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The Georgia GOShawk

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THE GOShawk SAYS WELCOME! - To the following new members -- Jeffrey Jackson Athens; Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Wilkes, Dublin; Charles Ford, Decatur; Richard Kuerzi, Folkston; Mrs. Gilbert Green, Fitzgerald; Lenn Sisson, Kingston; William Brown, Fitzgerald; Arnold Johnson, Perry; David Loertscher, Austell; and Georgia State University Library, Atlanta.

EDITORIAL COMMENT - All reports from around the state indicated the spring migration through Georgia was off. The only exception was Athens and they felt the migration proceeded as usual. Dalton and Atlanta mentioned smaller numbers of birds, using the terms ripple and trickle instead of wave of migrants. Reports from other areas pointed to a decrease in number of birds.

Many causative agents could bring about this trend. A glance at the weather patterns over the state reveal exceptionally fine weather with few major fronts moving through Georgia. Dry weather prevailed -- Dalton, at least, experienced fewer thunderstorms than usual. Good weather does not portend good birding. With no bad weather to set the birds down, perhaps they simply overflowed the state; making a beeline for areas to the north.

Birds may have rippled rather than waved through Georgia, but that doesn't mean we lack news. Significant finds were found. Audubon's Shearwater and a shearwater of the Manx/Audubon type sailed the winds off our coast -- Phalaropes rode the waves of our offshore water. White Pelicans - 160 of them - cruised over the Georgia side of the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge.

Atlanta had a House Finch explosion -- one male was singing in the Atlanta area on June 5. Pendergrass and Athens report House Finches also. (Remember Dalton and Columbus attracted these birds back during the winter).

Olive-sided Flycatchers were sighted in Atlanta and Murray County - a Double-crested Cormorant showed up in Atlanta.

Whistling Swans were on the Savannah River National Wildlife Refuge; a Purple Gallinule floated on the waters of a lake in Whitfield County. Upland Sandpipers were in Seminole County and Atlanta; Bank Swallows darted after insects above Atlanta. A Louisiana Heron was at Ft. Gaines. Savannah turned up Stilt Sandpipers, Wilson's and Northern Phalaropes, Western Tanager, and Bald Eagle. Ospreys were well represented throughout Georgia -- a Sandhill Crane was seen in winter below Columbus; several migrating flocks were sighted to complete this inventory of unusual/interesting birds of late winter and spring in Georgia.

ROUND-UP OF GOS NEWS -- You did it Fitzgerald and you did a bang-up job! Many thanks go to all involved in making our Spring 1977 meeting a success. Milton and Mary Hopkins along with daughter, Carol; William and Mandy Dopson; Eugene and Myrtle Harper deserve a vote of thanks for putting on a great meeting.

The weather cooperated and so did the birds -- 109 species recorded. Attendance was good - about 70 members registered.

Wilson Baker's slide presentation "Aspects of the Life History of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers" was timely -- we were in Red-cockaded country! The delicious barbecue dinner sure hit the spot after a day in the field pursuing birds. "Ecological Aspects of the Galapagos Islands," a slide narrative by Dr. David W. Johnston was most stimulating. He paid tribute to George Dorsey for starting him out at Boy Scout Camp on the ornithological/natural sciences path.

Birds of note listed on the field trips -- Snowy Egret\*, Swallow-tailed\* and Mississippi\* Kites, Sharp-shinned Hawks\*, Bald Eagle\*, Sora, Barred Owl, 18 species of warblers, including six plus Cape Mays feeding in the pecan trees at count-down and Bachman's Sparrow.

Fall meeting -- at Brunswick - October 14-16, 1977. Headquarters - Ramada Inn on Glynn Avenue. Another pelagic trip is being scheduled. Remember the passage of a hurricane along the coast scrubbed out the one planned at the Jekyll Island meeting in 1975. Election of officers will be held. Put a ring around that weekend and let's have a great coastal birding weekend. See you there!

The Revised Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds is at the printers and hopefully will be ready for the fall meeting. Price \$2.00 per copy -- a good bargain as you'll ever find! Be sure to get your copy.

