

The GOSHawk

Newsletter of The Georgia Ornithological Society Vol. I No. 1

THE GOS HAWK SAYS - We're fledged and flying! This is the first issue of the new GOS newsletter, taking over the chores of THE CHIRPS. As with THE CHIRPS, THE GOS HAWKS will be inserted in your ORIOLES. The purpose of this newsletter is to bind together our state-wide society - to let our members know the news of birds, people, GOS happenings, etc. The success of the newsletter depends on having news to print - and that depends on you! If you have any news suitable for inclusion, please mail it to the editor. Also, suggestions, criticisms, ideas - all are welcome - let your thoughts be known. This is your voice in the society. Most of our news will come from newsletters of local societies. Many thanks go to the editors for such a quick and good response. The only two newsletters not being received are from Columbus and University of Georgia womens' Club Bird Group. Any GOSers in these two areas, please ask your editor to put us on the mailing list. Keep those newsletters coming!

NAME - GOS hawk is a multi-purpose name. First, it incorporates the initials of the society. Secondly, we "hawk" for the news. Thirdly, it is also a bird name - an accipiter of Northern and Western woodlands - the Goshawk. Have there been any Goshawk sightings in Georgia? Goshawks have been sighted and photographed in North Carolina this past winter (American Birds, Vol 27, No. 3). An old reference book mentioned Goshawks in Florida; but, a search of recent materials turned up no information on their status there.

ROUND - UP OF GOS NEWS - the Spring meeting at Stone Mountain was most successful. After a rainy, rainy week, the weather faired Friday evening and remained perfect for the week-end. 139 species were seen. Every warbler - save the Orange-crowned Warbler - on the check-list was seen. The Don Cohrs saw a Lawrence's Warbler - the recessive hybrid of the Blue-winged - Golden-winged Warblers. Fifty-five members were registered.

FALL MEETING - will be held in Thomasville the first part of October. Why not come down to the Coastal Plain and see what the birds are up to. This is the time to renew old friendships, make new ones and get in some good birding. Election of officers will be held, so this is a most important meeting. Come - bring a friend or relative and enjoy a good week-end. we need YOU there.

BIRD NEWS - A statement of editorial policy. Bird news printed in this publication will be taken from local newsletters and from items sent to the editor. Therefore, verification by this editor is impossible. By printing bird sightings, our members can know what is being seen in the state and where it is being seen. More information on a particular bird can be had by contacting the local society. In reporting the bird news, the oldest news will be listed first; working up to the latest date.

From THE PIPER newsletter of The Coastal Georgia Audubon Society, Brunswick. This summer, several members of C.G.A.S. went with a group to visit this nature wonderland (Lewis Island). They brought back glowing reports of seeing three unusual swallowtailed kites, six Mississippi Kites, one immature (hooray!) bald eagle not far from an active nest, an abundance of prothonotary warblers, several wood ibis, and snail shells indicating the presence of limpkins (seen later by another group). On a recent trip to the north end of Sea Island Phil Hollar and Joe King spotted three birds which are unusual to this area, a red breasted nuthatch, western kingbird, and pigeon hawk. The Altamaha Delta area is an appealing spot; for rare birds. During Thanksgiving week, a Massachusetts resident, was visiting relatives on Jekyll Island. One day he went up to the old rice fields which are now home for many wintering ducks. There he positively identified 45 FULVOUS TREE DUCKS. Although the A.O.U. has accredited the species in Georgia, with the G.O.S. listing a specimen in Augusta in 1961, it is undoubtedly a rare bird to the coast. Peterson lists its range as marshes and rice fields of southern Texas and Louisiana. Moving down to Jekyll Island, Cecily Masters reports seeing a COMMON GOLDENEYE, not commonly found in this area, in the incomplete marina basin. Other diving ducks found there in the winter include red-breasted merganzers and horned grebes. Cecily Masters reports having seen a rare-to-this-area white pelican in the marina basin on Jekyll on December 24.

We have received a report of the Monk Parakeet in East Point. Helen Tracy was the first to see them in our coastal area. Two visited her Sea Island feeder for several days. Now they are being sighted in Brunswick. Everyone who observes the bird is impressed with its beauty. It is friendly and intelligent and is a favorite wherever caged birds are sold. At least five people report seeing two Magnificent Frigate Birds flying over St. Simons and Jekyll. This sighting is rare. A St. Simons family had a Monk Parakeet at their feeder for several days. In a recent issue of YANKEE magazine, Roger Tory Peterson took issue with those people who claim that the bird should be eradicated. He says that it is a harmless bird which likes to come to bird feeders, that's all. Earle Greene tells us about the MONK PARAKEET (*Myiopsitta monachus*). Earle condensed a four page circular by Gardiner Bump, Foreign Game Investigations, Division of Wildlife Research, from which we take this description. "A medium-sized parakeet, greenish gray above with a lemon yellow belly. Forecrown, cheeks, forethroat, and breast softly quaker gray with darker feather edges. Flight feathers blue-gray. Tail bluish green, long, pointed. Bill Rosy flesh color; feet dark. Length 11- $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Sexes alike in coloration."

