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The Georgia GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society Vol. II No. 1

THE GOShawk SAYS - A warm welcome to three new members--Daniel Carbaugh, Columbus; J.P. Ginsberg, Dalton; Richard Hopkins, 2874 Catalina Drive, Decatur, GA 30032. We look forward to seeing you at the fall meeting--and all our other meetings! Please add the name Mrs. Almonte Howell, Jr., 280 Duncan Springs Road, Athens, GA 30601 to your membership list.

Why not write up your sightings--unusual or rare birds; late or early birds; peculiar behavior, etc.--for The Oriole. Any first sighting for the state--second and third, also--should be submitted. Les Davenport can always use material--so, go ahead, write up that article and mail it in. Not sure if your bird is up to Oriole standards or if the article is written up correctly? Send it in and let Les do the worrying!

Remember the newest GOS undertaking--Guide to Birding in Georgia. Dan Hans is editor and you'll be hearing more from him in the future. Meanwhile, be mentally pinpointing your favorite and most productive birding spots across our state--"from Rabun Gap to Tybee Light"--and be ready when Dan asks for information.

The Atlanta Audubon Society has a really good thing going. Call this number--634-5497--and you'll get information, via tape recording, of the next Audubon meeting/field trip, information on birding in the Atlanta area, etc. Atlanta also has two Rare Bird alert numbers--the Don Cohrs--767-4101; the John Swiderskies--633-9266. Planning to be in Atlanta awhile--dial these numbers to find out what is going on and if any rare birds have been seen and where to find them.

Last May a conference was held by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources on Endangered Species in Georgia. Birds placed on the endangered list at this first meeting were--Brown Pelican, Mississippi Kite, Swallowtail Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, American Kestrel, Wood Stork, Sandhill Crane, Limpkin, Black-necked Stilt, Barn Owl, Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Common Raven, Bewick's Wren, Bachman's Warbler, Kirtland's Warbler, Bachman's Sparrow. A United States list of endangered species adds the Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

ROUND-UP OF GOS NEWS - Y'all come--come to Dalton for the fall meeting. Pack your bag, grab your binoculars and bird guide, gather up some friends and relatives and head for the hills! That's where the action in the bird world will be October 11-13. The birds have given us the word that they'll be here; the weather has promised to cooperate and a good time is guaranteed. Joseph W. Taylor, treasurer of the American Birding Association and champion bird watcher with 713 North American Birds on his Life List, will be the banquet speaker. "A Bird Watcher's America" will tell of his birding experiences and what he thinks are the best places for birding from Greenland across and around the United States to Alaska. The ridges around Dalton will be coloring up; the air will be sparkling clear; the birds will be in the river bottoms and on the mountain top. Like it? Why not try it? We need YOU in Dalton!

Spring meeting will be held at Albany.

AUGUSTA SPRING COUNT - May 4 - 76 species. Highlights of the count--Mississippi Kites were in--about a dozen or more were feeding low over a field at the airport. Several pairs of Painted Buntings were sighted at the old dump along the road to the airport. Grasshopper Sparrows were in abundance. Conspicuous by its absence was the Great (Common) Egret--not one was seen all day. This is sad for at one time it was perhaps the most commonly seen long-legged wader in the ponds. Blue Grosbeaks, including many singing immature males were in abundance.

BIRD NEWS - Albany Audubon Society--(This is the first time we have received the Albany newsletter and are glad to have the news of south Georgia--Ed.) (June) Recent sightings: Two Roseate Spoonbills were seen by several Audubon members in a small pond near

the Leary Road. (Editor's Note: This is a fourth sighting for Georgia. 1) Georgia Birds - Thomas D. Burleigh lists one in Liberty County, 1934. 2) Three immatures were seen and photographed at Rome, July 21, 1972, The Oriole, Vol. 37, Nos. 2 & 3. 3) July 15, 1972, three immature were seen near Dalton, The Georgia GOShawk, Vol. 1, No. 1.) A Least Bittern has been sighted on 8-mile Road. An Osprey and a Bachman's Sparrow have been seen at St. Joe.

