

# THE ORIOLE

Quarterly Journal of the Georgia Ornithological Society



*Richard Parks*

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# THE ORIOLE

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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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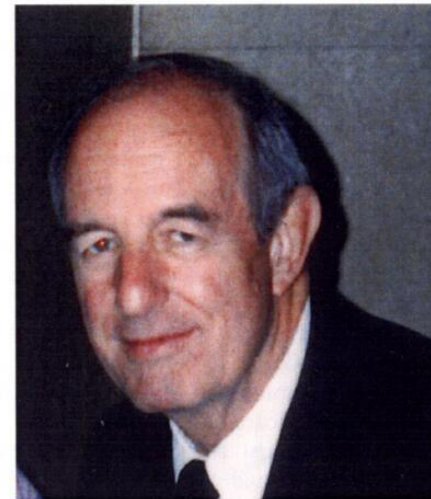
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## IN MEMORIAM: WILLIAM W. GRIFFIN, 1921-2002

Richard A. Parks  
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William W. Griffin, a charter member and former president of the Georgia Ornithological Society (GOS), died after a long illness on 10 May 2002, in Atlanta, Georgia. Bill, as most everyone knew him, was an Atlanta native, born in the city on 13 October 1921.

Bill's interest in birds was stimulated as a Boy Scout working on the bird study merit badge. The study of birds quickly became a passion. As a teenager he joined the Atlanta Bird Club (later the Atlanta Audubon

Society) as well as the GOS. Not satisfied with simply being a member, Bill served as vice-president of the Atlanta Bird Club in 1937-1938 and president in 1946-1947.

While enrolled at Emory University studying for a biology degree, Bill was asked to serve as editor of the quarterly journal of the GOS, *The Oriole*, in 1941. He edited the journal until he entered the U. S. Marine Corps in 1942. After returning home at the conclusion of World War II, Bill continued to contribute to the GOS by serving as president for the 1947-1949 term. He then returned to *The Oriole* in 1950 as a co-editor with Richard A. Parks. Ironically, his term as editor was ended by military service again, when Bill was recalled to active duty during the Korean conflict. Bill also was an active contributor of articles and notes to *The Oriole* over the years.

Prior to World War II, Bill gathered and prepared a collection of over 800 bird skins, which he deposited at the Georgia Museum of Natural History at the University of Georgia in Athens, thus providing valuable study material for students and ornithologists. He also played a major role in the development of the first annotated checklist of Georgia birds.

In April 1941, a collection of lists, notes, and other data on Georgia birds from various sources, was deposited at Emory University. Bill, then a student there, carefully checked the material, added to it, and developed a checklist and wrote the annotative text. After some delay because of the war, *Birds of Georgia, a Preliminary Check-list and Bibliography*, by Greene, Griffin, Odum, Stoddard, and Tompkins was published by the University of Georgia Press in 1945. This was the second Occasional Publication of the GOS.

Bill had a passion for history. He is well known for having written the *History of Ornithology in Georgia* for Thomas Burleigh's book, *Georgia Birds* (1958).

As his interest in birds waned in the sixties, he turned his attention to other longtime interests: Georgia cultural history, antiques, and conservation. He was a charter member of the Georgia Conservancy, and in its early years served on the board of trustees.

In 1973, Bill became the first chairman of The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, which he and others had founded in 1972, serving on the board of trustees until 1987. In 1983, he received an award from the Trust for Outstanding Achievements in the field of historic preservation. Bill also was active with the Atlanta History Center as a trustee.

In 1985, Bill received the Earle R. Greene Memorial Award of the Georgia Ornithological Society in recognition of his many years of service to the society and ornithology in Georgia. He also was an Elective Member of the American Ornithologists' Union.

After World War II, Bill's career path changed from biology to law and he became a successful real estate lawyer in Atlanta. He met his future wife, Florence Phillips, at a Georgia Ornithological Society meeting. They married in 1949 and had three children, William, Jr., Ellen, and Daniel. There were seven grandchildren at the time of Bill's death. Bill was a good-natured person who was always available to mentor others interested in the bird life of Georgia.



## THE ORIGINS OF THE ORIOLE

Norman H. Giles  
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The initial discussions concerning the possibility of publishing a quarterly journal devoted to Georgia ornithology occurred at an unusual time and place--at about 4:00 on a Saturday morning in April 1935 on a streetcar on Highland Avenue in the Virginia-Highland section of Atlanta. My birding buddy and fellow Emory University student, Don Eyles, and I often took the first streetcar from our side of town, which picked up the conductors and motormen to deliver them to appropriate streetcar barns. This we did on Saturday mornings during the spring migration seasons in April and May. Our route took us from the southeast side of Atlanta to Lakewood Park at the headwaters of South River, the starting point for a trip to one of our favorite spring birding areas several miles southeast on the river (Sawtell Meadows). This extensive marshy area was a great spot for shorebirds. In addition, it was adjacent to a considerable swampy tract that was a favorite habitat for rails and herons. (This area has now been paved as a parking lot for large trucks!)

On that Saturday morning Don and I talked about the possibility of establishing a journal devoted to Georgia birds. On that occasion and in subsequent weeks we considered the pros and cons, e.g., possible sources of financial support, and finally decided to pursue the matter further even if it involved utilization of our meager savings.

One of the first problems we faced was the selection of a name for our publication. We finally settled on *The Anhinga* which Don and I thought was distinctive and definitely southern. However, when we proposed this name to our colleagues in the Atlanta Bird Club, which had agreed to sponsor the publication, most reactions were less than enthusiastic. Many considered the name too exotic. Finally, after considerable discussion *The Oriole* (the orchard species, of course) was selected as a name which would be familiar and appropriately southern.

During our preparatory period we received welcome advice from several knowledgeable individuals. I would like to mention in particular the members of our initial editorial board: Charles Newton Elliott, Berma Jarrard, Earle R. Greene, Dr. E. E. Murphy, Ivan R. Tompkins, Herbert L. Stoddard, J. Fred Denton, L. H. Mounts, and Mabel T. Rogers.

In addition to the members of the editorial board we owed a great debt to Alfred F. Gainer, editor of *The Migrant*, journal of the Tennessee Ornithological Society, who provided invaluable aid in explaining the mechanisms of a journal of this sort. Alexander Sprunt, director of

Southern Sanctuaries for the Audubon Association, gave much time to our publication and in addition contributed one of the leading articles in the initial issue. Dr. Harry C. Oberholser of the Biological Survey gave us much good advice and also contributed an article to the first issue entitled "Ornithological Opportunities in Georgia." To the above patrons and many other friends, the editors were greatly indebted. Without their cooperation the enterprise could not have been undertaken.

In January 1936 the first issue of *The Oriole* appeared. It was labeled "A Quarterly Journal of Georgia Ornithology" and was sponsored by the Atlanta Bird Club. Numerous individuals have asked me where we obtained the oriole illustration on the first cover. Unfortunately, I cannot recollect how this came about. Perhaps it was a drawing made by Don Eyles, but at this point I no longer remember the source.

In any event, we sent a copy of the first issue to Roger Tory Peterson, long a supporter of Georgia ornithology, and he was kind enough to provide a beautiful cover for the second issue which appeared in April 1936.

Later, Roger painted a spectacular Orchard Oriole in full color for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue. This was used for 12 years, and now a fine painting of an Orchard Oriole produced by our own Dick Parks graces the current issues of *The Oriole*.

The Georgia Ornithological Society (GOS) was founded at a meeting in Atlanta in December 1936 with approximately 110 charter members. Its first biannual meeting was held in Milledgeville in April 1937. On this occasion, *The Oriole* became the official organ of the GOS.

In glancing through the issues produced during the first five years of *The Oriole* I am pleased to note several short articles by distinguished ornithologists other than the members of our editorial board. These include a note by Frank M. Chapman about a visit he made as a boy to his grandparents' home in Milledgeville where he first heard the song of a caged bullfinch. I also noted to my astonishment a short article by my mother Alice Guerard Giles, which I had totally forgotten. She wrote about getting titmice and chickadees to eat from her hand in our backyard.