From THE MARSHLANDER newsletter of the Ogeechee Audubon Society - Savannah. Savannah Refuge Winter Report: Duck populations this past season on the Savannah Refuge complex were the lowest that have been recorded. Although no positive reason for this has been determined, mild weather was probably a contributing factor. Two adult, and one immature, Bald Eagles have frequented the Savannah Refuge beginning in December. Two Golden Eagles were also observed. Thirteen Fulvous Tree Ducks used the refuge for a short period in early fall. Evening Grosbeaks have been observed this past month. Nesting activity as of March 15th is well underway. Canada Geese (Harris Neck), Wood Ducks, Ospreys, Red-tail Hawks, Loggerhead Shrikes, and Great Horned Owls have all wooed and conquered suitable mates. With the approach of spring, Anhingas, American Bittern and Green Herons are returning to the refuge. Numerous species of song birds are also being observed. Evening Grosbeaks, rare even in winter, were seen as recently as May 17 at Sam Young's 20 pound bird feeder. And the reports of Snow Buntings (from a variety of coastal areas) are too numerous to discount as fantasy. Savannah Refuge 1973 Nesting Report: Final results of the 1973 nesting season have been tabulated by the manager of the Savannah complex of refuges (i.e. Savannah, Harris Neck, Blackbeard, and Wassaw refuges) and it appears the Clapper Rails of Wassaw scored highest with 250 nests while the Blackbeard Osprey scored lowest with one nest reported. Of course it is thoroughly unscientific, and unfair, to match rail against Osprey in nesting competition for Rails frequently raise two broods per season (with up to 12 chicks per brood), while Osprey parents normally only raise a brood of three. From these statistics alone it is easy to see the advantage the Rails have in subsequently enlarging their number of future nest builders. The Wood Ducks on the Savannah refuge hatched more than twice the number recorded last year-- 770 ducklings produced from 110 nests, whereas last summer 91 nests yielded only 319 young. Furthermore, last year the bulk of the Woodie population was concentrated at Harris Neck, whereas this year the Savannah refuge is the "in" place. The Least Terns made a comeback this season with 25 nests on Blackbeard island; last summer all Least Tern nests were wiped out by high tides. However, it is sad to note that this is a 75% decrease for Blackbeard. What is worse, not a single Least Tern nest was found on Wassaw, Wolf, or Tybee refuges. Wading birds fared well on the island refuges with Louisiana Herons leading the pack with 215 nests, while Snowy Egrets were close contenders with 185 nests. The extremely productive Savannah rookery was mysteriously abandoned this year thus vacating over 1,000 previously active nests! (It is rumored the rookery will remain in caretaker status...)

From the Atlanta Audubon Society newsletter. On a float trip down the Flint River on May 9 the songs of at least two Parula Warblers were heard. These birds were not seen but were clearly identifiable by song. They were in a patch of woods covered with Spanish Moss. A characteristic of the nests of Parula Warblers which breed along the coast is the use of Spanish Moss as a construction material. If further investigation proves that these birds are indeed breeding along the Flint River regularly it will represent an extension of the breeding range in Georgia. The Spanish Moss district in Upson County will be destroyed by the proposed Spurrell Bluff Dam. (Editor's note: These birds also use Usnea when available and also build in areas where neither plant is available.)

Mike Einhorn reports that a Painted Bunting was seen in the Atlanta area. The ringed turtle dove, an escaped cage bird that has naturalized in Los Angeles, Miami, Tampa, and lately in Charleston, is in Atlanta. Georgine Pindar has one regularly at her feeder. This bird is beige-colored with a rounded tail and a black crescent at the back of its neck.

From the Dalton Kingfisher - On July 15, 1972 three immature Roseate Spoonbills were seen. The birds were at a small livestock pond in a large livestock pasture and were seen at 9:00 A.M. The birds were observed for twenty minutes, then flew off in a southerly direction. A track made by one of these birds was dug up and taken to the GOS meeting at Stone Mountain. Tom French identified the track as being that of a Roseate Spoonbill. (Editor's Note: See June-September issue of THE ORIOLE - "Roseate Spoonbills in Northwest Georgia" by Robert Manns - about the sighting of three immature Roseate Spoonbills near Rome on July 21, 1972.) An article on the Dalton Roseate Spoonbills will appear in a future issue of THE ORIOLE.