The Piper - Coastal Georgia Audubon Society - Brunswick--(August) Great news for birders--a flying instructor and his wife spotted what they believe to be six King Vultures south of Route 17 between Jekyll Island turn-off and Satilla Shores. The birds were first spotted at 2,000 Feet. A pair and a single were seen around noon on the 26th on the mud flats at ebb tide south of the Jekyll Causeway. The birds--white, with red heads, black wing tips--have been seen over Cumberland Island. (Editor's Note: A Field Guide to the Birds, Roger Tory Peterson, lists the King Vulture in Appendix I - Accidentals - Found by William Bartram in Florida 1774 or 1775.)

The Marshlander - Ogeechee Audubon Society - Savannah--The April 27th field trip turned up a flock of Tree Swallows, Common Yellowthroat, Marsh Wren, sp., Blue Jays, Mockingbirds.

The Observer - Columbus Audubon Society--(May) James Miller has specialized in bonanzas this spring: an incredible 300 Indigo Buntings and 1500 Chipping Sparrows in Hartin's Dairy grain fields, and once-in-a-lifetime 60 Solitary Sandpipers, 50 Lesser Yellowlegs, 45 Least Sandpipers at drained Bussey's Lake.

The Fall Line - Ocmulgee Audubon Society - Macon--On the April 27th field trip everyone added the Red Crossbill to their Life List and some added the Short-billed Marsh Wren. The flock of Red Crossbills contained ten birds preening in a deciduous tree not yet fully leafed out--we could see the crossed mandibles. Also seen--Red-headed Woodpecker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue Grosbeak, American Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow.

May 18 found us at Rabun Bald for a field trip. 60 species were seen, including Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Common Raven.

(July) Mrs. T.J. Cater sends word that a Dickcissel has been observed in Houston County during this spring and summer and may be nesting. A Common Loon was seen on Lake Tobesofkee, June 16. (Editor's Note: The latest date in Georgia Birds, Ibid, is June 11, 1937, near Hinesville in Liberty County. One was seen in Atlanta, June 3, 1946.) At Ocmulgee National Monument an immature Yellow-crowned Night Heron was seen, July 5.

Chattahoochee Valley Natural History Club--On the May field trip a male and female Orchard Oriole posed on their pendent nest within ten feet of the group. Also noted were Prothonotory and Yellow-throated Warblers and Rough-winged Swallows.

Atlanta Audubon Society--John Swiderski writes of a trip to the Georgia Coast--A trip to the premier birding location in Georgia, the coast, produced 130+ species the last week-end in April. The Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area south of Darien was the most active stop of the field trip. Ten Stilt Sandpipers were observed at length. (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, J. Fred Denton, Milton Hopkins, Jr.--Erratic spring and fall transient on coast, occasional fall migrant in interior.) Glossy Ibis were feeding everywhere (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid--Occasional on coast, spring to fall, possibly breeding.) A Purple Gallinule was seen among the reeds and a Least Bittern and Sora were also enjoyed. The Gray Kingbird was found at the Cloisters on Sea Island. (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid--Occasional summer resident along coast, breeding.) Black-crowned and Yellow crowned Night Herons were seen, the latter at Ft. Frederica on St. Simons. The Yellow-crowned Night Herons had a nest in near downtown Brunswick in a backyard tree. Also on this trip were Judy Swiderski and Terry Moore.

(June) Terry Moore saw a Cattle Egret in a pasture adjoining the Atlanta Regional Hospital around April 14. He also heard two Willow Flycatchers (Traill's), May 12, at Entrenchment Creek sewage treatment plant. This is a new location for this bird in Atlanta. (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid--Scarce spring and fall transient north of Fall Line. Has nested in Atlanta in recent years.) Mrs. Beaufort Crawford, Milledgeville, reports a male Painted Bunting was at her feeder the last two weeks of April.

(Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid--common summer resident on or near coast and up Savannah River Valley to Augusta. Accidental in rest of coastal plain.). A Great Egret was in a back yard pond near Stone Mountain. Judy Swiderski, Terry Moore saw Upland Sandpipers (Plovers) again this year at ARH--they were present the last week of the month. (These birds were seen in the same area at the Stone Mountain GOS meeting--spring--1973 - Ed.)