BIRD NEWS -- An asterisk following the name of a bird denotes it is listed as rare, scarce, uncommon, casual, etc., for that particular area/season in the Pocket Check-list Georgia Birds, J. Fred Denton, Milton Hopkins, Jr. Editor's notes are taken from this book unless otherwise stated.

Abbreviations used in this newsletter - National Wildlife Refuge - NWR; River - R; Lake - L; Island - Is; County - Co; Mountain - Mtn; Creek - Cr; Fort - Ft.; Common-Com.; immature - im; Audubon Society - AS.

THE OBSERVER - COLUMBUS AS -- Owl sightings have been fairly common around the area. A Great Horned Owl\* is being cared for at Callaway Gardens after falling from a tree. Screech Owls are easily heard most nights in woodlands in and around Columbus -- Barred Owls have been sounding off in Harris Co. (HCo).

Purple Martins came in on February 21. One of our members said the martins were so eager this year they sat on a clothesline while he put up gourds for them. He goes on to say while fishing at Rood Cr. recently, he saw a Great Egret\* land on (deep) water a couple of times, like a duck, and then fly into a pine tree. Lesser Scaup, Redhead\*, Canvasback\*, Ring-billed Gull were at Cooper Cr. Park (CCP) during the cold spell - April issue.

On March 4, at 6:00 p.m., Sam Pate flushed a dozen Bob-white in a HCo woodland. As the Bob-white flew, a female Wood Duck erupted from a hole in a big dead pine; followed closely by a squirrel. A male Wood Duck then landed beside her on a limb. The pair searched about 15 minutes for possible nesting sites in other dead trees. They emitted almost overlooked high squeaks, apparently remaining in contact in the woods.

Last spring over in E. Georgia, a man came running in yelling, "I got hit on the head by a duck" to the landowner. Young Wood Ducks were jumping from a hole 40 feet up in a big tree. With no water nearby, the owner caught 12 young and the hen. Nine young died, plus the hen, in an attempt to "raise them" in a cage. The ducks should have been transported to a pond for release. (This upholds my theory, young birds should be left alone unless they are in desperate need of help. Wood Ducks do nest appreciable distances from water. - Ed.)

We have a report of a Carolina Wren that roosts with its face toward the wall while sitting in the center of a mop. Perhaps to a predator, the rear end of a Carolina Wren will not look too inviting. Another member mentions that her resident Carolina Wren "turns in" about an hour before dark and "gets up" 15 minutes after the break of day.

For our May 21 field trip we toured the famous Red-cockaded Woodpecker areas at Ft. Benning. Going on down to the rookery north of Ft. Gaines, we found nesting Anhinga, Great Egret\*, Cattle Egret; Little Blue Heron; Purple and Com. Gallinule.

Interesting sightings in and around Columbus -- Yellow-throated Vireo (V), Prothonotary Warbler (W) March 29; Yellow-billed Cuckoo March 30; Red-eyed V, Prairie W March 31; E. Wood Pewee, Ovenbird April 2; Kentucky W, N. Oriole\* April 3.

Jane Knight checks off these birds -- Singing Hermit Thrush, Hooded W, Palm W, Summer Tanager April 5.

More records -- Chuck-wills-widdow April 6; Worm-eating W April 7; Pileated Woodpecker April 12; Rose-breasted Grosbeak April 23.

Bill Matheny records this list -- three Blue-winged W April 30; Wilson's W\* May 2, Sharp-shinned Hawk\* in mid-April; Short\*-and long-tailed\* Marsh Wrens May 5.

April 28 at Goat Rock Dam these warblers were noted - Cerulean\*, Black-poll, Chestnut-sided, Blackburnian. A Worm-eating W has been singing for weeks in HCo. (This would be an interesting far south nesting record.-Ed.)

