

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society Vol. II No. 2

THE GOShawk SAYS - A hearty welcome to our new members--Charlotte Sharpe, Sylvania; Carlisle Walker, Rome; Robert Todd (L), Rome; Thomas Patterson, Dublin; Joe Kight, Chattahoochee, Fla.; Florence Geertz, Gainesville; Harry White, Dalton; Selma Erwin, Milledgeville; Georgann Schmalz, Decatur; George Mock, Jr., Mattapoissett, Mass.; Mrs. Earl Williams, Rocky Ford; Mr. and Mrs. John Hinson, Sylvania. Hope you can come to all our meetings--you and GOS will benefit!

Veteran birder, Allan D. Cruickshank died at age 67 on October 11 at Rockledge, Fla. following a short illness. He was a dean of American birders, author of books on birds, teacher at Audubon Camps, lecturer, photographer. At one time, he was president of the Linnæan Society of New York, editor of American Birds and served on the staff of the National Audubon Society for many years.

Trying to think up an unusual and useful Christmas gift--need something for that hard-to-buy for friend or relative? George Dorsey came up with a grand idea at the recent business meeting. Why not give a gift of membership in GOS? This would be a gift that would be in use all year long and benefit both the recipient and GOS. Already have your Christmas shopping done? GOS gift memberships make fine birthday, anniversary and whatever-occasion-is-coming-along presents.

Have you noticed the excellent wild food crop? Here in the North Georgia region, the wild foods are plentiful. Trees are laden with most--beechnuts, acorns, hickory nuts. Persimmon trees hang heavy with fruit--the sun striking the orange balls gives the trees a Japanese lantern effect. Holly, privet, brier, honeysuckle, Hercules Club, sweet gum, sumac berries, drupes, balls are awaiting hungry customers. Dogwood drupes and wild grapes were in abundance--the birds have consumed most of these now. In this winter of spiraling food prices, perhaps it is as well the food crop is very good--it will be costly enough to feed people!

Remember the GOS Guide to Georgia Birding undertaking--Daniel Hana, editor. Write up your favorite birding area--around your home, your farm, a park, that swampy area across town, the fallow field nearby. Include in your write-up, directions for getting to and coming from the site from a central location, type of habitat, parking facilities--if permission is needed, with whom to get in contact. You'll be hearing more about this from your regional vice-president.

ROUND-UP OF GOS NEWS - Thank you Dalton--Cherokee Audubon Society, Dalton Junior College, Natural Science Division for a fine, fine meeting. The week-end went like clock-work--very smooth-running. The weather cooperated, the birds were about, the ridges sang an anthem to the beauties of the autumn season--trees stood out as notes of red, gold, green, brown and tints as yet unnamed. The mountains were clothed in a Joseph's coat of many colors. Bill Jump's slides of local birds were very good--Mr. Joe Taylor's slide narrative was photography extraordinaire.

110 species of birds were recorded--including 25 species of warblers. 106 people registered for the week-end; 115 people were present at the banquet. George Dorsey even put a bird on his Life List - the Dunlin - and this is not easy for him to do in the North Georgia region--usually he has to go further afield for additions.

INTERESTING BIRDS SEEN ON THE FIELD TRIPS - 75 Canada Geese on Shield's Pond; Green-winged Teal (3rd record for Dalton), American Bittern, Dunlin (1st record), Philadelphia Vireo (1st record).

FIRST OF SEASON BIRDS RECORDED - Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Palm Warbler, Vesper Sparrow, Dark-eyed (Slate-Colored) Junco, Swamp Sparrow.

Spring meeting will be in Albany, April 11-13, 1975. We saw the fall migrants coming down the colorful ridges of North Georgia - now we will go to the extreme south of our state and see the spring migrants - dressed in their courting finery - sing their way across the Coastal Plain. Think Albany!

The Oriole will now be published semi-annually as voted on at the business meeting. Do write up that special bird news of yours and send it along to Les Davenport.

BIRD NEWS - The Bird-Watcher - Floyd County Audubon Society - Rome Last summer while he was a nature study instructor at Darlington School Day Camp, George Dorsey and the youngsters twice saw a bird they could not identify--there was nothing like it in the books. At first George thought it might be an escape from an aviary - but later decided it might be an anomalous Gray Catbird. It was the right size and shape and had a Gray Catbird type bill. The bird was a fairly bright yellow color all over, with the exception that it was very slightly darker in the wings and it had a lighter-colored wing-bar.

It was in dense thickets along a stream and there were normal Gray Catbirds about; but, they did not see them together. It gave no call note; but did respond to his "wren scold". George returned to the same place several times, but did not see the bird again.