On June 8, a Mute Swan was seen on the backwaters of the Chattahoochee River. Plans were made to mark the area with signs as a sanctuary and some thought was given to bringing in another Mute Swan. The swan was wantonly shot before any protection could be arranged. Sanctuary signs will be put up in the hope of deterring further shooting. (Actions such as this shooting are hard to understand. Some people have an almost uncontrollable urge to shoot any large bird--small ones, too!--Ed.)

Doris Cohrs saw two singing male Swainson's Warblers on June 10 just off Fairburn Road. One was heard the first part of June in the Big Canoe area in North Georgia.

Upper Flint River Audubon Society - Jonesboro--Roger Green spent several hours on June 16 searching for the Cohrs Swainson's Warbler. Armed with a tape recording of the Swainson's call, he got several responses and lured him close-by, but no visual sighting. He also saw three Great Egrets on June 24 at Jackson's farm. Ken and Barbara Acree, Stockbridge, report a flock of immature Little Blue Herons on Swan Lake, July 6. A night heron, thought to be an immature yellow crowned was seen July 3 at a home on Charles Avenue.

The Dalton Kingfisher - Cherokee Audubon Society--A male Mallard and male Wood Duck were noted on a pond in Dalton, June 8 and at a later date at another pond a little further out of town. On June 29, an immature night heron, thought to be a yellow crowned--was caught by hand. The bird was being harrassed by dogs, but upon capture did not seem to have any injuries. Norene Boring kept it in a cage for an afternoon and several members of the Audubon Society had a chance to observe it. In the evening the bird was released in a swampy area. Anne Hamilton, Harriett DiGioia saw 8+ night herons flying over the Cleveland Highway, July 25. Anne Hamilton noted a Northern Parula Warbler in her yard, August 1--Harriett DiGioia saw a Northern Waterthrush August 6--this is a bit early.

Sandy Pangle has two finds to his credit-- a Black Tern in immature plumage was shot by some boys on Crown Mill Lake near Dalton. Sandy asked the boys to give him the bird and he brought it home and made the identification. The bird was viewed by several members of the Audubon Society. Two more Black Terns--one in full winter plumage--were noted August 12 at Thread Mill Lake. He also found an immature Louisiana Heron (fide AH) at TML August 12. (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid--Common summer resident near coast and in Okefenokee breeding, fairly common in winter. Casual summer visitant elsewhere.)

On April 23, Harriett DiGioia saw a Warbling Vireo. This was not published in the local newsletter or in the June, 1974, issue of The Georgia GOShawk--Vol. I, No. 4--as the observer wished to do some reading and research into the plumages of Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos. After much searching, the observer feels there is no doubt as to the identity of this bird. (Editor's Note: A Warbling Vireo was seen at Goat Rock Dam, Columbus, October, 1973--The Georgia GOShawk, Vol. I, No.2. This bird is not listed in Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid. Georgia Birds, Ibid puts it on the hypothetical list with two sightings--April 28, 1890 at the mouth of Altamaha River and on October 15, 1935 at Augusta.)

Grace Boddiford sends in the following news from Scriven County-- between July 4-7 at drained Itchy Pond, approximately 100 each Wood Storks (Ibis) and Great Egrets; 6 Great Blue & 1 Little Blue Herons were seen. The area was checked again a bit later and 6 each Wood Storks, Great Egrets; 1 Great Blue, 1 Little Blue Heron were noted. A week before July 4, 25 each Wood Storks and Great Egrets were recorded.

NEWS OF PEOPLE - Elbridge and Katherine Freeborn stopped near Tuskegee, Alabama, on a recent trip. They visited a nearby rookery and saw Great Blue and Little Blue Herons and Cattle Egrets. Upon leaving they were surprised to see a male Rhode Island Red Chicken. The grounds keeper told them the Rhode Island Reds had been nesting in the rookery for two or three years.