Sam Pate saw eight Upland Sandpipers\* in a pasture in Seminole Co. (SCo) March 24. Next day the number rose to 11. They left over the next several days. On April 24, he observed 10 Upland Sandpipers\* in SCo. He also heard a Whip-poor-will March 29 and he and three others saw at least 160 White Pelicans gliding over Eufaula NWR(ENWR) the afternoon of April 28. The massive birds leisurely flew over the Georgia side of the refuge before disappearing along the Chattahoochee R (CR). (Editor's Note -- Rare spring, fall visitor on coast, of casual occurrence at four interior localities).

Pectoral Sandpipers were seen near Bainbridge in April and a Bachman's Sparrow has been observed in the area -- May issue.

CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY NATURAL HISTORY CLUB - COLUMBUS -- Nest-building activities of a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks were observed March 5 at CCP. After seeing the hawks and viewing many other species, just as the three observers were leaving, one of them spied one of these beautiful predators eating a squirrel.

Sightings for our area include -- Louisiana Waterthrush HCo March 15; Wood Thrush and Solitary Vireo\* HCo March 19. James Miller jotted down these birds -- Black-throated Green W - early - March 14 (Editor's Note -- Georgia Birds, Thomas D. Burleigh - March 24, 1921 - Athens); Com. Loons\* January 22 and February 2, L West Point (LWP); Black and White W February 1; 250 Bonaparte's Gulls\*, LWP, February 6.

Sam Pate saw 27 Whistling Swans\* at Savannah R NWR March 19. Am. Redstarts and Black-throated Blue W were bathing in a member's sprinkler April 10. Sue Chambliss had a N. Parula W in her backyard March 29.

THE FALL LINE -- OCMULGEE AS - MACON -- Two Sora\* were seen just south of Macon March 13. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are nesting - the gnatcatchers were seen building on April 3 at Ocmulgee National Monument. A Red-headed Woodpecker stopped at a feeder in April. T. P. Haines heard a Great-crested Flycatcher April 20. An Osprey\* has been fishing in area waters and two E. Bluebirds were at L. Wildwood.

Hundreds of Bobolinks have been in the area. A member taped the songs of these birds as they congregated on his front lawn. Blue Grosbeak, Orchard Oriole, an im. Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-throated W; Yellow-breasted Chat, Blackpoll W have been listed in our area.

THE ALBANY LIMPKIN - ALBANY AS -- Cindy and Jim Parsons put up a bird house three years ago. Their list of tenants has been a Screech Owl first year, Com. Flicker second year, Flying Squirrel last year. (Wonder who'll get squatter's rights this year? - Ed.)

A Barn Owl\* has been hanging around the hangers at the old Turner Air Force Base. Ann Gordon gives up some late departing dates -- Dark-eyed Junco, Chipping and White-throated Sparrows March 29, plus a large assemblage of Cedar Waxwings in her yard. She noted seven - eight White Ibis\* in south Dougherty Co March 15 and Com. Snipe, Snowy\* and Cattle Egrets, Belted Kingfisher, Little Blue Heron, same area, March 30.

Rip Holman saw an E. Kingbird March 29 and late-departing Yellow-rumped W and Purple Finches March 30. He and Ann Gordon found a Louisiana Heron\* at Ft. Gaines March 31. An Osprey\* has been near Windsor Park School.

Herschell Sessions visited the Albany area and with Rip Holman went to Wilderness Pond seeing nesting Black-crowned Night Heron\*, Great Blue Heron, Anhinga.

THE BIRD-WATCHER - FLOYD CO. AS - ROME -- Jim Colehour has been feeding birds at his place quite a while. Some of his best clients are the Brown-headed Nuthatches. They gather up and wait for him to put seed out. One actually lit on top of Jim's head recently in its eagerness to eat!

Phil Ham went out to the blackbird roost and reports it is still active (please see Vol. 4, No. 3, Page 4 this newsletter for a write-up. - Ed.) He also raises this interesting speculation. On March 10 there was a large number of Purple Finches at his feeder. By March 11 most were gone. Come the 16th a large number gathered again, staying till March 24, after which they came no more. Phil wonders if the second batch might have been birds migrating through - the original flock having pulled out for northern areas. George Dorsey noted a male Purple Finch at his feeder March 28.