On the field trip of September 8, half a dozen or so Vesper Sparrows were seen near some open pasture country. Phil Ham saw two White-throated Sparrows September 26--an early date for our area.

George Dorsey had the following tip in the newsletter--"A good field mark of the (immature) Chestnut-sided Warbler is its yellow wing-bars--'golden wing-bars' we used to say". (This tip has been very helpful to me--Ed.)

The Piper - Coastal Georgia Audubon Society - Brunswick - In September, 25 members went to Cumberland Island. At one pond they counted about 50 Wood Storks (Ibis).

(Nov.) Joe King reports small flocks of shorebirds coming in on St. Simons and Sea Islands. He has spotted a sizeable flock of scoters (which species? - Ed.) offshore. In Brunswick, a House Wren and Gray-cheeked Thrush have been spotted.

The House Finch - Henry County Audubon Society - Several members were able to see the Swainson's Thrush which was killed by flying against the picture window of the Alexander Memorial Library last spring. The dead bird was given to a Stone Mountain taxidermist who is working on a display of Georgia birds for the Museum of Natural History in Atlanta.

Albany Audubon Society - (Nov.) - A Black-crowned Night Heron and Wood Stork--summer residents--were last seen by some of our members, October 19. One of the most interesting migrants that has been seen recently is the Greater Yellowlegs. In all, 21 individuals have been noted at four ponds. Recent winter arrivals - Sharp-shinned Hawk, Hermit Thrush have been reported. American Kestrels (Aparrow Hawk) are being seen in our area.

The Fall Line - Ocmulgee Audubon Society - Macon - (Aug.) An immature and an adult Great (Common) Egret, an Osprey, Northern Parula Warbler have been seen at Ocmulgee National Monument (ONM).

On the September 28 field trip to ONM the following birds were noted--Wood Duck, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Pileated Woodpecker, Summer Tanager, Northern Waterthrush, Red-shouldered Hawk. A Swainson's Thrush was seen on October 8 - A dead one was retrieved from a cat, October 11.

An unusual concentration of Mockingbirds was seen at ONM. In an area near the railroad track where some brush had been cut, an estimated 50 birds were seen.

Upper Flint River Audubon Society - Jonesboro - Ken Acree came up with a fine bird sighting for our area, September 1, when he got a good look at a Wood Stork flying over Old Conyers Road, Stockbridge area. Later on, Barbara went out to see the bird, but was never able to locate it. (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, J. Fred Denton, Milton Hopkins, Jr. - A regular summer visitant on coast and in Okefenokee, non-breeding. Casual summer visitant in remainder of state.)

The Marshlander - Ogeechee Audubon Society - Savannah - (July/August) A man staying in a cabin on the Ogeechee River in Bullock County awoke one morning to a wild scrambling noise on the roof. Investigation found ten Black Vultures perched along the ridge of the roof--all staring at him! He wonders why they did not perch on a great dead cypress 100 yards to the rear. This same man awakened on another morning to find a Carolina Wren perched on his head!

Augusta Audubon Society - (Sept.) At the annual picnic wade-in 55 species were recorded. A flock of eight Wood Storks flew high above the rookery. Approximately 800 Cattle Egrets were nesting; about 400 nests counted. 300 White Ibis - by far the largest number ever recorded in this rookery - around 150 nests were counted. Only four Little Blue Herons were seen - no nests sighted. 12 Anhingas flew about--only two nests found. One Green Heron and one nest were spotted; one Wood Duck--no nest and only two Great Egrets with no nest seen.

Elaine Gates, Tom Rial, Gerald Knighton, Ed Case report the following birds seen on field trips. July 7 - 13 White Ibis - two adults, 11 immatures, Cattle Egrets, Great Egret at Farmer's Barn Pond. An immature Barred Owl was seen at the Lock and Dam, Probably the off-spring of the adult seen in the same tree cavity since last February. (Mississippi) Kites were seen at Bush Field - Gerald Knighton discovered a Least Bittern breeding at Swan Pond (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid - Summer resident, breeding commonly on coast and locally throughout most of remainder of state.)

July 27 - several immature White Ibis were seen at the Levee, dead Screech Owl-red phase-was found on road to the Lock and Dam where three Hairy Woodpeckers were seen. On the August 10 trip, an unusual number of Prothonotary Warblers were seen - two males to-

gether at Stink Ditch; five more at the Lock and Dam, indicating migration movement already. (There is a restlessness that takes place among local birds causing them to move about and bunch up before the true migration begins - Ed.). Five Red-tailed Hawks were noted on the road to the Airport - three Red-shouldered hawks were viewed over Kite Field. Formations of Cattle Egrets were seen about 7:00 A.M. leaving their roost and fanning out over the Savannah River bottom pastures to feed. About 500 birds were estimated to be in the flock.

