

DEC 1973

The Georgia GOShawk

Newsletter of The Georgia Ornithological Society Vol. I No. 2

THE GOShawk SAYS - We are changing our name to The Georgia GOShawk. Mr. Chandler Robbins, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service kindly took the time to write to the editor and point out that The Genessee Ornithological Society of Rochester, N.Y. has used the name The Goshawk for their newsletter for some twenty-nine years. Therefore, we have changed to the new name.

CONCERNING GOSHAWKS IN THE SOUTH - According to American Birds, Vol. 27, No. 3 Goshawks have been sighted in North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana. It then seems reasonable that Goshawks will some day be seen in Georgia.

SPEWRELL BLUFF DAM - Gov. Carter did reject the proposed Spewrell Bluff Dam. Much credit should go to the various Audubon Societies around the state which worked so hard to fight the dam. The Upper Flint River and Atlanta Audubon Societies were leaders in the fray. This does not end the battle as the subject is liable to come up in the next administration and there will always be other dams proposed. It is a continual uphill battle! From the newsletter of The Chattahoochee Valley National History Club, we take the following quote "And thank you Gov. Carter for deciding against the dam at Spewrell Bluff. The appreciation of all conservationists in the Chattahoochee Valley (Georgia) goes to you for your Oct. 1st decision to let Flint Rivers' white water live."

HELP! - the editor is not receiving The Marshlander or The Piper. This leaves a great gap in the coverage of the state and gives us no coastal bird records. GOSers in the Savannah-Brunswick area, please ask your editors to send in their newsletters.

ROUND-UP OF GOS NEWS - The Fall meeting was most successful from all standpoints. The latest statistics - 70 people in attendance - 135 species seen. Good views were had of a mature Bald Eagle, Limpkins, a flying Osprey, White Ibis, Wood Ibis, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. The singular beauty of Sandpipers wheeling in perfect harmony as if directed by an unseen hand - now dark; now light - against the peaceful backdrop of the salt marshes at the refuge - such are the wonders of nature for all to see. Trips were taken to St. Mark's Wildlife Refuge, Wakulla Springs, Greenwood Plantation. Many thanks go to the staff of The Tall Timbers Research Station for a good job, well done and for a delicious Bar-B-Que dinner.

A COMMITTEE WILL BE SET UP to study the Monk Parakeet problem. A decision will be made as to the GOS position on them. Dr. Davenport is in need of material for The Oriole. If you have any news of birds - unusual numbers of birds, odd behavior, rare birds, late and early birds, please write it up and send it to Dr. Davenport.

NEW OFFICERS - President-Wallace Dreyfoos; First Vice-President-Norene Boring; Second Vice-President-Terry Moore; Secretary-Mrs. W.A. Gibbs; Treasurer-Tom Collum. We look forward to two good years with these officers. Thanks go to the nominating committee - Elbridge Freeborn, Grace Boddiford, Dr. J.F. Denton for selecting these officers.

OUTGOING OFFICERS - Many, many thank yous go to Tom Rial, Claudia Carswell, Louis Schweizer. Your work is much appreciated.

BIRD NEWS - For this issue, the editor is still using the 5th A.O.U. Checklist of bird names. The number in front of certain items indicates the month in which the newsletter was printed.

THE ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY - The Hans, Swiderskis and Cohrs saw a Virginia Rail at Entrenchment Creek, Sept. 2. A Gray-cheeked Thrush was seen Sept. 9 at Stone Mountain Nature Garden. (10) False Alarm! Following up a lead given to Elbridge Freeborn, we thought we were hot on the trail of perhaps a flock of Monk parakeets in Vinings. As it turned out, the visitors were not Monks(probably very fortunately) but some even more exotic parrot-like birds- Peachfaced Lovebirds.

THE AUGUSTA AUDUBON SOCIETY - (10) Report on field trips - Saturday, the 15th Tom Rial reported little sound or movement, two Red-headed Woodpeckers were seen, which probably indicated migration since one is seldom seen. A good look was had of a Barred Owl at the lock and dam. Oct. 14 - the highlight of the trip was three Magnolia Warblers. Oct. 27 - brought up a Ruddy Duck, a rare to common species wintering in Augusta, Canada Warblers and a House Wren.