Our April 17 field trip to Hall's L and Morrison Camp Ground yielded 32 species, including -- Green Heron, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Wood Thrush, E. Bluebird, Black-throated Blue W, Orchard Oriole, Indigo Bunting, White-throated and Song Sparrows.

ATLANTA AS -- A field trip to Cumberland Is. National Seashore in March turned up 79 species. Some of the most interesting birds were -- White-winged Scoter\*, Wilson's Plover, Am. Oystercatcher, Cooper's Hawk\*, Sharp-shinned Hawk\*, N. Parula W, Solitary V.\*

Perhaps the most exciting bird news of the season for the Atlanta area is the explosion of House Finches. Vaughn Morrison and Terry Moore found a pair in a field near Pendergrass. A pair have been coming to a feeder in Dunwoody; Don and Doris Cohrs report 25 plus birds coming regularly to their feeder in East Point and the McDonough population is reported to be 30 plus birds. (Editor's Note -- not yet on Check-list but will undoubtedly appear on forthcoming list; being seen in increasing numbers in state.)

February 12 a group of Atlanta birders, Terry Moore, Vaughn Morrison, Joe Greenberg, et. al., chartered two boats for a successful pelagic trip 50 miles out from Savannah. Birds found included -- Audubon's Shearwater-1; shearwater\* of the Manx/Audubon type; Gannet-50-75 (some within 75 feet of the boats), Phalarope\*sp.-6; Parasitic Jaeger\*-1 (right over one of the boats); unidentified jaeger\*-2 (instead of a UFO - it is a UFJ - Ed.) Razorbill-50. The Razorbills were found in small flocks - three - five - and almost always accompanied by a single Bonaparte's Gull\*. Details of these observations will appear in the Oriole. The following day at Savannah Beach the same group observed Red-throated Loon-6 and Purple Sandpiper-2. Not a bad weekend! (Editor's Note -- Razorbills and Audubon's Shearwaters are listed as accidentals. The Razorbill off Tybee Is. December 19, 1967 - specimen. Audubon's Shearwater on Little Cumberland Is., Camden Co., July 25, 1966-specimen. The Razorbills and shearwater were briefly mentioned in Vol. IV, No. 3, Page 7, this newsletter. Remember - we need material like this written up for the Oriole. Please write up your unusual sightings for inclusion in this permanent/official record).

Olive-sided Flycatchers\* appeared at two locations - at John Ward Swamp (JWS) seen by Vaughn Morrison May 7 and at Emory University's President's Estate (EPE) on May 16 by Louisa Echols. (Same bird? Please see Editor's note under Dalton news - Ed.) A Double-crested Cormorant was spied at Murphy Candler Park May 13, viewed by many observers. (Editor's Note -- ...Scarce transient and winter resident in interior).

Terry Moore ticks off these birds -- back in December - on the 26th he and the Oglethorpe University Bird Class saw Brewer's Blackbirds\* and a single Sandhill Crane in Georgia near E NWR. (Editor's Note -- not generally recorded in winter outside Okefenokee NWR). First Purple Martin report - 10 of them at L Acworth March 5; a Red Crossbill\* flew over his parking lot in Marietta March 16 and one flew over his home in Cobb Co.- June issue. Another member reports one at a feeder March 5. Also Cerulean W\* April 10; Laughing Gull\* Georgia side E NWR April 17. Along with Vaughn Morrison he saw 10 Upland Sandpipers\* April 2 at the Honor Farm.

Jeff Petite started the Upland Sandpiper\* sightings on April 1 with several being seen through April 9. Vaughn Morrison carefully studied a Cooper's Hawk\* at CR March 13. In early March, Black Duck, Gadwall, Blue-winged Teal, Am. Wigeon\*-up to 10, N. Shoveler\* along with Wood Duck, Ring-necked Duck were observed by Wally Dreyfoos, Joe Greenberg, Eileen Hutcheson along the CR south of Roswell. Wally also tells of a Red-breasted Merganser\* near his home March 5.

