apr (Anne Waters, Vernon Waters), three were seen in Spalding Co. on 1 May (Eric Beohm), four were found in Floyd Co. on 4 May (Marion Dobbs), and singles were at two locations in Bartow Co. on 5 May (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle), but the best count by far was 18 in Upson Co. on 11 May (Eric Beohm).
- BOBOLINK - Good numbers were reported, including "thousands" at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. from 26 to 28 Apr (Paul Champlin, Anne Waters), 200 in Baker Co. on 30 Apr (Michael Bell), about 200 in Butts Co. on 1 May (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm), 200 to 300 in Floyd Co. on 2 May (Stephen Stewart), 100+ at the ELHLAF on 4 May (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell), 100 in Bartow Co. on 4 May (Bruce Dralle), and at least 6700 in Monroe Co. on 5 May (Jim Flynn).
- BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - Good counts were 40 at Oxbow Meadows in the Columbus area on 21 Mar (Walt Chambers) and 270 in Bartow Co. on 31 Mar (Bruce Dralle).
- BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE - This species continues at Reed Bingham State Park, where the high count was six on 17 Mar (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). A female was seen at this location carrying nesting material on 27 Apr (Michael Bell).
- SHINY COWBIRD - A bird was well photographed in Early Co. on 26 May (fide Terry Johnson). This is the first accepted record for the state away from the coast.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE - Early for the Atlanta area were singles seen in downtown on 5 Mar (Jo Hunsinger) and one in Tucker in DeKalb Co. beginning 9 Mar (Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell).
- RED CROSSBILL - This species continues at Pine Log WMA in Bartow Co., where four were seen on 14 Apr (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- PINE SISKIN - Twenty was a good count for the coast from Liberty Co. on 27 Mar (Eric Beohm).
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH - An excellent count, especially for the coast, of 300+ came from Brunswick in Glynn Co. on 2 Mar (Mike Chapman).

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FROM THE FIELD

JUNE-JULY 2002

A couple of pelagic trips during June were quite productive, with the highlight being an adult White-tailed Tropicbird on a trip organized by Russ Wigh. This was a life bird for most, if not all, of the participants on the trip. Hopefully, there will be continued demand from eager birders to warrant regular off-shore trips in the future, resulting in a better understanding of the status of pelagic species in Georgia waters.

Birders also managed to help add to our knowledge of changes in the breeding ranges of various species. Some, such as Cliff Swallow and Eastern Phoebe, seem to be on a steady march south, whereas the Florida subspecies of Boat-tailed Grackle may be spreading farther inland. The documented nesting attempt of Cedar Waxwing in Sumter County illustrates that summer can be a rewarding time to be out in the field.

Abbreviations used include: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, 1986, Haney, J.C. et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 10; AWMA Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area in McIntosh Co.; ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton Co.; ENWR - the Bradley Unit of the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge in Stewart Co.; Kennesaw Mt. - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Cobb Co.; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- PIED-BILLED GREBE - A pair nested successfully at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. this summer. Two young were seen on 4 Jul (Anne Waters).
- BLACK-CAPPED PETREL - One was seen on a pelagic trip about 50 miles out of Savannah on 11 Jun (Eric Beohm).
- CORY'S SHEARWATER - A count of 51 was made on a pelagic trip out of Tybee Island on 24 Jun (Russ Wigh et al.).
- GREATER SHEARWATER - The two aforementioned pelagic trips produced counts of two on 11 Jun (Eric Beohm) and 19 on 24 Jun (Russ Wigh et al.).
- WILSON'S STORM PETREL - Six were seen on each of the pelagic trips on 11 Jun (Eric Beohm) and 24 Jun (Russ Wigh et al.).
- LEACH'S STORM PETREL - One was seen on the pelagic trip out of Savannah on 11 Jun (Eric Beohm).
- WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD - An adult bird was a great find approximately 118 km due east of St. Catherines Island on the pelagic trip on 24 Jun (Russ Wigh et al.). Everyone on the trip enjoyed good views of the bird, and excellent photographs were taken.

- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - A count of 16 was made at Walter F. George Dam on 7 Jul (Walt Chambers), and the same observer saw one at the same location on 13 Jul.
- BROWN PELICAN - One was found at Walter F. George Dam on both 24 Jun and 20 Jul (Walt Chambers).
- ANHINGA - A count of 51 was made at AWMA on 25 Jun (Jim Flynn). One seen in Spalding Co. on 29 Jul was quite far north (Eric Beohm).
- GREAT WHITE HERON - The all-white morph of the Great Blue Heron was found in the Duluth area in Gwinnett Co. from 24 Jul through the end of the period (Rick Rader).
- SNOWY EGRET - Seven were counted at the ELHLAF on 26 Jul (Carol Lambert).
- REDDISH EGRET - Singles were seen at Gould's Inlet on 22 Jun (Bill Lotz, Jeff Sewell) and at Sapelo Island on 25 Jun (Doris Cohrs), and three were found on Ossabaw Island on 23 Jul (Brad Winn).
- CATTLE EGRET - This species was again well reported from north Georgia, with counts of 27 near Stockbridge in Henry Co. on 9 Jun (Peggy Moore, Terry Moore), 10 in Floyd Co. on 12 Jun (Stephen Stewart), 26 at the ELHLAF on 26 Jul (Carol Lambert) and nine at Dyar Pasture WMA in Greene Co. on 31 Jul (Jim Wilson).
- BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - An immature was a good find in Greene Co. on 4 Jul (Paul Sykes).
- WHITE IBIS - Counts from north Georgia included 11 in Bartow Co. on 14 Jun (Bruce Dralle), two at Eagle's Landing Nature Preserve in Henry Co. on 29 Jun (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and one at the ELHLAF on 26 Jul (Carol Lambert).
- GLOSSY IBIS - One was found inland at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on both 10 Jul (James Keener) and 27 Jul (Paul Champlin).
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL - The best count from just south of Brunswick in Glynn Co. was 38 on 19 Jun (Lydia Thompson). One was seen inland along the Altamaha River in Long Co. from mid-June through the end of July (Jack Sadow).
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL - A pair was at ENWR on 19 Jun (Walt Chambers), and ten were found at the same location on 13 Jul (Walt Chambers).
- RING-NECKED DUCK - One was found at ENWR on 15 Jun (Walt Chambers).
- LESSER SCAUP - One was reported from Columbia Co. from 13 to 15 Jun (Gene Howard, Calvin Zippler).
- HOODED MERGANSER - A female was found at AWMA on 25 Jun (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- RUDDY DUCK - Single males were noted at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 8 Jun (Anne Waters, Calvin Zippler) and at Rock Eagle Park in Putnam Co. on 26 Jul (Billy Dunbar).
- SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - Twenty-nine nests were found in Georgia this year (*vide* E.J. Williams). High counts included 19 in Long Co. on 20 Jul (Larry Carlile), 13 in Tattnall Co. on 20 Jul (Dan Kennedy) and an impressive 80 in Wayne Co. on 22 Jul (E.J. Williams). Also noteworthy were one in Jasper Co. on 17 Jul (Tim Keyes), two in the Macon area on