I graduated from Emory University in June 1937 and started graduate studies at Harvard that September. I was replaced as editor of *The Oriole* by Earle R. Greene in April 1938. Ivan Tompkins and Herbert Stoddard became editors in March 1939. In June 1939 Mrs. Hugh Harris replaced Ivan and she served as sole editor from December 1939 for several terms.

I received my Ph.D. in 1940. After one year as a postdoctoral fellow I accepted a position as instructor of botany at Yale University where I remained for over 30 years, becoming a professor of botany, and finally the Eugene Higgins Professor of Genetics. While living in New England I continued bird watching, my membership in the GOS (becoming a life

member), and participated in Christmas censuses, two of which concluded at Roger Tory Peterson's home in Old Lyme, Connecticut. Also, I got to know Dr. Charles Sibley quite well while he was carrying out his epochal studies on DNA hybridization of birds at the Peabody Museum at Yale.

Finally, in 1972 I decided to return to my native state accepting an appointment as Fuller E. Callaway Professor of Genetics at the University of Georgia. Six colleagues from Yale, including Dr. Mary Case, who is a very active member of the Oconee Rivers Audubon Society, joined me in the move to Georgia.

Since returning to Georgia I have been delighted to see the progress of *The Oriole*. I hope that members of the GOS will find these recollections on the origins of *The Oriole* of interest. You may be certain that I shall follow its continuation with great interest and indirect paternal satisfaction.

*Editors' Note*—In the last issue of *The Oriole* (67:43) there was an error in the spelling of Tip Hon's last name. The title should read: BREEDING RECORDS OF HOODED MERGANSERS IN GEORGIA, 1967-2002 by Bradley J. Bergstrom and Tip Hon. We apologize for this error.

## THE EARLIEST NORTH AMERICAN RECORD OF AUK (AVES: ALCIDAE) FROM THE LATE EOCENE OF CENTRAL GEORGIA

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*Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, Georgia College & State University, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061-0490*

A new fossil from the Hardie Mine, Gordon, Georgia is the earliest record (late Eocene, 36.0-34.2 Ma = Megannum, one million years on the radioisotopic time scale) of an auk (Aves: Alcidae) yet found. The next earliest fossil alcid record is from the Miocene, almost 20 million years later. Alcids have a good fossil record from the middle Miocene, (approximately 10.0 Ma) through the Pleistocene (1.8 Ma - 10,000 years before present) in the north Atlantic and north Pacific (Olson 1985; Chandler 1990a). *Hydrotherikornis oregonus* Miller (1931), the oldest purported alcid from the Eocene of California, is actually a petrel (Chandler 1990b) and is reassigned to the tubenoses (Procellariiformes). Alcids (auks, murres, guillemots, puffins, murrelets, and auklets) are Northern Hemisphere seabirds, of which there are 22 living and one recently extinct species. They are pelagic for most of the year coming ashore only to nest. Alcids are committed wing-propelled divers (Livezey 1988) and most are fish eaters, although a few are zooplankton feeders.

### Geology

The Hardie Mine site is an inactive, open-pit kaolin mine located 3.9 km NNW of Gordon (32° 4.335'N, 83° 21.543'W), Wilkinson County, Georgia. An approximately one-meter thick stratum of in-place fossiliferous late Eocene Clinchfield Formation sediments is exposed on the north wall of the mine (Huddleston and Hetrick 1985). Recent collecting of *in situ* and spoil pile Clinchfield sediments of the Hardie Mine have yielded numerous shark, ray, and bony fish teeth, palaeopheid snake vertebrae, a colubrid snake vertebra, and the alcid fossil reported here. The Clinchfield sediments of the Hardie Mine are a locally discrete fossiliferous unit (local fauna).

### Discussion

The fossil, a left distal end of a humerus (Fig. 1), exhibits the lateral compression of the shaft characteristic of alcids as wing-propelled divers. The humerus compares closest in osteology and in size to the southern auk, *Australca grandis*, from Bone Valley (very early Pliocene, 5.0-4.5 Ma) of Florida and the recently (1844) extinct Great Auk, *Pinguinus*



*impennis*. The Hardie Mine auk can be assigned as a sister taxon to a clade of extinct and extant north Atlantic alcid genera including *Pinguinus*, *Australca*, *Alca*, and *Uria*.

This newly discovered auk is distinctive from the north Pacific radiation of flightless mancalline auks (Chandler 1990a). Paleogeographically, this new species of auk lived along the ancient coastline of the Atlantic during the Eocene marine transgression and is 20 million years older than any other fossil alcid yet reported from the fossil record. The characters of this humerus show that by the late Eocene (36.0-34.2 Ma) this ancient auk had evolved the specialized anatomy of a wing-propelled diver. This is consistent with our understanding of avian evolution in that most modern families of birds had evolved by the Eocene (Feduccia 1996).

#### Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following people: Bonney Weathers collected the fossil and donated it to the Georgia College Vertebrate Paleontology (GCVP) collection; Michael Searle donated a humerus of *Australca grandis* to GCVP for comparative study; Linda Chandler reviewed the manuscript; and Ashley Cooper helped prepare the figures. Fieldwork was supported by a Faculty Research Grant awarded by the Office of Research Services, Georgia College & State University.

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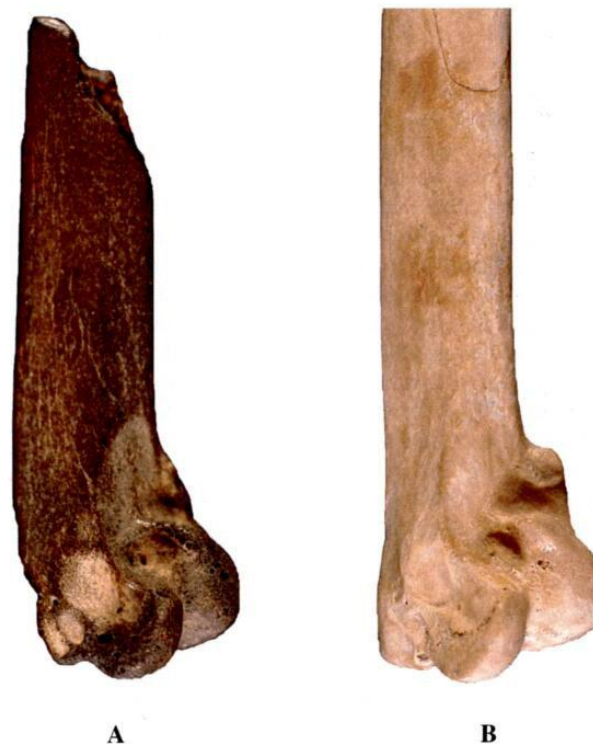


Figure 1. Eocene auk from Hardie Mine, Wilkinson County, Georgia. Eocene auk, **A** (GCVP 5690), distal end of left humerus, compared with *Australca grandis*, **B** (GCVP 5691). Measurements of GCVP 5690: length = [43.7]mm, distal end width = 10.5mm.

## GENERAL NOTES

THREE WESTERN TANAGER SIGHTINGS FOR GEORGIA – On 27 December 1997, while conducting the Augusta Christmas Bird Count (CBC), George Reeves and Carol Barton observed two female Western Tanagers (*Piranga ludoviciana*) in Merry Brickyard Ponds where Beaver Dam Ditch crosses the gas line easement. The birds were observed from a distance of approximately 50 feet. The entire front of each bird was yellow; the back was grayish-olive and the wings were darker gray with two prominent pale wing bars. The heavy tanager-type bill was pale. This is the first record of this species for Augusta.

While covering the same area for the Augusta CBC on 26 December 2000, George Reeves and Adrienne DeBiase observed a female Western Tanager about 300 feet down the gas line easement from its intersection with the ditch. The tanager was observed for over 10 minutes as it foraged in deciduous trees. Due to the obligation of participating in other CBCs and poor weather, no one ever returned to this area to see if these birds remained past the above dates.