Two early Ospreys\* were recorded in late February; King Rails were in evidence at JWS March 12 according to Joe Greenberg. Joel Volpi watched three Sandhill Cranes\* go over Lawrenceville February 23 - early. We have two more reports of Sandhill Cranes\* - one flock flying over Yerkes Field Station March 22, seen by Doris Cohrs and another group observed by Joel and Vicki Volpi near the Shakerag Community March 23 - both late dates.

Jean and Pat Bevis give us one of the few Red-breasted Nuthatch sightings - one in their yard in early March.

Vince and Trina Jackson; Don and Doris Cohrs tell of seeing a flock of 10 Cattle Egrets at Regional Hospital April 3. A rail was reported at JWS that calls exactly like the Clapper Rail *o* the Peterson record. King Rails are in the swamp and their typical call was heard for comparison. Late dates are given for Green-winged Teal on April 11 by Joel and Vicki Volpi and a flock of 13 Hooded Mergansers April 9 by Jeff Petite and Terry Moore.

An early Barn Swallow was spotted by Joel Volpi on March 23 (Editor's Note -- earliest recorded date for state March 20, 1974 at Dalton); Prothonotary W by Mary Anne Neville, Mary Ann Vernocy; N. Waterthrush by Eileen Hutcheson April 9.

Migrants and summer residents moving through and into the area include -- Am. Bittern, Broad-winged Hawk, Virginia Rail\*, Sora\*, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Whip-poor-will, Tree\* Swallow, Yellow-throated V; Warblers - Swainson's (Don and Doris Cohrs), Worm-eating, Yellow, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky; Scarlet and Summer Tanagers.

At JWS a Yellow-crowned Night Heron\* and Black-billed Cuckoo\* were seen on April 24 by Larry and Pat Thompson. Along the CR on May 9, Bank Swallows\* were carefully observed feeding with Rough-winged Swallows. Dick Parks mentions seeing a Gray-cheeked Thrush\* in Piedmont Park for one of the few reports this spring May 13.

Louisa Echols at EPE gives us these finds -- Nashville W\* April 27, 28; Lincoln's Sparrow\* April 28. Billy Russell found a Canada W there on May 1. A N Oriole was perched on Hasting's Garden Center April 28 (That bird knows where the eats are! - Ed.) Up near Clayton, John Swiderski carefully scrutinized a Henslow's Sparrow\* April 23, 24.

AUGUSTA AS -- Clarence Belger has been birding, recording these finds -- Whip-poor-will at his Clark Hill (CH) place on March 14 - early date. (Editor's Note - Georgia Birds, Ibid - March 19, 1922 - Atlanta. Can winter in extreme south Georgia). On March 14 he heard a Long-eared Owl calling; March 20 Tree Swallows\* and a good flock of scaup on Swan Pond. 300 Cattle Egrets were at Merry Pond (MP) April 14, an Osprey\* was watched at Farmer's Pond, plus a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and he has a Red-shouldered Hawk nest under surveillance -- two large young can be seen. A Comorant (Double-crested) was seen April 24 on a farm pond near CH.

Gerald Knighton and Clarence found a hen Wood Duck with six fledglings crossing the road near CH April 24. This was about 1-1/2 miles from water. April 22, Clarence parked his car at MP to bird. While he was gone a Carolina Wren started nest construction between the headlight and radiator. He had no choice but to drive away with the partially built nest! (That's a great incubator! - Ed.)

On March 10 an Anhinga was seen at MP - early date. Run-down of field trips - March 26 - Chimney Swift - early; Hawks - Sharp-shinned\*, Red-tailed-5, Red-shouldered-1. April 9- White-crowned\* and White-throated Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, King Rail, Black-crowned Night Heron\*. April 23 - Cape May W., Painted Bunting, Solitary and Spotted Sandpiper, Long-billed Marsh Wren, N. Waterthrush.