- 23 Jul (Ty Ivey) and two near Winder in Barrow Co. on 30 Jul (Ann McLaughlin).
- MISSISSIPPI KITE - Nine were found in Early Co. on 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). The large kite congregation in Wayne Co. contained 12 of this species on 22 Jul (E.J. Williams).
- NORTHERN HARRIER - A male was still in Oconee Co. on 11 Jun (E.J. Williams).
- AMERICAN KESTREL - One was seen in Gordon Co. on 8 Jun (John Gatchett), two were noted in Bartow Co. on 13 Jun (Bill Lotz), a pair was seen at Oxbow Meadows in the Columbus area on 25 Jun (Walt Chambers), and one was observed in Miller Co. on 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- BLACK RAIL - One was heard calling at a marsh in Greene Co. on 4 Jul (Paul Sykes). Apparently numbers have decreased significantly at this location, the only known inland site for this species.
- SORA - Very early were two at the AWMA on 19 Jul (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle) and one in Bartow Co. on 26 Jul (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).
- PURPLE GALLINULE - A pair with young were noted in Lee Co. on 9 Jun (Clive Rainey), and five adults and two young were found at a reliable site for this species in Clay Co. on 24 Jun (Walt Chambers).
- AMERICAN COOT - One was found at the AWMA on 12 Jun (Eric Beohm), two were seen at Cooper Creek Park in the Columbus area on 25 Jun (Walt Chambers), and one was present at the ELHLAF during July (Carol Lambert).
- SANDHILL CRANE - Two were present in Thomas Co. for about a week during early June (*vide* Leon Neel).
- WILSON'S PLOVER - A count of 32 was made on Ossabaw Island on 23 Jul (Brad Winn).
- SEMPALMATED PLOVER - A count of 40 on Jekyll Island on 22 Jun was good for summer (Mike Chapman, Darrell Lee).
- PIPING PLOVER - Six were already at St. Catherines Island on 22 Jul (Paul Sykes).
- LESSER YELLOWLEGS - One seen at the ELHLAF on 29 Jun was early (Jeff Sewell).
- WILLET - This species was well reported inland this summer. Six were seen in Bartow Co. on 13 Jul (Bob Zaremba), two were found at another location in Bartow Co. the following day (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba), one was at Walter F. George Dam on 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), and two were seen again at Walter F. George Dam on 20 Jul (Walt Chambers).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER - One seen in Greene Co. on 4 Jul could have been early or late (Paul Sykes).
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW - One was found on Ossabaw Island on 23 Jul for a rare summer record (Brad Winn).
- MARbled GODWIT - Two were also unusual for summer at St. Catherines Island on 22 Jul (Paul Sykes).
- LEAST SANDPIPER - One seen at the ELHLAF on 8 Jun was late (Jeff Sewell et al.).

- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - Notable counts were 30 at the AWMA on 2 June (Eric Beohm), six in Bartow Co. on 7 Jun (Bruce Dralle) and eight at ENWR on 8 Jun (Walt Chambers).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER - The high count was 70 in Bartow Co. on 28 Jul (Bruce Dralle, Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).
- PURPLE SANDPIPER - A late bird was photographed on 1 Jun at Tybee Island (Andrew Chapman).
- STILT SANDPIPER - One seen at the AWMA on 2 Jun was late (Eric Beohm). Southbound were singles in Bartow Co. on 14 Jul (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba) and at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 27 Jul (Paul Champlin).
- LAUGHING GULL - Good numbers were seen inland along the Chattahoochee River, including eight at Florence Marina State Park on 8 Jun (Walt Chambers), ten at West Point Dam on 15 Jun (Walt Chambers) and three at Walter F. George Dam on 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- HERRING GULL - Unusual for summer was one seen at Walter F. George Dam on both 13 Jul (Walt Chambers) and 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - Two were seen at Tybee Island on both 24 Jun (Jim Flynn et al.) and 14 Jul (Rick Fridell).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - Similar to the previous species, this gull appears to be coming more regular in summer. One was seen on Sapelo Island on both 16 and 23 Jul (Doris Cohrs).
- CASPIAN TERN - One was seen at ENWR on 8 Jun (Walt Chambers).
- COMMON TERN - Interesting inland reports were of four to six at ENWR on 29 Jun (Walt Chambers) and counts of 11 and eight at Walter F. George Dam on 29 Jun and 20 Jul, respectively (Walt Chambers). Twenty were reported from Tybee Island on 14 Jul (Krista Fridell, Rick Fridell).
- LEAST TERN - A good count of 200 was made on Jekyll Island on 26 Jul (Lydia Thompson).
- BRIDLED TERN - Three were reported on a pelagic trip out of Savannah on 11 Jun (Eric Beohm).
- SOOTY TERN - Pelagic trips turned up one on 11 Jun (Eric Beohm) and two on 24 Jun (Russ Wigh et al.).
- BLACK TERN - The best counts were 56 at Harris Neck NWR on 23 Jun (Bill Lotz, Jeff Sewell) and 30 at the AWMA on 25 Jun (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- WHITE-WINGED DOVE - One was present in Coffee Co. from 15 through 25 Jun (Annette Bittaker).
- BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO - One was reported from Brasstown Bald on 16 Jun (Eric Beohm).
- WILLOW FLYCATCHER - Singles were found in Fannin Co. on 8 Jun (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and at Brasstown Bald on 16 Jun (Eric Beohm). Unusual was the report of one or two birds in the Macon area beginning 8 Jun through at least 23 Jul (Ty Ivey et al.).
- EASTERN PHOEBE - This species is becoming a more regular breeder in the coastal plain, as evidenced by a pair in Randolph Co. and another pair