A third sighting was on the coast, on the St. Catherines Island CBC on 16 December 2000. I (Waters) spotted a female Western Tanager on a low limb just over the road where it peered down at me. It had a yellow head, breast, and belly and a grayish-yellow back. It had dark wings with two distinct wing bars and a pale, thick bill. When it flew, it gave a three-note call similar to that of a Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*). Although several people looked for it the next day, it could not be located.

Haney et al. (1986, *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS Occasional Publ. No. 10) lists the Western Tanager as an accidental or rare visitor. It also indicates that it has been seen in Grady County, Warner Robins, Thomasville, Atlanta, Dalton, Americus, and near Columbus. Ours are the first sightings for Augusta and St. Catherines Island.

(Records accepted by the GOS Checklist and Records Committee).

Anne Waters, 1621 Apple Valley Dr., Augusta, Georgia 30906  
George Reeves, 94 Addie Rd., Graniteville, South Carolina 29829

FIRST EARED GREBE FOR AUGUSTA – Although Eared Grebes (*Podiceps nigricollis*) have been seen in other areas of Georgia, Augusta did not have a record for this species until 21 August 2000. On this date, Clarence Belger and I found an adult Eared Grebe in full breeding plumage on the Expressway Pond in Merry Brickyard Ponds. It had a dark head, neck, and back and on its dark face was a beautiful fan of golden

feathers radiating out from its red eye. At the time it was just resting, but we later saw it diving and feeding. Richard Lux arrived that afternoon and saw the grebe. In the following days, many people observed this grebe through September and into October. The last date it was seen here was 27 October.

I saw a wintering Eared Grebe across the Savannah River in South Carolina on L Lake of the Savannah River Site during the Christmas Bird Count, 21 December 1998, and another was seen there on the 21 December 2000 count.

Anne Waters, 1621 Apple Valley Dr., Augusta, GA 30906

FIRST ROSS'S GOOSE SEEN IN AUGUSTA – On 21 December 2000, a Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*) was reported on Woodbridge Lake in West Augusta. Gene Howard verified the sighting on 22 December and contacted me (Waters). It was an adult in white plumage with black wing tips. The small size and small pink, stubby bill with no grin patch were noted. It was feeding with a flock of Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) and a Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*). At times it was observed flying in and out of the lake with these birds. Many people observed the bird for the next three months. Gene Howard reported that it remained on the lake until 10 April 2001. This is the first Ross's Goose reported for the Augusta area.

(Record accepted by the GOS Checklist and Records Committee).

Anne Waters, 1621 Apple Valley Dr., Augusta, Georgia 30906  
Eugene Howard, 21 Woodside Circle, Evans, Georgia 30809

FIRST CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD FOR AUGUSTA – I observed a hummingbird with Betsy Ristorph for over an hour on 6 January 2001, in Betsy's back yard. The bird had been present there since 6 December 2000. We noted that the wings and tail appeared to be the same length. There was some rufous shading on the light breast and under the tail, tiny dark dots on the throat, and a green back. The tips of the tail were white, but we never could get a good look at the tail pattern because the bird fed and sat with the tail feathers folded; so the identity could not be determined.

On 15 January, Fred Moore captured, measured, photographed, and banded the hummingbird. After consulting with ornithologist Bob Sargent by phone, the bird was identified as a female Calliope Hummingbird



(*Stellula calliope*). The bird had a groove in the bill, which means it was a young of the year. The wings were slightly shorter than the tail. The wing and tail measurements are at the upper end of the range for males and the lower end of the range for females. It was hatched in 2000, but since it was banded in January 2001, it was considered a second year bird. On 2 February Fred e-mailed Betsy that the hummingbird most likely was an immature male based on further study of the measurements, feather characteristics of the tail, and photos taken on 15 January.

The hummingbird returned regularly to the feeders through 7 February. It was sighted again on 27 February, 4, 14-17, and 23 March, and for the last time on 11 April. According to Betsy, by the time the bird left it had a beautiful gorget of deep magenta stripes. This is the first record of a Calliope Hummingbird for Augusta. In the March 2001 GOSHAWK (vol. 28, no. 1, p. 1), Jeff Sewell states that five Calliope Hummingbirds were banded in Georgia between December 2000 and January 2001. According to Rusty Trump there were only two records of Calliope Hummingbird in Georgia prior to this, both since 1998. Trump also stated that the other Calliope Hummingbird records for the winter of 2000-2001 were in Carroll, Dodge, Fulton, and Gwinette counties.

(Record accepted by the GOS Checklist and Records Committee)

Anne R. Waters, 1621 Apple Valley Dr., Augusta, Georgia 30906  
Betsy Ristroph, 754 Oxford Rd., Augusta, Georgia 30909

A GREEN VIOLET-EAR (*Colibri thalassinus*) FROM THOMAS COUNTY, GEORGIA – At about 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, 8 July 2001, the Neels saw a large hummingbird on one of three hummingbird feeders just outside their kitchen window in southern Thomas County, Georgia (see Neel et al. 1991, *Oriole* 56:38-40). The hummingbird appeared entirely dark in the shade of a roof eave and was noticeably larger, by about one-third, than the score or so of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*) that were buzzing about among the nearby flowers and feeders. The Neels watched as the bird returned twice more after the initial sighting, each time a quick visit (about 45 minutes apart) to the same shaded feeders, lasting from only a few seconds to a half-minute before the bird flew quickly out of sight toward the woods. The bird had a distinctly down-curved bill. Its plumage was dark in the shade, but when it flew away from the feeder (and the observers), its back flashed to a vivid, iridescent green. No white or lighter plumage was ever seen. The tail appeared bluish with a bold, much darker, sub-terminal band.

Crawford later arrived at the Neel house and saw the bird. He

estimated the size of the bird, apart from the bill, as about that of his palm-clenched fingers (80 mm) and this also approximated the bird's stocky aspect. We never saw the front of the bird in sunlight, but the square, bluish tail with a dark subterminal band was clearly seen, as was the decurved bill. In sunlight, the back was a vivid green.

Williamson (2001, *Hummingbirds of North America*, Houghton-Mifflin Co., p. 82) characterizes the species as "wary, often keeping to shadows;" Sibley (2000, *National Audubon Society: The Sibley Guide to Birds*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, p. 293) describes it as "large and fairly stocky." Newfield (2001, *Birding* 33:114-121) says, "Observers of Green Violet-ears have frequently noted that the birds prefer to remain in shaded areas" and that, "Without direct light, the glittering colors are difficult to discern, and the birds appear all-dark." Newfield twice describes the birds as "slender and elegant," which contradicts Sibley, above, and what we observed. Our record represents the first description of this species for the state of Georgia.

(Record accepted by the GOS Checklist and Records Committee)

Robert L. Crawford, 208 Junius St., Thomasville, GA 31792  
W. Leon and Julia G. Neel, P.O. Box 1043, Thomasville, GA 31799

CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOW: FATAL FORAGE – Chuck-wills-widows (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*) are known to pursue and consume small passerine birds (Bent, A.C. 1940, *Life Histories of North American Cuckoos, Goatsuckers, Hummingbirds and Their Allies*. U.S. National Mus. Bull. 176; Straight, C.A. and R.J. Cooper, 2000, Chuck-wills-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*). In: *The Birds of North America*, No. 499, (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA), as well as their more frequent fare of insects. Birds have been recorded in the stomach contents of "chucks" only during spring and fall (Straight and Cooper 2000), suggesting that avian consumption may be associated with migration. Mortality resulting from this remarkable augmentation of the diet has not been recorded previously in Chuck-wills-widows.

On 27 September 2001, I found an adult male Chuck-wills-widow dead on the beach at Cumberland Island, Camden County, Georgia. The feet and tail of an adult female Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) were protruding from the goatsucker's mouth, and the body of the yellowthroat was apparently stuck in its throat. The "chuck" had a full stomach containing by volume: 45% Scarabaeidae (n=3), 45% Lepidoptera (n=1), and 10% Acrididae (n=1). This is consistent with available diet



information mentioned by Straight and Cooper (2000). The yellowthroat's stomach held three tiny fragments of vegetation. Both birds had substantial fat deposits, appeared healthy, and had been dead approximately one day. Both specimens were deposited in the Cumberland Island Museum.