A Red-tailed Hawk hurdled through the windshield of a Cessna 150, flying over Atlanta's Perimeter Mall at about 1,800 feet on April 14. The pilot and an instructor were aboard -- one of the men sustained a broken nose and was knocked unconscious by the impact. He stated he did not see the hawk approaching.

THE MARSHLANDER - OGEECHEE AS - SAVANNAH -- During the final days of the long hard winter, some out-of-range birds flew into our territory brightening an otherwise bleak birding season. From February 24-27, two of our members hosted a female Western Tanager (its distinctive wing bars clearly distinguishing it from the similar female Summer Tanager). The tanager's four-day sojourn afforded friends and neighbors the opportunity to add a western species to their Georgia lists. (Editor's Note - Accidental in Grady Co., November 11, 1954 and at Warner Robins, December - March 18, 1956 - specimens. Others have been seen around the state since the checklist was printed.) This same couple also enjoyed a visit by White-crowned Sparrows\* - White-crowns\* were found at the Corp of Engineers Savannah R Spoil Site March 3.

By March 27, the tell-tale signs of Spring were evident: The 100 Am. Avocets\* frequenting the Savannah R. delta had molted into breeding plumage and Louisiana and Yellow-crowned Night Herons were sporting nuptial plumes. Many wintering species postponed migration perhaps anticipating the freak spring blizzards which would grip the north: Mallards and Blue-winged Teal were found May 7 on the Corps property - Savannah Sparrows remained in the area.

The Least Terns which have nested the past five years on the spoil banks created by the Corps were late in returning this year (April 22). Nesting is now in progress (May 27) with over 112 active nests dispersed throughout a four-mile stretch paralleling the Back R. Unfortunately, over 90 nests have been destroyed by dredging activity -- spoil has been pumped over an area containing 60+ nests and vehicular activity decimated the rest. Pressure to maintain a navigable harbor precludes any possibility of halting dredging for the nesting period. In one sense the terns profited from the dredging: The sandy spoil banks are ideal nesting habitat, whereas the original fresh water marsh was not.

Black-necked Stilts\* (over 120) are also nesting on Corps property. So far neither stilts or terns have hatched young (May 27), but the forecast is good for the stilts which have selected a remote nest site. Predators (mainly racoons and rats) are adding to the obstacles facing the tern colonies, but 100-200 Least Terns will probably fledge successfully.

Birds in transit this spring on the delta include a Wilson's Phalarope\* (May 7); Stilt Sandpipers\*-11; (May 5-7); Solitary Sandpipers (May 1-7); Bald Eagles\*-2 ad. (April 17) and a Northern Phalarope\* seen by Laine Lanier and another observer May 22.

THE KINGFISHER - CHEROKEE AS - DALTON -- Delano Crowe and Harry White on Spring Count Day, May 7, got the third area record for a Purple Gallinule\* at Haig Mill L (Editor's Note -- Common but local summer resident in Lower Coastal Plain, occasionally at Augusta and Macon. Casual elsewhere). They also saw a Loggerhead Shrike impale a snake on a red oak twig at Gobbler's Knob March 20. On April 10, they noted two warblers - Prothonotary and Blackburnian.

David Crowe found an Am. Bittern April 11 by seeing its reflection in the water of a pond near his home. Harry White logs a Cerulean W\* in his yard April 7 and three Pine Siskins in his yard April 13 for the second area report of the season.

Anne Hamilton and Grace Boddiford watched an Osprey\* at Thread Mill Lake (TML) March 27. Anne and Harriett DiGioia had the pleasure of watching an Osprey\* catch a fish at the National Fish Hatchery Cohutta April 12. The bird soared in graceful circles, looking intently at the water with head bent downward. When last seen the Osprey was flapping across a meadow with a Com. Crow in hot pursuit. In mid-flight the Osprey changed the fish's position - from sideways to head first, thus lessening the wind resistance. Continuing with Anne's birds - Red-headed Woodpecker April 23; N. Oriole April 28; Swainson's Thrush May 3.