ALERT!! Be on the look-out for the Scrub (Florida) Jay which has just been seen (Oct. 27-28) on Jekyll Island. Terry Moore called Tom Rial and asked that he alert birders in this area of the sighting. The Scrub Jay is about 11½ inches long with solid blue wings and tail (olive-gray back) and is crestless. Its peculiar habitat is the scrub country of coastal

Florida, extending from about St. Augustine southward. A Scrub Jay was reported to have been taken at Okefenokee Swamp in 1896, but this was never confirmed so the species remains on the Hypothetical List of Georgia. Peterson states it has never been reported outside the state of Florida. Mrs. Masters, who lives on Jekyll, knows the whereabouts of the jay and will direct you to it should you be on the island and wish to search it out. (Editor's Note: The Dec. issue of the newsletter of the Atlanta Audubon Society containing a write-up of the Scrub Jay arrived too late for inclusion. It will appear in the next issue.)

THE CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY NATURAL HISTORY CLUB - (9) Two Snowy Egrets were seen recently, the first in the valley in a long time, as well as an immature White Ibis. A Common Snipe on Aug. 18, is a new early local record. (Editor's Note: The earliest arrival date given in Georgia Birds-Thomas D. Burleigh is Aug. 25, 1932 at Atlanta.) On the Eufoula Causeway, 50 Cattle Egrets were seen. One of the highlights of the summer birding was a Swainson's Warbler found in Marion County in June, nesting season.* Another was a Black and White Warbler found on three occasions in Marion County. Again in nesting season.* (The Columbus newsletter gave June 23 as the date).

(10) Some dates of birds seen - Veery, Sept. 12; Baltimore Orioles about Sept. 12 (three bathing at the same time); Gray-cheeked Thrush, at Goatrock Dam, Sept. 20; Golden-winged Warbler, Sept. 22. Red-cockaded Woodpeckers have also been noted.*

COLUMBUS AUDUBON SOCIETY OBSERVER - We go back to Spring to pick up some news. Five Cerulean Warblers were seen on April 19, Calloway Memorial Forest. Five Laughing Gulls were seen by L.A. Wells in the Spring. The only Osprey and Common Loons came from Lake Harding, also 20 Bonapartes Gulls. The recently found two Black-necked Stitts in Seminole County are apparently the first inland record for the Southeast. Seminole Co. is in extreme S.W. Ga. New early arrival dates were noted for Tennessee Warblers.

(5) A couple of "firsts" - Least Flycatcher, April 29. A Swallow-tailed Kite has been reported on consecutive Sundays at Omaha; also a "second", - a Traill's Flycatcher by James Miller. Empidonax Flycatchers, very similar, can be identified only by sound. The first Black crowned Night Heron in 11 years has been reported and a new abundance record set for Blackpoll Warblers. James Miller turned in the first spring record of the elusive Black-billed Cuckoo for Columbus. With no previous spring record, James Miller found 6 Blue-winged Warblers in 4 locations. His developed backyard attracted a rare Canada Warbler on successive days. L.A. Wells noted 20 Least Terns, a rarity inland, in an apparent reverse migration as they disappeared over Oliver Dam southward. We can only surmise they were returning to coastal-river nesting sites, previously flooded, after an exploratory tour. A Magnolia Warbler was seen May 13.

Two of our members invaded the Flint at Flint Shoals the morning of Oct. 13. Their report was reminiscent of the old Chattahoochee-before-dam days when the rich broad-leaf riverbottoms served as a feedway for south-bound migrants. Too long to list, their 11 species of wood warblers included 30 Magnolias, 20 Tennessees, 6 each of Blackburnians, Chestnut-sideds, Hoodeds, also 2 Orange-crowneds and a Bay-breasted.

The season's first ducks were observed on Lake Oliver on Oct. 17: 10 American Widgeon.

A Field Trip to Bussey's Lake, Oct. 13 where among the shore birds we observed a Dowitcher which uses his bill like a sewing machine while feeding on the mud-flat. L.A. Wells heard a Winter Wren sing for the first time in his life (and in the fall!), and described it as a handful of tiny silver bells tinkling in the damp brush. Another said it sounded like milady's several boudoir music boxes, each gurgling a different tune. Earlier on the same morning - a little to the south - was found the rare Black-billed Cuckoo, and the day before an all-time early Veery.

The two House Wrens on Oct. 7 were the earliest ever. A few days before, the Warbling Vireo was found at Goat Road. (Editor's Note: Although not listed in the Pocket Check-list-Georgia Birds by J. Fred Denton, Milton Hopkins, Jr.; the Warbling Vireo is listed on the hypothetical list of Georgia Birds by Thomas D. Burleigh-page 700. Burleigh lists the birds as "Eastern Warbling Vireo, Vireo gilvus gilvus", giving two sightings. One on April 28, 1890 at the mouth of the Altamaha River; the other on Oct. 15, 1935 at Augusta.)

THE BIRD-WATCHER - FLOYD COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY - (10) On our field trip, a pair of Sparrow Hawks put on a show in the air. At the lake at Floyd Junior College, there were 25 American Widgeon and three Ring-necked Ducks.