Confirmation of the warbler identification and age of the Chuck-will's-widow were provided by Dr. William Post (Charleston Museum), and identification of the stomach contents was made by Dr. John O. Whitaker, Jr. (Indiana State University).

Carol Ruckdeschel, *Cumberland Island Museum, P.O. Box 796, St. Mary's, Georgia 31588*

**LATE WINTERING BALTIMORE ORIOLES IN PECAN ORCHARDS IN BULLOCH COUNTY, GEORGIA** – The winter range of Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) includes all of Florida and the immediate coastal regions of Georgia, and North and South Carolina (National Geographic Society. 1999. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Haney et al. (1996, *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, GOS Occasional Publ. No. 10) note that Baltimore Orioles are rare in the winter in suburban areas of Georgia. Following a search of more than 30 pecan orchards, a total of 13 orioles were located in Bulloch County between 22 January and 15 March 2001 (see J.W. Parrish, 2002, *Oriole* 67:52-53 for a report of early wintering Baltimore Orioles seen in Bulloch County).

Nine of the orioles were found in close association with pecan orchards that were fenced and contained hoofed animals (horses, cattle, or sheep). Two orioles were found in an orchard that consisted of over 5000 pecan trees on a 50-acre tract. The remaining two orioles were found associated with pecan orchards which were not as cleanly harvested (Steve Hein and Mark Welford, pers. comm.). 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. Three adult males were found in association with female orioles. The remaining orioles were all isolated, fall-plumaged birds (National Geographic Society 1999).

The present report suggests that a larger number of Baltimore Orioles might be wintering in Georgia than was previously thought. However, I did not find any orioles in the two largest pecan orchards in Candler and Screven Counties (each about 100 acres). It would appear that pecans may be a major winter source of food, although other food 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. Recent 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 seven total, 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. Certainly, pecan orchards should be an early place to begin looking for them.

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#### **GOS SPRING 2002 MEETING POSTER ABSTRACTS** **26 - 28 April 2002** **Valdosta, GA**

##### **DEAD BIRD SURVEILLANCE FOR THE DETECTION OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN GEORGIA IN 2001.**

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**Abstract:** In lieu of the geographical expansion of West Nile virus (WNV) in 2000, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) coordinated a proactive surveillance system to be implemented by WNV positive states and those states at high risk of becoming affected. Comprehensive strategies for detecting WNV include avian, mosquito, equine, and human surveillance. As bird mortality was shown to be a sensitive method for WNV detection in 2000, much effort has been focused on dead bird surveillance. WNV was first detected in Georgia in an American crow submitted to the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) from Lowndes County on July 10, 2001. Between July and December 2001, SCWDS (in collaboration with the Georgia Division of Public Health) isolated WNV from 322 dead birds from 54 counties in Georgia. Corvids appeared to be highly susceptible to overt infection and consequently represented sensitive species for



surveillance efforts. In 2001, SCWDS processed 1,566 dead bird submissions, of which 751 (48%) were American crows or blue jays. Of the 322 WNV isolates, 302 (94%) were from these two species. As human and equine cases of WNV encephalitis are generally preceded by the observance of bird morbidity and mortality, wild bird surveillance plays a critical role in the early detection and potential control of WNV transmission.

#### THE BOBWHITE QUAIL INITIATIVE: RESTORING GEORGIA'S STATE GAMEBIRD WHILE IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT.

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**Abstract:** Like many southeastern states, Georgia's northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) population has declined by more than 70% since the 1960s. Research has indicated that the primary cause of this decline is the reduction in habitat quality resulting from intensification of agriculture and forestry practices. To address this problem, members of Georgia's General Assembly worked with the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) and other conservation organizations to develop and fund the Bobwhite Quail Initiative (BQI) during the 1999 legislative session. The BQI was designed to restore habitat for bobwhites, songbirds, and other farm wildlife on private lands, and was implemented in 14 counties in Georgia (subsequently expanded to 17 in 2000). In the first year of the program, BQI personnel provided technical assistance for >100,000 acres of land allocating >\$51,000 to enroll landowners for the first contract period (2000-2002) of the BQI. In the second year of the program, BQI personnel provided technical assistance for an additional 100,000 acres and allocated >\$138,000 to enroll landowners during the second BQI contract period (2001-2003). Although Georgia incurred extreme drought during the summer of 2000, bobwhite

quail and songbird response to BQI management practices during the first season of the program indicated that these practices had positive impacts on both. Bobwhite populations remained stable or increased on 71% of the treatment farms, while 75% of the control farms experienced population declines. Sparrow species dependent upon early successional habitat also increased by 30% in managed fields of BQI.

THE EARLIEST RECORD OF AN AUK (AVES: ALCIDAE) FROM THE LATE EOCENE OF CENTRAL GEORGIA, HARDIE MINE, GORDON, GEORGIA. Robert M. Chandler and Dennis Parmley, *Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, Georgia College & State University, Milledgeville, GA 31061-0490; e-mail <bob.chandler@gcsu.edu>*

**Abstract:** A new fossil from the Hardie Mine, Gordon, Georgia is the earliest record (late Eocene, 36.0-34.2 Ma = Megannum, one million years on the radioisotopic time scale) of a fossil auk (Aves: Alcidae) yet found. All other purported records of Eocene alcids are assignable to other orders of birds. The next fossil alcid record is from the Miocene almost 20 million years later. The fossil, a left distal end of a humerus, already exhibits the lateral compression of the shaft characteristic of alcids as wing-propelled divers. The humerus compares closest in osteology and in size to the southern auk, *Australca grandis*, from Bone Valley (very early Pliocene, 5.0-4.5 Ma) of Florida and the recently extinct Great Auk, *Pinguinus impennis*. The new genus and species of auk can be assigned as a sister taxon to a clade of extinct and extant species including *Pinguinus*, *Australca*, *Alca*, and *Uria*.

DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN AMERICAN KESTREL (*FALCO SPARVERIUS PAULUS*) IN SOUTH GEORGIA. Ken Boyd<sup>1</sup>, Michael Shain, Roy Shuford, Timothy Breen, and John Parrish, *Department of Biology, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA 30460-8042. <sup>1</sup>Fort Gordon Army Base, Augusta, GA 30905 <jparrish@georgiasouthern.edu>*

**Abstract:** More than 400 nest boxes were erected below the Fall Line to study the demographics of kestrels. Nest box occupancy was low (2-13%) during the 8 years of the study. Clutch size has averaged about 5 eggs/nest, similar to other studies. A small population of kestrels was found at Fort Gordon Army Base (Augusta) in 1994, when 3 pair nested in boxes. At least 20 pairs have nested each of the past six years at Fort Gordon. No more than 10 pairs have nested in boxes other than at Fort Gordon in any year of the study. More than 600 kestrels have fledged



from boxes at Fort Gordon, compared to about 150 young from boxes in the rest of the state. The sex ratios of the fledglings were balanced early in the study, but significantly more males (59%) were fledged in four of the past five years at Fort Gordon. The kestrels in Georgia are the same subspecies as in Florida based on juvenal plumages. Preliminary genetic analyses showed that two Georgia kestrels were different from kestrels in California. One of two kestrels from New Jersey was similar to Georgia kestrels, whereas the other was similar to California kestrels.