A Long-eared Owl was heard for four nights in November near Dalton. A Short-billed Marsh Wren was seen by Harriett DiGioia, December 2. Jan DeVore saw a Common Goldeneye on the Christmas count, December 16. This is the second record for this area. On February 4, a Swainson's Thrush was reported and is a second winter record. January 28 brought news of the sighting of a Black and white Warbler. At 3:40 P.M. on March 3, a flock of 40 + Sandhill Cranes was seen flying near Dalton. (Editor's Note: This was the only report of Sandhill Cranes for the Appalachian Region. AMERICAN BIRDS Vol. 27, No. 3). The above four are verified sightings. Sixteen Cattle Egrets were seen on April 16 and 200 Lesser Scaup on Thread Mill Lake April 13. Anne Hamilton had the good fortune to see nine Black-Crowned Night Herons - 8 adult and one immature; perched in the trees at Thread Mill Lake. A Golden-winged Warbler was seen by Harriett DiGioia, April 29. Norene Boring and Anne Hamilton, on May 5, had the pleasure of seeing an Osprey dive into Shield's Pond and come up with a fair-sized fish.

NEWS OF PEOPLE - It is with sadness that in this first issue we report the death of two of our members. Mr. Robert Overing, a former treasurer, died last March. R.E. Hamilton, also a former treasurer, died on August 18. His wife, Anne, is a charter member of our society. Both these men were well-liked and respected members and will be missed at future GOS meetings. Our deepest sympathies are extended to you Mrs. Overing and Anne and to your families.

Marene Snow attended the National Audubon Society meeting in Denver, June 7-11. Birding highlights were the White-tailed Ptarmigan, Brown-capped Rosy Finch at an elevation of 12,000 feet in Rocky Mountain National Park and Chestnut-collared Longspurs in the Pawnee Grasslands.

Lorraine Dusenbury won a seat on the Glynn County Commission in the November election. Not only is she the first woman to serve on the commission, she is also the first Jekyll Island resident elected.

Alfred W. Jones has been awarded the U.S. Interior Department's highest civilian award. The Conservation Service Award was presented to him last month by George B. Hartzog, Jr. director of the National Park Service. We are all pleased that Mr. Jones was selected to receive this high honor. He was cited for his activities in preserving Sapelo, Sea Island, St. Simons, Jekyll Island, and Cumberland.

Norene Boring was one of twenty-seven members of NAS that participated in an Inaugural Field Trip to the Soviet Union this summer.

Excursions and visits in and around Moscow, Leningrad & Kiev highlighted the cultural and historical aspects of Soviet life.

Several days were spent birding and exploring at the Leberda Nature Reserve, near Dombai in the northern Caucasus. The reserve, begun in 1935 consists of 90,000 hectares. There were many sanatoriums, holiday homes and tourist centers in the area. Sixty-three species of birds were sighted including Scarlet Grosbeak, Green Warbler, Crested Lark, Blue headed Wagtail, Fieldfare, Mistle Thrush, Ortolan, Greenfinch, Golden Oriole, Great Tit.

Two of our members have had five articles written about them in the Sunday Magazine Section of the ATLANTA JOURNAL/CONSTITUTION. In the December 24, 1972 issue - "Every New Bird Is A Thrill" about Earle R. Greene. "The Bird Man of 14th Street" is about Richard A. Parks, July 29. We wish you much success on your full-time bird painting venture, Dick.

From Louis Fink - To report on one transplanted GOS member: I'm up here on the Coastal Plain, admiring the Painted Buntings, Glossy Ibis, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Summer Tanagers and Indigo Buntings. THE ORIOLE brings welcome news from Georgia. Apt. 6 Bldg. L, Tau Valley Estates, Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801.

Louis Schweizer has moved from Augusta to the Atlanta Area.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY - Hope may spring eternal, but, eco-systems, unfortunately, don't. CONSERVING LIFE ON EARTH - David W. Ehrenfeld.

MISCELLANEOUS - From MCRAE WILLIAMS: Back issues of THE ORIOLE received in response to the list of the "TEN MOST-WANTED" back issues in the June-September 1972 ORIOLE were most welcome. At this time, the three "MOST-WANTED" issues are the March 1941, December 1939 and March-June 1944 issues. Please contact: Business Manager, THE ORIOLE, 755 Ellsworth Drive, Atlanta, GA 30318, (404) 355-4355 regarding copies which might be available.

There are "Ecology In The Classroom" kits available for \$3.50 from the Audubon Naturalist Society, 8940 Jones Mill Rd., Washington, D.C. 20015, and are designed for the volunteer teacher in elementary school. A pamphlet containing a description of the kits can be obtained from writing to the above address.

ELBRIDGE FREEBORN reminds us that Richard Parks' "Brown Thrashers and Cherokee Roses" prints are still available. These would make good presents - wedding, housewarming, Christmas. For more information, contact Elbridge.

To keep this newsletter from becoming too long, we will now close this issue. A few items were not included in this issue-they will appear in the next issue.

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