Bill and Lee Gibbs - On the evening of August 13 - decided to look in on the Cattle Egrets seen on August 10. On a small island in Merry Ponds, they saw what looked like a football stadium packed with cheering spectators. The birds were stacked in trees from the lowest branches to the topmost boughs. There appeared to be 2000 Cattle Egrets, about 100 immature White Ibis in the roost trees. 16 Great Egrets fed in the shallows and later flew to the roost.

Fred Denton was pleased to find the American Kestrel breeding in Richmond County this summer. To date it has been an uncommon resident in this part of the state in summertime.

Chattahoochee Valley Natural History Club - Columbus - Columbus birders wrote a new definition for the summer doldrums, it is spelled Good Finds for June, July, August-1974 edition. James Miller, William Matheny have a first record to their credit--three Western Sandpipers Georgia side, Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge (ENWR), August 25.

The following records are reported by James Miller--three adult Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Box Springs Swamp, June 2, 30; adults also seen at Bussey's Lake (BL), May 16, 27, June 26. The latest Pectoral Sandpiper - by eleven days, BL, May 16. On May 25, he found a brood of four young Barn Swallows in an old Phoebe's nest under a bridge on Old River Road - the Barn Swallow was first found nesting locally in 1972. American Redstart, June 1 (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid - Uncommon summer resident, breeding locally in mountains, Piedmont, Upper Coastal Plain south to Blakely. Abundant spring and fall migrant over entire state.) A Snowy Egret was seen at Milgen Lake, August 7, for a third local record. (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid. Common resident near coast, breeding. Rare in summer elsewhere). A pair of Short-billed Marsh Wrens were seen October 2.

William Matheny has these birds to his credit - Mississippi Kite--four at Flint River-Ga. 96, July 19 - first this far north since 1963. First fall record for the Semipalmated Plover - Brookstone, August 2; American Redstart, July 23, August 4. A White-throated Sparrow spent the summer in the forest behind his Armour Road apartment. Yellow Warbler, August 8, Veery, September 8--all time early date; Gray-cheeked Thrush, September 21.

A Least Bittern's nest with four eggs was found on the Georgia side, ENWR, June 2. 15 Least Terns were seen at Lake Oliver (LO), September 27--early by 19 days; a pair of Caspian Terns flew over on September 6 for the sixth local record (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid - Common all year on Coast, non-breeding. Accidental at Columbus. One seen at Lake Lanier, August 18, 1973 - Wally and Jeanne Dreyfoos - The Georgia GOSHawk - Vol. 1 No. 3). A Black-throated Green Warbler was seen, October 3. An immature Bald Eagle has been observed several times this fall at Callaway Gardens. The Observer - Columbus Audubon Society - A number of good finds have been reported by Columbus area birders this summer. The Cattle Egret has become numerous in the Chattahoochee Valley Coastal Plain-William Matheny, James Miller found 150, Georgia side, ENWR, June 8, plus a long flight of 350 at BL, July 22. Also to their credit, singing Black and White Warbler males in Marion County. Sue Chambliss sighted young warblers of this species, Pine Mountain, 1970.

~~Columbus~~
A.S.
William Matheny saw the following birds--Swainson's Thrush, September 13; House Wren, September 18; Gray-cheeked Thrush, September 21; Blue-winged Warbler, September 22 - first fall record since 1968. Two Ospreys, September 28 near the Flint River NE, two Mississippi Kites, August 18 and a Bewick's Wren, September 7--earliest ever.

James Miller checked off these birds - two Ring-necked Ducks summered at Lake Heath instead of the usual one. Purple Gallinule, Georgia side, ENWR June 8; Box Springs, June 2, 30; Lesser Yellow legs, BL, May 17--latest ever; Least Sandpiper, BL, July 14 - earliest ever; 70 Blue-winged Teal, BL, all time high number.

More news from Columbus - Barred Owl, August 5, Weracoba Park; singing male Dickcissel, July 12, Georgia side, ENWR; Scarlet Tanager, September 11 - new early record, Common Loon, October 2, LO, earliest arrival by 14 days; 12 Lesser Scaup, LO, October 7 established new early arrival date; flock of 10 Bonaparte's Gulls, LO, September 27 - early by 19 days; Black Terns - a few along from August 16-September 3; Red-breasted Nuthatch, October 9--only one re-

ported all last winter. A new early arrival date - October 2 for the Hermit Thrush; Orange-crowned Warbler, October 10; White-throated Sparrow, October 20 - said to be the latest date of arrival in area. A member saw three Ovenbirds at his feeder and two flew into his window October 2.