POPULATION CHANGES AND STOPOVER OF NEOTROPICAL MIGRANT SONGBIRDS DURING FALL MIGRATION ON JEKYLL ISLAND, GEORGIA, 1986-2000. Scott G. Somershoe, *U.S.G.S.-Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, 2524 S. Frontage Rd., Vicksburg, MS 39180.* <ssomershoe@usgs.gov>

**Abstract:** Stopover ecology of migrating songbirds along the southeast Atlantic coast has been little studied. Migrating songbirds were captured during fall migration, 1986 - 2000, at the south end of Jekyll Island, Georgia, which is one of the best concentration points for migrants along the coast. Total abundance of Neotropical migrant songbirds captured per net hour increased significantly as did the abundance of the Black-throated Blue Warbler, (*Dendroica caerulescens*), Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*), American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), and Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*). In contrast, capture rates for the Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*) declined significantly during the study. All species that had sufficient numbers of recaptures across years gained fat and mass, on average, except the Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*), which showed marked loss of mass. Stopover length did not differ between lean and heavy birds, except that leaner White-eyed Vireos (*Vireo griseus*) stayed significantly longer than heavier birds. Mass gain was positively related with stopover length and rates of energy acquisition were greater in lean birds, thus indicating that migrants had a successful stopover at this site. Common Yellowthroats (*Geothlypis trichas*) that were recaptured only one day after initial capture lost mass, while those birds staying longer than one day gained mass. Although most migrants left Jekyll Island shortly after arrival, the small percentage of birds that stayed were generally able to successfully satisfy their energetic demands in accordance to expected patterns of stopover.

## FROM THE FIELD AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2002

There were plenty of rare birds reported during the period, but the most sensational sighting by far was that of a Scott's Oriole at the home of Richard and Rose Beohm in Upson Co. during early November. The bird was photographed coming to feed on orange slices, but unfortunately by the time word got out to most of the birding community the bird had departed. According to Eric Beohm, there are only a couple of previous records of this species in eastern North America, both from along the Mississippi River. Needless to say, this is a first record for Georgia.

Once again, those who took to the seas on a couple of pelagic trips organized by Russ Wigh were well rewarded. Participants on both tours enjoyed good looks at Masked Booby, and on one of the trips a very rare Brown Booby also was seen. Both species currently are listed in the Provisional Species List in the *Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds*, with three accepted sight records for Masked Booby and one record for Brown Booby. Photographs should result in both species being added the Regular Species List.

I would again like to thank Mim Eisenberg, who continues to proofread these reports in a very timely manner.

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.; CRNRA - Cochran Shoals Unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area in Cobb 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.; MBBP - Merry Bros. Brickyard Ponds in Augusta; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; Oxbow Meadows - Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center in the Columbus area; SCSP - Sweetwater Creek State Park in Douglas Co.; SPCNP - South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserve in DeKalb Co.; v.ob. - various observers; WMA - Wildlife Management Area.

## SPECIES ACCOUNTS

RED-THROATED LOON - One was found in Columbia Co. on 3 Nov (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

HORNED GREBE - Six were seen at SCSP on 23 Nov (Chris Loudermilk).

EARED GREBE - Ten were found at Plant Scherer in Monroe Co. on 27 Nov (Terry Johnson).



- PTERODROMA* SP. - One, most likely a Black-capped Petrel, was seen on a pelagic trip out of Savannah on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.).
- CORY'S SHEARWATER - Totals on two pelagic trips out of Savannah were 49 on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.) and 26 on 7 Sep (Russ Wigh et al.).
- AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER - The same two pelagic trips tallied four on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.) and five on 7 Sep (Russ Wigh et al.).
- MASKED BOOBY - One was seen and photographed on the pelagic trip out of Savannah on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.), and two were seen and also photographed on the pelagic trip on 7 Sep (Russ Wigh et al.). All of these birds were found at Navy Tower R8. These are the first records of this species in the state since November 1993.
- BROWN BOOBY - Good photographs of a bird also found at Navy Tower R8 on the pelagic trip on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.) should result in this species being added to the Regular Species List by the GOS records committee. Only one accepted record is listed in the ACOGB.
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - Eight were found at Harris Neck NWR on 1 Sep (Bill Lotz, Dan Vickers).
- BROWN PELICAN - One again was found at Walter F. George Dam on 7 Nov (Walt Chambers).
- ANHINGA - A count of 70 came from the AWMA on 4 Aug (Nathan Klaus).
- MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD - A female was a great find at Lake Allatoona on 29 and 30 Oct (Georgann Schmalz et al.).
- AMERICAN BITTERN - Two seen at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 28 Aug were early (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan). Singles were reported from Sapelo Island on 10 Sep (Doris Cohrs), ENWR on 8 Oct (Michael Beohm), Jekyll Island on 2 Nov (Gene Keferl), Buchanan Lake in Haralson Co. on 17 Nov (Marion Dobbs), J.L. Lester WMA in Polk Co. on 24 Nov (Chris Loudermilk), and AWMA on 25 Nov (Michael Beohm). Three was an excellent count at the CRNRA on 17 Oct (Tim Keyes).
- LEAST BITTERN - Eight were seen at AWMA on 4 Aug (Nathan Klaus).
- "GREAT WHITE HERON" - Rare sightings of the white-morph of the Great Blue Heron were of a single continuing in the Duluth area through 3 Aug (Rick Rader) and another single at Gould's Inlet on 8 Oct (Brad Bergstrom et al.).
- TRICOLORED HERON - Singles were found inland in Tattnall Co. on 8 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 14 and 15 Sep (Paul Champlin).
- REDDISH EGRET - Two were seen on Blackbeard Island from 18 Aug (Lydia Thompson) through 5 Oct (Giff Beaton et al.), three were

- at Little Tybee Island on 8 Sep (Deb Barriero), two were on Little St. Simons Island on 5 Oct (Giff Beaton et al.), one was at Gould's Inlet on 21 Sep (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle), and two were found on Jekyll Island on 15 Oct (Mary Ann Teal).
- CATTLE EGRET - Twenty-two were seen in Carroll Co. on 17 Aug (Chris Loudermilk), and five were found at the ELHLAF on 18 Aug (Carol Lambert, Bill Lotz, Jeff Sewell, Dan Vickers). High counts included 500 in Washington Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and 300 in Webster Co. on 22 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). Late were one in Laurens Co. on 20 Nov (Marie Amerson) and three in Miller Co. on 30 Nov (John Gatchet).
- YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - Reports from the Atlanta area included one at the Big Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on 6 Aug (Leslie Curran), one in Bartow Co. on 11 Aug (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle, Earl Horn), and three at CRNRA on 16 Aug (Tim Rose).
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL - There were an amazing number of inland reports this period. One was seen along the Altamaha River during early August (Jack Sandow), one was in Thomas Co. from 14 to 17 Aug (Bobby Crawford, Leon Neel), two were in Burke Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan), with one still there on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), one was in the Tifton area on 29 Aug (Janet Dowlen), one was at the Phinizy Swamp from 29 Aug (Paul Champlin) to 2 Sep (Calvin Zippler), and an astounding six birds that were seen in Sumter Co. on 20 Oct (Jim Flynn, Phil Hardy, Earl Horn, Bob Norris) apparently had been there for about two months. The high count from the coast was 50 in the Brunswick area on 14 Sep (Lydia Thompson). Six birds seen on Little St. Simons Island on 6 Oct also were noteworthy (Giff Beaton et al.). Two were still at Andrews Island Causeway through 29 Nov (John Gatchet).
- WOOD STORK - Inland counts included 22 at Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon on 17 Aug (Bob Sargent), 68 in Burke Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan) and six at the ELHLAF on 2 Oct (Carol Lambert, Philip Northman).
- SNOW GOOSE - The first reports were of one in Morgan Co. on 9 and 10 Nov (Paul Sykes) and four in Harris Co. on 13 Nov (Walt Chambers).
- AMERICAN WIGEON - A count of 84 was made at Garden Lakes in the Rome area on 30 Nov (Marion Dobbs).
- MOTTLED DUCK - Three were reported from the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 24 Nov (Paul Champlin).
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL - Two were already at the ELHLAF on 10 Aug



(Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell et al.).

**NORTHERN SHOVELER** - A count of 110 was made at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 24 Nov (Paul Champlin).

**NORTHERN PINTAIL** - Ten seen in the Blairsville area on 27 Aug were very early (Betty Belanger).

**GREEN-WINGED TEAL** - A count of 120 came from the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 24 Nov (Paul Champlin).