Wyatt Bruce found these birds -- Hooded Warbler April 7; a male and female Blue-winged Teal, TML, May 16--rather late; two Least Sandpipers in a low, marshy pasture, Murray Co. (MCo). Harriett DiGioia - Am. Red-start April 3 (Editor's Note -- Georgia Birds, Ibid April 6, 1894 - Atlanta); Rose-breasted Grosbeak, MCo, April 16; Blackpoll, Worm-eating W, Carter's Dam, MCo, April 20; Black-throated Blue W, Jack's River, MCo, April 23; Gray-cheeked Thrush\*, Veery\* May 14. Frank McCamey and Harriott heard an

Acadian Flycatcher, MCo., April 24. Norene Boring heard an Orchard Oriole April 11.

Miscellaneous sightings in and about Dalton -- Field trip of April 17 - Blue winged W. Spring Count - May 7 - Lesser Yellowleg, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Canada W. A member reports the sighting of 20 Sandhill Cranes\* passing low and silently over her home March 22. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was seen around Coral Honeysuckle April 3 - one was reported two days earlier from MCo. A Red-headed Woodpecker was at a stump feeder April 1. Two White-crowned Sparrows\* were in an area yard April 27.

Grassy Mountain find -- Irma and Jim Colehour, Mabel Faulkner, Anne Hamilton, Wyatt Bruce, Harriett DiGioia, while censusing the birds for the U. S. Forest Service on the Songbird Management Area, Lake Conasauga, Grassy Mtn., MCo, found an Olive-sided Flycatcher - first record - May 15. The flycatcher was sitting on a branch at the top of a large dead tree in a cut-over area, giving forth its "Hic-three-beers!" song. (Editor's Note -- Rare transient, recorded in Clarke, Fulton, Grady, Lumpkin Counties.) Other first-of-season birds for this area - May 8 - two Magnolia W; Blackburnian W, Chestnut-sided W.

ENWR REPORT -- (This refuge embraces the Georgia-Alabama state line. Unless stated to have been seen in Georgia, all sightings are listed under this special section - Ed.) Short-eared Owl, two Barn Owls March 1; freshly killed Upland Sandpiper, plus five more in a huge pasture Hwy 165 near ENWR March 24; Sora, Blue-winged Teal; im. Bald Eagle May 8.

LETTERS -- Both letters concern House Finch sightings - Harriet Moeur writes from Athens - "My husband and I saw quite a number of House Finches\* at our feeder over a period of almost two months. The first female was seen January 23, returning frequently every day. The first male was seen January 31. We kept on seeing House Finches frequently until March 16. We saw as many as three females at one time as well as two adult males and one male which was much paler red so we assumed he was immature - thus, a minimum of six birds were frequenting our feeder. Many times they were there along with Purple Finches, but many times there were no Purple Finches present."

Doris Cohrs writes - "We still have one male House Finch in our neighborhood. As a matter of fact, he has serenaded us all day today (June 5). I wish I knew if he is alone or protecting a nesting territory."

She continues - "Birdwise, six of us spent Memorial Day weekend (May 27-30) at Jekyll Is. and came up with the following goodies: Magnificent Frigatebird\*, Great Blue Heron (White Morph.); Budgerigars-4; Gray Kingbird\*. In and around the Altamaha Wildlife Management Area we found many Least Bitterns, Purple Gallinule, White-rumped Sandpipers, White-crowned Sparrow\*.

Anne Hamilton passes on the following news from Sylvania - Grace Boddiford has a Painted Bunting nesting in a shrub right outside her home. On June 15, she noted the nest and saw it was not yet complete. She saw the female carrying coarse grass that day; the next morning the bird was carrying finer grass. Grace watched as the female hunkered down and molded the nest to her body. The first egg was seen on June 17 - on the 21st there were four eggs. A male Painted Bunting was seen singing on territory twice and once he flew almost to the nest.