Atlanta Audubon Society - (Sept.) Dick Parks has this for your interest - In 1969 House Wrens nested in the backyard of Mr. and Mrs. R.R. Stubbs on Oakdale Road, Druid Hills. This was the first known record for Atlanta, I do not know of any other records of these birds breeding here. On July 14 (1974), I received a call saying the wrens were again nesting in the Stubbs backyard. This is more interesting than it first appears. The Stubbs moved from the Oakdale address to a Stovall Blvd. One, about 5½ straight line miles away. The wrens nested this year in the yard of the Stovall Blvd. address. Thus, the only two known records to me of House Wrens nesting in the area have been in the Stubbs yard but at different locations. Obviously there must be other nestings which are going unnoticed; because they are in yards of people who do not know the birds are unusual.

(Oct.) In the September bulletin there was an observation of the rarity of House Wrens nesting in the Atlanta area. Harold Strickland, Norcross, has an otherwise note. Around his locality he has seen 10-15 wrens - House and Carolina. Last winter, he played host to as many as 250 Evening Grosbeaks. One pair stayed until May 20 this spring.

(Nov.) An adult Bald Eagle was reported in Hart County near Lake Hartwell. White-rumped Sandpipers were seen in the vicinity of Gainesville (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid - Erratic but not uncommon transient near coast, Rare transient in interior.) A Nashville Warbler was found north of Helen, September 9, by John Swiderski, Terry Moore, Dan Hans. Fall migration in the Atlanta area has produced several reports of Northern Waterthrushs, Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers.

The Dalton Kingfisher - Cherokee Audubon Society - Wood Duck Happenings - these ducks seem to be in goodly number this year. Harriett DiGioia saw 10 - seven male, 3 female - on the East Chickamauga Creek at their farm, October 11. An eclipse plumaged male was present at Thread Mill Lake (TML), October 21 - a female was noted there, November 10. A female was seen on a pond near Dalton around October 11 - three were seen on farm at Westside, Oct. 26.

Woodpecker Peckings - this is the year of the woodpeckers! Each month good reports are received for all species. Especially interesting are the sightings of Red-headed Woodpeckers. One of our members really got into the woodpeckers, October 10 near Villanow. He saw six Red-headed Woodpeckers and saw a Pileated, Red-headed and Downy Woodpecker together in the same tree. Upon returning to the same place, October 17 - four Red-headed and one Downy Woodpeckers were seen. Harriett DiGioia noted an immature Red-headed Woodpecker, September 20 in the woods near her home. On October 25-26 three of these birds - one an immature - were watched on their farm. The birds were harvesting white acorns. Upon obtaining an acorn, the birds would fly to another tree - one Black Walnut seemed to be a favorite - and crack the acorn for feasting. On a jaunt into Walker County on November 9, a member saw 13 Pileated Woodpeckers flying in the same direction. Each bird stopped at the top of the same dead tree, then continued on.

Citified Woodcocks - Woodcocks seem to be going city. Sandy Pangle saw a bird he feels strongly to be a Woodcock, TML, October 14. Harriett DiGioia put up a Woodcock across the street from her home, November 8.

An adult Yellow-crowned Night Heron was perched on a wire in front of a member's home, September 8. On August 6, a member saw six Bewick's Wrens in her yard and feels they were a family group. A Bewick's Wren was noted in a yard on the Dawnville Road (Terry Moore, please take note! - Ed). A bird strongly felt to be a Willow (Traill's) Flycatcher was seen at TML, September 5. Norene Boring saw White-throated Sparrows in her yard, September 13--a very early date; Black-billed Cuckoo, September 28.

Word was received from Ringgold of the sighting of 40-50 Broad-winged Hawks above Taylor's Ridge, Catoosa County, September 20. A Female Blue-winged Teal and Green-winged Teal (2nd record for Dalton) were viewed on a farm in the area, September 18. Sandy Pangle saw a Gadwall, TML, October 27 (HGD). Harry White had a White-crowned Sparrow in his yard, November 3. A Fox Sparrow was seen, November 8.

From Anne Hamilton comes the following sightings - Screech Owl, August 12; Blackburnian Warbler, Northern (Baltimore) Oriole, September 5.