**CANVASBACK** - Also extremely early was one of this species in Wilkinson Co. on 8 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). Three were observed at SCSP on 23 Nov (Chris Loudermilk).

**REDHEAD** - Ten were seen at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 29 Oct (Walt Chambers).

**GREATER SCAUP** - Two were reported from Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 16 Nov (Paul Champlin).

**SURF SCOTER** - Inland reports included one at the Phinizy Swamp from 25 to 27 Oct (Ann Waters, Morgan Whaley, Calvin Zippler et al.), two at Buford Dam on Lake Lanier on 27 Oct (Earl Horn), two at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 3 Nov (Malcolm Hodges et al.), one at SCSP on 3 Nov (Chris Loudermilk), four at Piedmont NWR on 13 Nov (Walter Carswell et al.), four again at SCSP on 13 Nov (Chris Loudermilk), one at Florence Marina State Park on 17 Nov (Jim Flynn), and one at Plant Scherer in Monroe Co. on 27 Nov (Terry Johnson). The best count from the coast was 14 off Jekyll Island on 20 Nov (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

**WHITE-WINGED SCOTER** - One was reported off Jekyll Island beginning 1 Nov (Lydia Thompson et al.).

**BLACK SCOTER** - A rare inland sighting was three at Clarks Hill Reservoir in Columbia Co. on 14 Oct (Paul Champlin). The highest count from the coast was about 2000 off Jekyll Island on both 2 and 10 Nov (Gene Keferl).

**RUDDY DUCK** - A male continued at Rock Eagle State Park in Putnam Co. through 5 Aug (Billy Dunbar).

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** - Eleven was a high count for Lamar Co. on 2 Aug (Michael Beohm), 10 were still in the Jesup area on 3 Aug (Nathan Klaus), and 25 were counted in Wayne Co. also on 3 Aug (Jerry Amerson, Marie Amerson et al.). One was a rare sighting in the Rome area on 5 Aug (Paul Blakeburn).

**MISSISSIPPI KITE** - Good counts included 13 in Lamar Co. on 2 Aug (Michael Beohm), eight in Upson Co. on 4 Aug (Michael Beohm), and 13 in Taylor Co. on 17 Aug (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

**BALD EAGLE** - One was a nice find at Lake Horton in Fayette Co. on 15 Sep (Dan Demko, Mary Provost). Good counts were 10 at the Clark Hill Reservoir on 27 Sep (Paul Champlin) and 11 in the

Lake Seminole area on 30 Nov (John Gatchet).

**SWAINSON'S HAWK** - A report of one was received from Spalding Co. on 4 Oct (Eric Beohm).

**GOLDEN EAGLE** - A first-year bird, unable to fly, was picked up in Jones Co. and taken to a rehabilitator on 26 Nov (fide E.J. Williams).

**MERLIN** - This species was well reported from across the state, with at least 11 birds seen inland during the period (v.ob.).

**PEREGRINE FALCON** - There were fewer reports of this falcon for the period. In all, about six birds were reported from inland sites (v.ob.).

**BLACK RAIL** - Two were reported from the reliable marsh for this species in Greene Co. on 4 Aug (Paul Sykes).

**VIRGINIA RAIL** - The highest count from Greene Co. was seven on 30 Nov (Paul Sykes).

**SORA** - One was seen at the ELHLAF on 23 Sep and two were at that location on 2 Oct (Carol Lambert). One also was seen in Greene Co. on 2 Nov (Paul Sykes).

**PURPLE GALLINULE** - A late bird was seen at Harris Neck NWR on 5 Oct (Bob Sargent, Paul Sykes et al.).

**SANDHILL CRANE** - By the end of the month several large flocks were noted, including 1260 in Lamar Co. on 28 Nov (Jim Ozier) and 739 in Spalding Co. on the same day (Michael Beohm).

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** - Inland reports were of singles at a sod farm in the Marshallville area on 8 Aug (Julie Ballenger, Walt Chambers), in Floyd Co. on 15 Aug (Marion Dobbs), and at Legacy Sod in Bartow Co. on 17 Aug (Bruce Dralle).

**AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER** - The highest counts were six at East Georgia Turf near Statesboro on both 13 Sep (Gene Keferl) and 14 Sep (Russ Wigh) and seven at Legacy Sod in Bartow Co. on 15 Sep (Bruce Dralle). Singles also were reported at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 2 Sep (Paul Champlin), from Washington Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), and from the ELHLAF on 26 Sep (Carol Lambert).

**SEMIPALMATED PLOVER** - Twenty were seen in Burke Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan).

**AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER** - A count of 55 was made on Little St. Simons Island on 5 Oct (Jeff Sewell et al.).

**WILLET** - Singles were found inland at Clarks Hill Reservoir in Columbia Co. on 24 Aug (Paul Champlin) and in Burke Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

**UPLAND SANDPIPER** - The highest counts were eight at East Georgia Turf in Bulloch Co. on both 10 Aug (Brad Winn) and 11 Aug



(Russ Wigh) and an impressive 42 at a sod farm in the Marshallville area on 20 Aug (Walt Chambers). Elsewhere, singles were seen in Peach Co. on 8 Aug (Julie Ballenger, Walt Chambers), in Floyd Co. on 15 Aug (Marion Dobbs), in Bartow Co. on 30 Aug (Bob Zaremba) and 31 Aug (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle), and in Washington Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

**LONG-BILLED CURLEW** - Two were found on Little St. Simons Island on 5 and 6 Oct (Giff Beaton, Jeff Sewell et al.), and one was seen along Jekyll Island Causeway on 29 Nov (John Gatchet).

**MARbled GODWIT** - A very high count of 121 was made on Little St. Simons Island on 6 Oct (Giff Beaton et al.).

**RED KNOT** - A count of 173 was made on Little St. Simons Island on 6 Oct (Giff Beaton et al.).

**SANDERLING** - This species was well reported inland, with one at ENWR on 4 Aug (Walt Chambers), one at J.L. Lester WMA in Polk Co. on 11 Aug (Marion Dobbs), three in Bartow Co. on 14 Aug (John Gatchet), two at the ELHLAF on 16 Aug (Carol Lambert), one in Burke Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan), one at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 14 Sep (Paul Champlin), and one at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 5 Nov (Walt Chambers).

**WESTERN SANDPIPER** - Six were seen at J.L. Lester WMA in Floyd Co. on 4 Aug (Marion Dobbs, Chris Loudermilk).

**LEAST SANDPIPER** - An inland count of 65 was made in Baker Co. on 23 Oct (Giff Beaton, Tom Egan).

**WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** - The high count was 15 at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 15 Sep (Paul Champlin et al.).

**BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** - Reports included one at Sod Atlanta in Bartow Co. on 11 Aug (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle, Earl Horn), one at Clarks Hill Reservoir on 24 Aug (Paul Champlin), one in Burke Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan), one at Legacy Sod in Bartow Co. on 2 Sep (John Gatchet) and 3 Sep (Jim Flynn), and two in Washington Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

**PECTORAL SANDPIPER** - High counts from Bartow Co. sod farms were 186 at Sod Atlanta on 17 Aug and 142 at Legacy Sod the following day (Bruce Dralle).

**DUNLIN** - The high count from the ELHLAF was nine on 26 Oct (Malcolm Hodges, Carol Lambert, Jeff Sewell).

**STILT SANDPIPER** - The highest inland counts were seven from Bartow Co. on 30 Aug (Bob Zaremba), three in Burke Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and seven at the ELHLAF on 13 Oct (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). Four also were found on Little St. Simons

Island on 6 Oct (Giff Beaton et al.).

**BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** - The highest counts were 16 in Bartow Co. on 14 Sep (Bruce Dralle), seven in the Marshallville area on 13 Sep (Mark Freeman), and six at East Georgia Turf in Bulloch Co. on 14 Sep (Russ Wigh).