- found in Quitman Co. on 13 Jun (Giff Beaton). Also quite far south was one seen at Walter F. George Dam on 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- GRAY KINGBIRD - Two pair were reported from two different locations on Jekyll Island on 9 Jul (Russ Wigh) and 12 Jul (Lydia Thompson). One was seen on St. Simons Island on 20 Jul (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - Singles were reported in Oconee Co. on 22 Jul (Carole Ludwig) and in the Lawrenceville area in Gwinnett Co. on 27 Jul (Diane Lahaise).
- WARBLING VIREO - One reported from Trackrock Campground near Brasstown Bald was very interesting (Eric Beohm). This species is a common breeder not far to the north of Georgia, and has also been recorded breeding in Alabama.
- TREE SWALLOW - One seen at the AWMA on 25 Jun was probably early (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). Two seen at Eagle's Landing Nature Preserve in Henry Co. on 29 Jun may also have been early or could have been local breeders (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). A pair was found nesting at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center in Jasper Co. during July (Tim Keyes).
- NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW - Good counts included 546 in Miller Co. on 14 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and 575 in Peach Co. on 27 Jul (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- BANK SWALLOW - One at the ELHLAF on 13 Jul was quite early (Patrick Brisse, Jeff Sewell).
- CLIFF SWALLOW - This species continues to expand its breeding range southwards. Several were found nesting along the Pataula Creek arm of Walter F. George Lake in Clay Co. on 13 Jun (Giff Beaton).
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - One was found at Trackrock Campground near Brasstown Bald on 18 Jun (Jim Flynn), and four to five were reported from along Burrell's Ford Rd. in Rabun Co. on 3 Jul (Rick Fridell).
- HOUSE WREN - This is another species that is expanding its breeding range in Georgia, though one found at Mayhaw WMA in Miller Co. on 14 Jul was quite a surprise (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- CEDAR WAXWING - Even more surprising was a failed nesting attempt by this species in Sumter Co. during June (Phil Hardy).
- GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER - Two seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 29 Jul were quite early (Tom Egan).
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - One seen at Tybee Island on 5 Jun was late (Diana Churchill).
- BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER - An early bird was reported in the Athens area on 5 Jul (Templeton Hill).
- CERULEAN WARBLER - The high count for the period was seven at Kennesaw Mt. on 31 Jul (Tom Egan et al.).
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - A nice count of 15 was made at Kennesaw Mt. on 31 Jul (Tom Egan et al.).
- AMERICAN REDSTART - Two pair were good finds along Pataula Creek in Randolph Co. and Quitman Co. on 13 Jun (Giff Beaton). The ACOGB does list this species as breeding south to Early Co., but I am unaware of