Harriett DiGioia - Veery, Golden-winged, Canada Warblers, September 6; Cerulean Warbler, September 7; Scarlet Tanager, September 8 - early; Blue-winged Warbler, September 13; Wilson's Warbler, September 16 (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid - Rather

scarce spring and fall transient above Fall Line, rare in Coastal Plain. Accidental in winter.); Swainson's Thrush, September 28; Gray-cheeked Thrush, September 30; Marsh Hawk, Grasshopper Sparrow (farm), October 5; Nashville Warbler, October 9; Screech Owl, October 20; House Wren, Solitary Vireo, October 24. A late Magnolia Warbler was seen at their farm, November 1. She had 11 sightings of Golden-winged Warblers; 12 sightings of Canada Warblers this past fall.

Terry Moore writes in - "we found at least one White-fronted Goose on the Altamaha Waterfowl Area just south of Darien, the week-end of October 25-27 (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds-Ibid - Accidental in Richmond County, February, 1891, Tift County, March 17, 1932). There may have been as many as three. Also many - over 1000 - Common Scoters plus at least two Surf and two White-winged Scoters were off Jekyll Island this same week-end."

A bird sighting sent in by Earle Green - "A bird known as the Scaled Pigeon (*Columba speciosa*) was seen and identified by two friends of mine. It was seen at their home almost daily for a week - I missed seeing it. From their description and the painted bird in "Field Guide to Mexican Birds - Peterson and Chalig - I believe it to be this bird. It is also known as Scaly-naped Pigeon, Red-necked Pigeon." (Editor's Note: A Field Guide to the Birds - Roger Tory Peterson - lists this bird in Appendix I--Accidentals--Twice seen at Key West. He gives the species name as *squamosa*.)

Daniel Jacobson gives the following bird report - "I observed three active Red-shouldered Hawk nests - one in Dade, two in Walker County. I have had a Screech Owl around my home (Wildwood) off and on during August and September. Dade County-August 3-six Solitary Sandpipers; August 17--Willet at small pond in cow pasture. The bird stayed one day - photographed; September 28--one Blackpoll Warbler (Editor's Note: Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, Ibid - Common spring and rare fall transient over most of state), Canada Warbler Blackburnian Warbler. Lookout Mountain - Walker County - September 28 - Swainson's Thrush."

"One highlight his fall was a day - September 22 - six hours of observation - spent at High Point Fire Tower, Lookout Mountain, Walker County. One adult Peregrine Falcon, one Sharp-shinned Hawk, one Marsh Hawk, four Red-tailed Hawk, 394 Broad-winged Hawks. Total - 401 hawks. A red-headed Woodpecker was seen that day. All together this fall, we have observed over 1,000 migrating hawks at this tower."

NEWS OF PEOPLE - GOS wishes a belated happy 88th birthday to Earle Greene. Earle sends in the following comments--Joe Taylor now has 717 species on his (Life) List - the 600 Club now has 104 members. Regarding the King Vulture sighting (The Georgia GOSHawk - Vol. II No.1) L.B. Pickren and I searched the area where the aviator said he had seen it. The aviator was to photograph it, but has not done so--this conversation with the aviator was some weeks ago, so there are grave doubts about this bird.

Helene MacNeill journeyed to Expo '74, Spokane, Washington; then on to Jackson Hole, Grand Tetons, Yellowstone. Mr. & Mrs. T.P. Haines enjoyed a trip to Boston and other points of interest in New England. Helen Lisak is off on a six weeks trip to Spain and Africa. Doris Cohrs put together a program - "Know Your Birds" - for eight groups of 4-H boys and girls at Camp Forston this past summer. Louis Schweizer took a full day off from his job to present this program to three groups. Georgine Pindor took a marvelous trip this past summer--attended an International Society for Music Education Conference in Australia. She birded in California, Australia, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Fiji, adding some 50 + birds to her Life List.

Fred Denton taught a course - "Bird Identification Made Easy" at Augusta College this fall. He was assisted on the field trips by Elaine Gates, Lee Gibbs, Tom Rial.

The Montag Company will be using three of Rosalind Clark's wacky and wonderful animal paintings on its note paper - to be sold nationwide. A feature article-complete with pictures-about Rosalind, her painting and other interests was in the Atlanta Journal, November 1.

Tom Rial had eye surgery on September 3. Joy Terhune checked into the hospital, October 27, for surgery. Moselle Williams underwent an operation, September 12. We wish you all a very speedy recovery!

Radio personalities - Eleanor Morris of the Augusta Audubon society was featured on a U.S. Forestry program this past summer. Elbridge Freeborn gave a talk about the Atlanta Audubon Society.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY - Animal Life--What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beast also happens to man. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of earth. Seattle, Dwamish Chieftain (c. 1786-1855)

A Happy Holiday Season - good birding in 1975 - to one and all!

Harriett G. DiGioia, Editor, (Mrs. Frank A.), 1309 Lakemont Drive, Dalton, GA 30720, December 3, 1974