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** - Two were found at ENWR on 4 Aug (Walt Chambers), two to three were reported from Bartow Co. from 30 Aug (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle) through 4 Sep (John Gatchet), three were at Clarks Hill Reservoir in Columbia Co. on 2 Sep (Paul Champlin), one was at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 2 Sep (Paul Champlin), and one was seen in Sumter Co. on 20 Oct (Jim Flynn, Phil Hardy, Earl Horn, Bob Norris).

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** - One was seen in Washington Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan), one was found at Clarks Hill Reservoir in Columbia Co. on 2 Sep (Paul Champlin), two were found at the ELHLAF on 13 Oct (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and 14 Oct (Carol Lambert), and four was a high count from Baker Co. on 23 Oct (Giff Beaton, Tom Egan).

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE** - Good finds were singles in Burke Co. on 6 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), in the Marshallville area also on 6 Sep (Bill Blakeslee, Jeff Sewell), and at SCSP on 17 Sep (Chris Loudermilk).

**RED PHALAROPE** - A very rare find was one in Bartow Co. from 1 to 4 Sep (Marie Amerson, Marion Dobbs, Bob Zaremba et al.).

**POMARINE JAEGER** - Two were observed off Jekyll Island on 21 Nov (Giff Beaton), and one was seen again off Jekyll Island on 29 Nov (John Gatchet).

**PARASITIC JAEGER** - One was seen off Tybee Island on 20 Nov (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), two were observed off Jekyll Island on 21 Nov (Giff Beaton), and one was seen also at Jekyll Island on 29 Nov (John Gatchet).

**LAUGHING GULL** - Two were seen at Walter F. George Lake on 4 Aug (Walt Chambers), two were at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 7 Aug (Walt Chambers), and two single birds were seen at SCSP on 15 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn, Chris Loudermilk) and 17 Sep (Chris Loudermilk). On the coast, 8000 were counted at Jekyll Island on 6 Oct (Joan Sykes, Paul Sykes).

**FRANKLIN'S GULL** - A first-year bird was found at Clarks Hill Reservoir on 14 Oct (Paul Champlin). Another bird was seen at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 15 Nov (Lorna West).

**BONAPARTE'S GULL** - Ten was a high count from the ELHLAF on 18 Nov (Carol Lambert).

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** - One was a rare inland find at Clarks



Hill Reservoir in Columbia Co. on 14 Oct (Paul Champlin). Thirteen was a high count at St. Simons Island on 25 Oct (Gene Keferl).

**CASPIAN TERN** - Inland sightings included two to three in the Lake Seminole area on 4 Aug (Michael Bell, Sean Kelley) and 6 Aug (Michael Beohm), one at SCSP on 16 Aug (Chris Loudermilk), one at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 29 Aug (Paul Champlin), two again at SCSP on 31 Aug (Chris Loudermilk), two at the Merry Bros. Ponds in Richmond Co. on 2 Sep (Paul Champlin), one at Carter's Lake in Murray Co. on 29 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), one at the ELHLAF on 11 Oct (Carol Lambert), one at Clarks Hill Reservoir in Columbia Co. on 14 Oct (Paul Champlin), and one in Wilkes Co. on 3 Nov (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn). A high count of 68 was made on St. Simons Island on 25 Oct (Gene Keferl).

**COMMON TERN** - Fifty were reported from Blackbeard Island on 8 Aug (Russ Wigh). Inland sightings were of eight near Walter F. George Dam on 4 Aug (Walt Chambers), one at West Point Dam in Troup Co. on 7 Aug (Walt Chambers), three at SCSP on 15 Sep (Chris Loudermilk), and one at Lake Acworth on 30 Aug (Giff Beaton, Tom Egan, Pierre Howard).

**LEAST TERN** - A high count of 170 was made at Blackbeard Island on 18 Aug (Lydia Thompson).

**BRIDLED TERN** - On two pelagic trips out of Savannah nine were seen on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.) and two were seen on 7 Sep (Russ Wigh et al.).

**SOOTY TERN** - The two pelagic trips had totals of 27 on 24 Aug (Russ Wigh et al.) and 10 on 7 Sep (Russ Wigh et al.).

**BLACK TERN** - Inland reports included five at the ELHLAF on 16 Aug (Carol Lambert), 14 at SCSP on the same day (Chris Loudermilk), five in the Marshallville area also on 16 Aug (Walt Chambers), 22 in Bartow Co. on 17 Aug (Bruce Dralle), and eight at Clarks Hill Reservoir on 24 Aug (Paul Champlin). The highest count was 225 on Blackbeard Island on 18 Aug (Lydia Thompson).

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** - One was a good find along St. Simons Island Causeway on 20 Nov (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** - Two seen at the Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center on 31 Oct were a little north of this species' usual range (Tim Keyes).

**LONG-EARED OWL** - Two injured birds were picked up during November. One was tangled in a fence in Fayette Co. (Jim Ozier) and the other was found along the Flint River at the Spalding/Pike Co. line (fide Carol Lambert).

**COMMON NIGHTHAWK** - The high count was 65+ in the Buckhead area on 27 Aug (Bill Lotz).

**SELASPHORUS SP.** - As is now expected, there were several reports of hummingbirds of this genus from across the state during the period.

**OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** - One was seen in Cobb Co. on 18 Sep (Bruce Dralle), and two were found at the Suwanee Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on both 27 and 28 Sep (Earl Horn, Bill Lotz).

**YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** - There was a total of 17 birds reported from across the state during the month of September (v.ob.). Hopefully all of these birds were identified correctly!

**ALDER FLYCATCHER** - A bird seen well on Blackbeard Island on 5 Oct was thought to be this species (Giff Beaton et al.).

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER** - A male was a good find in Miller Co. from 23 Oct (Giff Beaton, Tom Egan) through at least 17 Nov (Jim Flynn). This was the 22nd record for the state and the second earliest.

**WESTERN KINGBIRD** - Singles were seen on Jekyll Island on 5 Oct (Lydia Thompson) and at Harris Neck NWR on 23 and 24 Nov (Pat Metz).

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** - One was a nice find at Birdsong Nature Center in Grady Co. on 19 Oct (Michael Bell, Peter Jones et al.).

**BLUE-HEADED VIREO** - Eighteen was a high count at Kennesaw Mt. on 27 Oct (Giff Beaton).

**WARBLING VIREO** - This species is a good find anywhere in the state, but two seen on Jekyll Island on 6 Oct provided a very rare report for the coast (Carol Lambert).

**PHILADELPHIA VIREO** - This species was well reported during September and October, including a high count of three at Kennesaw Mt. on 3 Oct (Bob Zaremba et al.).

**HORNED LARK** - The highest counts were 24 in Bartow Co. on 17 Aug (Bruce Dralle) and 25 in Washington Co. on 28 Aug (Giff Beaton, Giff Beaton Sr., Tom Egan).

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** - Five seen at the ELHLAF on 26 Oct were somewhat late (Carol Lambert). Also late were singles in Greene Co. on 2 Nov (Paul Sykes) and at Jekyll Island on 25 Nov (Michael Beohm).