Some very interesting things can happen for the nature observer! About two weeks ago, Phil Ham had a Summer Tanager, two Scarlet Tanagers, two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, all at the same time in the trees about his

* Bobolinks were seen at Clark Hill Reservoir by one of our members.

home. This is nice back-yard birding! On Oct. 15, while one of our members was walking through his patch of woodland, to his amazement he saw every species of our woodpeckers all together in the same tree, a big pine-eight different species in the same tree. He says he never expects to see this again.

In a recent telephone conversation with Terry Moore, he asked where he might find the Bachman's Sparrow. With many other bird observers of our part of the country, I can only tell of having seen this species a number of years ago. Most of our weedy hillsides are now silent with the absence of the superb song of this little bird, that seems to have become quite rare. I do not believe that most of our members have ever seen it. I have never found it in the time of winter, but it probably was here over the winter months in sparing numbers, for I have heard its song quite early in the beginning of March (years ago!). It is such a shy, quiet bird, living on the ground, usually in thick broom-straw grass, that it is quite difficult to locate except when it mounts a bush to sing. You have almost to step on it to find it! I have rated its song as superior to any other bird we have.

THE HOUSE FINCH - HENRY COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY - We had a most enjoyable field trip Oct. 20, at Cotton Indian Creek. The day was perfect for a walk in the woods and we did see birds, among them a Philadelphia Vireo which is a stranger to these parts. (Editor's Note: A bird thought to be a Philadelphia Vireo was seen in Dalton, Sept. 8. The observer did not wish to publish it as a close study was not obtained. Both Georgia Birds - Burleigh and Pocket Check-list-Georgia Birds - Denton and Hopkins - list this bird as a rare fall transient. Burleigh records nine specimens collected and four sightings of this bird.)

THE DALTON KINGFISHER - CHEROKEE AUDUBON SOCIETY - Barn Owls were seen on the night of June 4 by six members. Good views were obtained. The owls are believed to nest in the large tulip tree on the front lawn of this home near the downtown area. A Great Horned Owl was heard on Sept. 14. An American Widgeon was seen at Thread Mill Lake, Sept. 20.

The warbler migration was extremely good at Dalton this fall. Harriett DiGioia - Blue-winged Warbler, Sept. 12; Black-throated Blue Warbler, Sept. 17; Golden-winged Warbler, Sept. 21; Black-billed Cuckoo-Oct. 2; Brewster's Warbler (hybrid of Golden-winged X Blue-winged Warbler) Oct. 3; Nashville Warbler, Oct. 4. Three House Wrens were seen on Oct. 13. A Western Sandpiper was seen on the field trip to the National Fish Hatchery, Cohutta, on Oct. 14. Three reports of Wood Ducks have been received - Frank DiGioia - 2 Wood Ducks, Sept. 22. Wood Ducks have been seen in corn field near Villanow and 4 Wood Ducks - 2 male, 2 female were on a pond near Dalton, Nov. 16. One male was in the eclipse plumage. A Veery was seen Sept. 11; a Gray-Cheeked Thrush, Oct. 2.

THE TWO CASES OF WOULD-BE MONK PARAKEETS - Case #1 - A Monk Parakeet was believed seen in a sub-division near Dalton on July 9. This bird allowed a close approach; some children were able to touch it. However, it eluded all grasps and the net. When pursued it would fly from one corn patch to another across the street, making Parrot-like sounds. The editor was told the bird stripped four ears of corn clean in one-half hours' time. Two slides were taken of the bird. Case #2 - On Sept. 28 a Parakeet-type bird was seen eating sunflower seeds off the standing stalk. The bird was quite aggressive - driving away other birds, including Crows. The only bird to stand its ground was a Mockingbird. It is the editor's belief this is the same bird as in Case #1. The descriptions tally and the sightings are in the same general area. A color picture of a Monk Parakeet appeared in the bulletin of The Wilson Ornithological Society at this time. All persons involved upon seeing the picture said the bird they saw was definitely not a Monk Parakeet. Perhaps it should be remembered not all Parakeet-type birds flying about are Monks. There are a number of other escapes flitting about. According to some sources, it is not only Monk Parakeets, but parakeets in general, that are causing alarm.

NEWS OF PEOPLE - Word has been received of the death of a former member - Dr. Fred Crenshaw. Mrs. Crenshaw is a former secretary of GOS.

The selling of the Dick Parks print has been given another boost. The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. will offer the print to its 21,000 membership. Dick had another exhibition of his great bird paintings at the Quinlan Art Center in Gainesville last month.