- any reports during the breeding season in recent years from southwest Georgia.
- SAVANNAH SPARROW - One seen at the AWMA on 12 Jun was very late (Eric Beohm).
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - A count of 15 was made in Bartow Co. on 28 Jul (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).
- PAINTED BUNTING - Five was a good count in Laurens Co. on 18 Jun (Michael Beohm). Other singles were found in the Americus area in Sumter Co. on 17 Jun (Bob Norris), at ENWR on 24 Jun (Walt Chambers) and in Emanuel Co. on 26 Jun (Michael Beohm).
- DICKCISSEL - The best count from Bartow Co. was five on 28 Jul (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).
- BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE - Six, including two fledglings, of the Gulf Coast brown-eyed subspecies were found in Tift Co. on 29 Jun (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- ORCHARD ORIOLE - A good count of 30 was made on Jekyll Island on 28 Jun, indicating early movement of this species (Lydia Thompson).
- PINE SISKIN - Two were found near Brasstown Bald on 16 Jun (Eric Beohm).

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FROM THE LITERATURE

"From the Literature" provides brief reviews of recent ornithological studies conducted in the state of Georgia. The reviews are designed for a general reader and are meant to make ornithological research in Georgia available to a wider audience. - The Editors.

Testing habitat-relationship models for forest birds of the southeastern United States. J. A. Cox, W. W. Baker, and R. T. Engstrom. 2001. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 66. - The Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*) in the Red Hills of southwest Georgia and northwest Florida is the largest population on private lands and supports an estimated 3-4% of the remaining population of this endangered species. Because this population has not been surveyed in over a decade, in 1998 the authors of this study used global positioning systems to geo-reference cavity trees (N = 2,047) and then entered the locations into a geographic information system (GIS). Estimated numbers of active (n=179) and inactive (n=90) clusters were similar to those found in previous surveys, but other factors (e.g., a high rate of cluster inactivation) made it difficult to conclude that the population was stable. Average number of cavity trees/cluster was 7.6 (SD=5.2). Average number of active trees in active clusters was 2.8 (SD=1.6). The most common species used as cavity trees were longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) and loblolly pine (*P. taeda*), and a greater proportion of longleaf cavity trees was active (26.9% versus 11.8% for loblolly). Active clusters had more active neighbors within 2 and 4.5 km and shorter distances to an active neighboring cluster than inactive clusters. Active clusters also were surrounded by more-uniform forest cover, smaller areas of unsuitable habitat types, less total edge habitat, and fewer total patches of unsuitable habitat than inactive clusters. Proportion of cavity trees in longleaf pine, number of active neighbors within 2 km, and proportion of unsuitable habitat within 804 m of cluster centers were the best predictors of cluster activity. These variables correctly classified 75% of the clusters. Clusters misclassified by a discriminant analysis (i.e., active clusters classified as inactive and inactive clusters classified as active) should be the focus of attempts to stabilize or expand this population by constructing artificial cavities.

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COPY – Manuscripts should be *typed, double-spaced* throughout, on quality paper. Underline scientific names only. Use the same font size and style throughout the manuscript. Manuscripts should include a title page (including names and addresses of all authors), text (beginning on page 2), literature cited, tables, figure legends (on a separate page), and figures. Number all pages through the tables in the upper right-hand corner. Avoid footnotes.

STYLE – For questions of style consult the CBE Style Manual, 5th edition. It is available from the Council of Biology Editors, Inc., Bethesda, Maryland 20814.

LITERATURE CITED – List all references cited in the text alphabetically by the first author's last name in a Literature Cited section. If there are three or fewer citations, they should be incorporated parenthetically in the text. General notes should also incorporate references in the text. Citations should conform to the style of a recent issue of *The Oriole*.

NOMENCLATURE – Common names of bird species should be capitalized. Provide the scientific name (underlined) at the first mention of each species. Nomenclature should follow the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (7th edition), 1998.

TABLES – Tables should be formatted with the size of *The Oriole* in mind and should be interpretable without reference to the text.

FIGURES – Figures should be appropriate for photoreproduction without retouching. Photos should be good-quality color or black-and-white prints.

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