Don and Doris Cohra have been really getting about. The middle of March found them at Freeport, Grand Bahama Island. They added 11 birds to their Life List, including Striped-headed Tanager, Bananaquit, Black-faced Grassquit. In July they journeyed to Estes Park, Colorado, to attend the National Wildlife Federation Summit Conference and got in some birding in Kansas. Doris is a sophomore at Georgia State, working toward a B.S. in biology.

GOS can claim two members of the 600 Club--Earle Greene and Terry Moore. There are 101 members of this group with four members now deceased.

Rosalind Clark attended the Symposium on Endangered and Threatened Species of North America held in Washington, D.C. this past June--Lorraine Dusenbury attended a one day symposium on the Loggerhead Turtle. Georgine Pinder was voted a scholarship to Dr. Phillip Greer's course at Shorter College, Rome.

Richard Parks presented a framed print of "The Brown Thrashers and Cherokee Roses" to Governor Jimmy Carter for his home in Plains. Dick's pictures also hang in such fine places as the Governor's Mansion, the library at Georgia Tech (Dick is a graduate of Tech) and the Junior League Headquarters in Atlanta.

Travelers--Mercedes and Gladys Buckner have toured Greece, Phil Dow had an extended tour of Germany. Eleanor Morris, Bill and Lee Gibbs went to Sanibel Island, Florida, in mid-May. Several birds were added to their Life Lists--Black-whiskered Vireo, Mangrove Cuckoo, Red-throated Loon in full breeding plumage. Seven Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen floating along in the air together.

We are pleased to report that Jeannine Angerman is at home recovering from the recent two month' bout in the hospital and surgery. She was at Mayo's Clinic for over a month and critically ill part of that time. She was not too ill to add two new birds to her Life List--the Nashville and Wilson's Warblers. (This is the fabric from which good birders are cut--Ed.). Allan Gates is at home recovering from surgery. Marene Snow fell and broke her wrist in the early part of the summer. The Atlanta newsletter says--"Rumor has it that she slipped on a trillium after making ten foot leap from boulder to boulder on the Appalachian Trail." Regardless of how it happened, we hope your wrist is all healed now.

Tom Rial attended the CBC meeting May 10-12 at Hendersonville, N.C. 110 species were seen; 130 birders registered. Six Saw-whet Owls were heard on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Tom's prize was a Golden-winged Warbler--29 warblers were seen for the week-end.

Harriett DiGioia spent the August 9-11 week-end at Rock Eagle 4-H Camp, Eatonton. She reports an abundance of the following adult and immature birds--Bluebird, Pine Warbler, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Chipping Sparrow. Quite a few Eastern Wood Pewees, Green Herons, Rough-winged Swallows and a couple of Barn Swallows were noted. In a willow tree overhanging the lake, a Blue-winged, a Prothonotory and a Yellow Warbler were seen feeding together. A female Wood Duck with five young trailing along behind was enjoyed.

MISCELLANEOUS--Lou Fink needs your help. He is writing a paper on the Fish Crow--which is moving inland. There are now records from St. Louis. Lou wants to know: any inland records of the Fish Crow; details of any inland nests; habitat of bird near water or not--what it was eating. Please send any information to Lou--Apt. 6, Building L, Tau Valley Estates, Rocky Mount, N.C., 27801.

McRae Williams has this reminder--Pocket Check-list of Georgia Birds is available at \$.75 each, postpaid. Sixty pages, 4 x 6 inches. No pictures but ample space for notes and records. Discussion of the status of every bird in Georgia; frequency, season, breeding and area given. (These will be on sale at the fall meeting at Dalton. A most useful addition to your library--Ed.).

Back issues of The Oriole are available at \$.75 each, postpaid, reduced prices for lots of 10 or more. Practically all issues from 1936 are on hand for immediate delivery. Order The Oriole or Check-list from GOS, 755 Ellsworth Dr., Atlanta, GA 30318. Please give complete name and address with zip code.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY - We shall never understand the natural environment until we see it not as just so much air, water, and real estate, but as a living organism.--Paul Brooks

Harriett G. DiGioia, Editor, (Mrs. Frank A.), 1309 Lakemont Drive, Dalton, GA 30720, August 27, 1974.