**BANK SWALLOW** - A count of 27 came from Super Sod in Peach Co. on 23 Aug (Tim Keyes, Jeff Sewell).

**BROWN CREEPER** - Five were seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 1 Nov (Tom Egan et al.).



- SEDGE WREN** - The high counts were three at CRNRA on 17 Oct (Tim Keyes), three at J.L. Lester WMA in Polk Co. on 20 Oct (Chris Loudermilk), eight at Birdsong Nature Center in Grady Co. on 26 Oct (Michael Bell), three in Greene Co. on 2 Nov (Paul Sykes), three in Lincoln Co. on 3 Nov (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), and three at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 16 Nov (Paul Champlin).
- MARSH WREN** - Two were seen at CRNRA on 30 Sep (Bob Zaremba), and singles were seen again at CRNRA on 16 Oct (Ellen Miller) and at SPCNP on both 6 Oct (Jeff Madsen) and 10 Oct (Leslie Curran). Two were found at Oxbow Meadows in the Columbus area on 2 Nov (Walt Chambers).
- GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET** - One seen at Chicopee Woods in Hall Co. on 23 Sep was early (Karen Theodorou).
- RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** - Also early was one of this species seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 9 Sep (Tom Egan et al.).
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** - Late singles were seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 31 Oct (Tom Egan et al.) and in the Tucker area on 28 Nov (Jenny Michaels).
- VEERY** - Forty were tallied at Kennesaw Mt. on a pre-dawn count at Kennesaw Mt. on 29 Sep (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).
- GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH** - The same pre-dawn count at Kennesaw Mt. totaled 20 of this species (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba). The best daytime counts were four in the Columbus area on 28 Sep (Walt Chambers) and also four at Kennesaw Mt. on 2 Oct (Bob Zaremba et al.).
- SWAINSON'S THRUSH** - The pre-dawn count at Kennesaw Mt. on 29 Sep produced 146. A high count of 30+ was made at Big Creek Greenway in the Alpharetta area on 19 Sep (Leslie Curran, Theresa Hartz).
- BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** - Four were seen in the Columbus area on 16 Sep (Walt Chambers).
- "BREWSTER'S WARBLER"** - Singles of this Blue-winged x Golden-winged Warbler hybrid form were seen at Kennesaw Mt. on 19 Sep (Tom Egan et al.), Big Creek Greenway in the Alpharetta area also on 19 Sep (Leslie Curran, Theresa Hartz), and at Buford Dam on 1 Oct (Jim Flynn).
- "LAWRENCE'S WARBLER"** - This much rarer hybrid form was reported from the Buckhead area on 16 Sep (Melissa Heath).
- TENNESSEE WARBLER** - The high count from Kennesaw Mt. was 43 on 23 Sep (Deb Zaremba et al.). Thirty-five was a high count from Lamar Co. on 13 Oct (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn).
- ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** - Three were seen at Dawson Forest on 18 Oct (Jim Flynn).

- NASHVILLE WARBLER** - Only three singles were reported from Kennesaw Mt. for the period (fide Tom Egan). Singles also were seen on Tybee Island on 22 Sep (Doris Cohrs), in Dawson Forest on 23 Sep (Jim Flynn), at SCSP on 7 Oct (Chris Loudermilk), and in Floyd Co. on 8 Oct (Marion Dobbs).
- YELLOW WARBLER** - A count of 18 was made at AWMA on 4 Aug (Nathan Klaus).
- MAGNOLIA WARBLER** - A very high count of 41 was made at Suwanee Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on 14 Sep (Earl Horn et al.).
- BAY-BREASTED WARBLER** - Twenty-four was a high count at Kennesaw Mt. on 27 Oct (Giff Beaton et al.).
- BLACKPOLL WARBLER** - Singles were found in Floyd Co. on 1 Oct (Marion Dobbs) and at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 14 Oct (Paul Champlin). Four also were recorded at Kennesaw Mt. during the month of October (fide Tom Egan).
- CERULEAN WARBLER** - It was a good year for this species at Kennesaw Mt. with a total of 135 birds reported for the fall (fide Tom Egan). The five-year average is 113.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** - It also was a good season for this species at Kennesaw Mt., with a total of 336 birds reported, considerably higher than the five year average of 191 (fide Tom Egan). A count of 12 was made at Suwanee Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on 14 Sep (Earl Horn et al.).
- AMERICAN REDSTART** - High counts were 25 at Suwanee Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on 21 Sep (Earl Horn) and 23 at Kennesaw Mt. on 29 Sep (fide Tom Egan).
- WORM-EATING WARBLER** - A bird seen at SCSP on 13 Oct was somewhat late (Chris Loudermilk).
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER** - Four were found in the Columbus area on 25 Aug, 2 Sep, and 5 Sep (Walt Chambers).
- OVENBIRD** - One was still at the ELHLAF Wetlands Center on 26 Oct (Carol Lambert).
- NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** - One seen at Skidaway Island on 18 Oct was late (Russ Wigh).
- CONNECTICUT WARBLER** - Singles were found at Reynold's Preserve on 24 Sep (Paul Raney) and at Arrowhead Wildlife Education Center in Floyd Co. on 7 Oct (Nelson Dobbs).
- MOURNING WARBLER** - Two were an exceptional find at Kennesaw Mt. on 23 Sep (Sterling Blanchard, Pierre Howard, Deb Zaremba).
- WILSON'S WARBLER** - There was a total of 10 birds reported, including a rare coastal report of one at Skidaway Island on 15 Sep (Russ Wigh) and two at Suwanee Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on 20 Sep (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn, Rusty Trump).



- CANADA WARBLER - The high count was three at both Indian Springs State Park on 9 Sep (Michael Beohm) and Suwanee Creek Greenway in Gwinnett Co. on 14 Sep (Earl Horn et al.).
- SUMMER TANAGER - A late bird was seen in Gwinnett Co. on 20 Nov (Karen Theodorou).
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - One was reported from the AWMA on 5 Oct (Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).
- LARK SPARROW - Singles were found in Gordon Co. on 2 Sep (John Gatchet) and 7 Sep (Johnny Parks) and in Oglethorpe Co. on 7 Oct (Jim Flynn).
- HENSLOW'S SPARROW - One was a good find at CRNRA on 17 Oct (Tim Keyes). Two to three were seen on Skidaway Island on 31 Oct (Russ Wigh) and eight were counted at Birdsong Nature Center in Grady Co. on 23 Nov (Michael Bell).
- LECONTE'S SPARROW - Singles were seen in Oglethorpe Co. on 3 Nov (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn) and at Paulk's Pasture WMA in Glynn Co. on 29 Nov (John Gatchet). Six was the high count at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 16 Nov (Paul Champlin).
- NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW - One was seen at Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 16 and 24 Nov (Paul Champlin).
- SONG SPARROW - A count of 410 was made in an area of less than 60 acres in Greene Co. on 30 Nov (Paul Sykes).
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW - Two were found in Douglas Co. on 19 Oct (Chris Loudermilk). Singles were seen in Floyd Co. on 10 Oct (Marion Dobbs), at Kennesaw Mt. on 16 Oct (Tom Egan et al.), in Dawson Forest on 18 Oct (Jim Flynn), in Greene Co. on 19 Oct (Paul Sykes), in Gwinnett Co. on 25 Oct (Earl Horn), at Kennesaw Mt. on 29 Oct (Tom Egan et al.), in Greene Co. on 2 Nov (Paul Sykes), and at Oxbow Meadows in the Columbus area on 13 Nov (Walt Chambers).
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK - A male in Laurens Co. on 8 Aug was very early (Michael Beohm). A late bird was seen in Forsyth Co. on 10 Nov (Jim Flynn).
- INDIGO BUNTING - A high count of 40+ came from SPCNP on 6 Oct (Jeff Madsen).
- PAINTED BUNTING - A female was seen in Thomas Co. on 31 Oct (Leon Neel), and a late bird was seen at Jekyll Island on 25 Nov (Michael Beohm).
- DICKCISSEL - Small numbers were reported from Bartow Co. during August and September (v.ob.), and two were seen at Oxbow Meadows on 28 Sep (Walt Chambers). One was seen at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on the late date of 24 Nov (Pierre Howard, Bob Zaremba, Deb Zaremba).

- BOBOLINK - A count of 52 was made in Bartow Co. on 15 Sep (Bruce Dralle).
- YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD - An immature was seen at the Phinizy Swamp in Richmond Co. on 15 Sep (James Keener et al.).
- BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - Three hundred was an excellent count from Bartow Co. on 16 Nov (Traci Brown, Bruce Dralle).
- SCOTT'S ORIOLE - A truly amazing find was one at the home of Richard Beohm in Upson Co. from 3 through 8 Nov (Eric Beohm, Michael Beohm, Richard Beohm). This bird was well photographed and has been accepted as a first record for Georgia by the GOS Record Committee.
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH - Early for the coast was a male in the Darien area on 7 Sep (Doris Cohrs).

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# THE ORIOLE

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



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