A Barn Owl\* thought to have been road-killed was brought in to Grace - Ann was there too - on June 25. It had been found a couple of days previously. A Red-cockaded Woodpecker\* flew through Grace's yard the weekend of June 24-26. Two reports of Wood Ibis\* have been received. Julius Ariail (Grace's son-in-law) saw a flock of eight to ten in Screven Co. Elizabeth Lee caught sight of what she feels was a Western Kingbird\* at her home June 14. She identified the bird with the aid of binoculars and bird guide.

Wyatt, Jerrilynn and Stephanie Bruce went down Thomasville way. On May 1, Wyatt racked up these birds - Great Blue Heron-10; Snowy Egret\*-8; Cattle Egret-12; White Ibis\*-8; Loggerhead Shrike-8; Palm Warbler-1; Yellow Warbler-10; Carolina Wren on nest with eggs. He found another wren sitting on a nest and feels it was a Bewick's Wren. His father said a "different-looking" wren was incubating in an outbuilding. The nest was wedged back into a tight corner.

NEWS OF PEOPLE -- Our sympathies are extended to Maibelle Dickey Hodgins in the death of her mother, Mrs. Eugene Dickey, June 10, 1977 and to Anne P. Hamilton and Grace P. Boddiford in the death of their brother, Mr. Milas P. Pieffer of Screven Co. May 27.

SPEAKERS AND TEACHERS -- Frank McCamey was the banquet speaker at the Tennessee Ornithological Society's Chattanooga Chapter, presenting a program on hawks. Joel and Vicki Volpi traveled down Columbus way to present a program on hawks. T. P. Haines went up to Dalton to speak at the Cherokee Audubon Society's annual banquet - "Around The World in Eighty Birds." Sam Pate gave the June program for the Albany AS.

Joe Greenberg taught an adult Beginning Ornithology Course at the Chattahoochee Nature Center - Vaughn Morrison taught a course - Georgia Birds: Their Habits and Habitats at Oglethorpe University.

AWARDS -- Mary Ann Neville was named Wildlife Conservationist of the year by the Georgia Wildlife Federation for her educational work in the restocking of the red wolf in South Carolina. Kent Mitchell in his column "The Gear Locker," appearing in The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, April 24, 1977, told of Mary Ann's award.

More names in print -- Celestine Sibley in her column of May 22, 1977, in The Atlanta Journal and Constitution wrote about Elbridge and Katherine Freeborn and his knowledge of gardening; raising the question whether the Carters should have a garden patch at the White House.

The Atlanta Journal and Constitution Magazine, March 27, 1977, carried an interesting, well-written article, "Snow White Comes Visiting From Canada" by Maibelle Dickey Hodgins. Maibelle wrote about the partial albino female Evening Grosbeak feeding with all the other Evening Grosbeaks at her feeder. A nice photograph by Maibelle graced the article. (This article referred to the winter of 1975-76; not last winter - Ed.)

Tom Collum and a building he designed, the solar-heated Shenandoah Recreation Center, were written up in The Atlanta Journal and Constitution Magazine for April 17, 1977. Tom's picture appeared with the article. Travelers -- Bill Terrell wrote about his trip to Texas, March 25 - April 9 with stops at Anahuac, Aransas, Laguna, Atascosa and other places. 157 species were sighted, 33 of them lifers. His list included - Hooded and Lichtenstein's Orioles; Swainson's, Harris' and White-tailed Hawks; White-tailed Kite; Whooping Crane; Elf Owl.

Byron and Myrtle Eberhart returned from their trip to the west. Birds seen included - Harris' Hawk, Chachalaca, Whooping Crane-27; Inca Dove; Curve-billed Thrasher, Black-headed Oriole.

Howard Joyce led the Coastal Georgia ASers on a field trip to St. Mark's NWR and Wakulla Springs. Limpkins, Osprey, Pintail were among the birds enjoyed.

Sue Chambliss is recovered from surgery and left April 24 for a month in England.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY -- In the Blue Ridge, when the sun beats hard against a blacktop road in summer or against a bank of moss or the bark of a tree in midwinter, there are those who say that the "witch water is rising." There are unfortunate others who never see the tremulous wisps of heated air that dance above the surface. How To Talk To Birds - Richard C. Davids.

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