Wally Dreyfoos is to be commended for his work in giving bird-type advice to the developers of Peachtree Corners. Among the good results of his efforts are the many trees planted especially to attract birds, the birdfeeder furnished each resident, and a check-list of birds on the property.

Mrs. Harlan Starr went on the Audubon sponsored summer tour to the Scandinavian Countries.

L.A. and Roberta Wells had a month's vacation in Florida. The bird find of the trip was a rare Curlew Sandpiper, observed while birding in St. Petersburg's DeSoto Park, as well as a Man-of War.

Ed and Lola Case had a glorious trip "out West" during the latter part of August and early September. They flew to Portland, Oregon and each day while dining observed a Rufous Hummingbird sipping nectar from the nasturtiums in the window box. This was a first for them and they added ten new birds to their Life List. The Canada Jay and Clark's Nutcracker were among the "firsts". The Cases then took a trip down the Cascade Mountain Range, visiting Crater Lake. They flew to Denver and scaled Mt. Evans, which is over 14,000 feet. From there, on to San Antonio for a lot of sight-seeing; then home.

Around mid-September, Jake and Helen Speltz had a delightful ten day trip up the East Coast. The first stop was the Outer Banks where Herring, Laughing, Ring-billed, Bonapartes' Gulls were in abundance. Common Terns, Sandpipers, Plovers dotted the beaches. The Speltz then went to Williamsburg, then home via the Blue Ridge Parkway. They had a good view of a male Ruffed Grouse on the parkway.

Mercedes and Gladys Buckner spent an exciting two weeks at Bear Mountain Ranch, five miles from Silver City, New Mexico. Ideally located for diversity in bird watching, it is situated near the Sonoran Desert and is very near the Gila National Forest. They then visited the Southwestern Research Station in the Chiricahua Mountains of Arizona and the national forest there. At least fifteen species of Hummingbirds have been recorded there. Many interesting birds were seen, including Gambels' Quail, Roadrunners. Two full days were spent in Gila Mountains birding; one day was spent desert birding with an excellent guide.

Fred and Virginia Denton and Wilson Baker attended the A.O.U. meeting at Cape Cod. A field trip was taken to Monomay Island, off the southern tip of the Cape. Thousands of gulls and other shore birds dotted the beaches, but the Great Black-backed Gulls were the ones he was most interested in, Dr. Denton said. Also seen, Peregrine Falcons, Short-eared Owls, hundreds of migrating warblers were scattered through the scrub on the island. There are no trees there. The find of the day was a Ground Dove-no record exists of this bird in Massachusetts. Almost every day White-crowned Sparrows came to the feeders of the cottage where the Dentons were staying; one morning there were twenty-five. These sparrows were migrating, and hopefully we'll get a few in Georgia this winter. Wilson Baker commented on the fact it was the largest turn-out even for an A.O.U. meeting - 500 +.

Wilson Baker attended the Florida Ornithological Society meeting at Vero Beach. Dr. Herbert Kale was in charge of this meeting.

GOSers attending the 54th Annual meeting of The Wilson Ornithological Society, Chapel Hill, N.C. this past spring - Doris Cohrs, Jeanine Angerman, Tom Rial, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Teulings, Wilson Baker, Robert Crawford.

The Atlanta Audubon Society's trip to Puerto Rico was most successful and everyone had a great time. Members of our society who made the trip - Betty Schroeder, Marene Snow, Sybil Arbery, Sue Mathews, Lida MacKenzie. 68 species were seen-including White-tailed Tropic Bird, Magnificent Frigate Bird.

Eugene Cypert has an excellent Site Guide article - Okefenokee Swamp in the latest issue of American Birds.

We are happy to notice that after a silence of 2½ years, George Dorsey is again editing The Bird-Watcher at Rome.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY - ... In fact, I had more trouble with Georgia reports (Christmas Counts) than with the other three states edited by me. Several very unlikely species were included with no substantiating details whatsoever; and many write-ups for rare or unusual winter records were unsatisfactory. Certainly 'seen in tree near stream' is poor information to submit for a most unusual bird. It is imperative to give the names and qualifications of all observers and explain in detail why the bird could not have been any species that closely resembles it. Allan D. Cruickshank-American Birds Vol 27 No. 2.

NOTICE - GOS PATCHES - Order your GOS patches from Tom Rial, 791 Boardman Rd., Aiken, S.C. The price is \$1.50 for the first one ordered; \$1.25 for each additional one. Now's your chance to "buy" an official look.

A North American Hawk Migration Conference will be held in Syracuse, N.Y., April 19-21, 1974. Room does not permit details now. You can contact the editor for a printed sheet concerning subjects to be discussed.

The Spring meeting will be held in Columbus.

Please do YOUR part in conserving energy during this crisis!

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