

The Georgia GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society, Vol. VI., No. 1

September 30, 1978

THE GOShawk SAYS --- A BIG "HELLO" to these new members -- Terry Johnson, Forsyth; Sheila and James Burke, Jonesboro; Mr. & Mrs. Aldon Annis, Smyrna; Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Iannuzzi, Atlanta; Mrs. Champ Vance, St. Simons Island; Donald Charbonneau, Jesup.

EDITORIAL COMMENT -- Late spring-summer 1978 - bird sightings were average to a little above average for the long hot Georgia summer. After a rather poor migration, birds settled into breeding chores and some rewarding sightings were made.

Headlines were Wilson's Phalaropes at Pendergrass, along with White-rumped and Western Sandpipers. Late Sandhill Cranes were viewed at Lake Notteley; the only Olive-sided Flycatcher was reported from Atlanta; Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was noted at Columbus.

Two Wilson's Warblers -- one from Atlanta in spring and an early fall sighting from the Cohutta Ranger District, Murray County, come to our attention. Atlanta gives us two Connecticut Warblers and a Mourning Warbler - House Finches lingered at Atlanta feeders, evidence of nesting comes from Stone Mountain and Atlanta.

GOSers in Columbus record an apparent increase in White Ibis in South Georgia; Swallow-tailed Kites were watched in the sky over Waycross and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Dickcissels at Augusta and a Western Tanager in July on the Cohutta Ranger District, Gilmer County, put the finishing touches on bird news for our state.

ROUND-UP OF GOS NEWS -- Meeting to be at Columbus October 13, 14, 15. Quotation from a letter to the editor from Randy Barlow, Cochran; one of the four students Dr. Lovejoy chose from his ornithology class for gift membership in GOS. "When I got your last newsletter (or should I say our last newsletter) I couldn't believe that Dr. Lovejoy has chosen to give me membership in GOS. I was pleased and excited. . . .

"I am going to try my best to make it to the regular fall meeting in October. I may be working. But I will participate in GOS. I am proud to be a member!!!" (Isn't that great? This is what we need in GOS! A committee -- Bobby Crawford, Frank McCamey, Don Cohrs, Harriett Di Gioia* has been formed to come up with ideas to interest young people in GOS. If you have a brainstorm on this subject, let one of the committee know. Randy proves the interest is there -- how do we reach young people? Get your thinking caps on and let's have some input - Ed.)

The Articles of Incorporation for GOS had to be filed at Dalton. Warren Coppedge, local lawyer, handled the legal aspects. This action carries a fee. Warren waived the fee "in honorarium of George Dorsey of Rome." He had been a student of George's at the Darlington School and wished to show his gratitude and respect for this outstanding teacher.

BIRD NEWS -- An asterisk following the name of a bird denotes it is listed as occasional, rare, uncommon, casual for that particular area/season in the Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, J. Fred Denton. Editor's notes are taken from this book.

Abbreviations used in this newsletter -- Audubon Society - AS; National Wildlife Refuge - NWR; adult-ad; immature-im; male-m; female-f; river-R; Lake-L; Creek-Cr; Island-Is; Mountain-Mtn; Fort-Ft; County-Co; Common-Com; American-Am; Warbler-W; Eastern-E; Northern-N.

ATLANTA AS - The seventh annual Fernbank Migration Watch, 10 consecutive Sunday mornings of birding the forest at Fernbank Science Center, turned up a total of 92 species; one more than last spring. During the seven years of this watch, 128 species have been seen/heard. Three new species were added -- Great Blue Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, N. Waterthrush. GOSers taking part were Elbridge Freeborn, publicity; leaders Dan and Ann Forster, Joe Greenberg, Eileen Hutcheson, Vince and Trina Jackson, Vaughn and Beth Morrison, Billy Pulliam, Terrill Soules, Mary Ann Vernocy. Don and Doris Cohrs once again coordinated the walks.

* ANITA PARKER

Field Notes -- Total number of species for May was 141, including 32 species of warblers. Clearly the most interesting birds of the month were the Wilson's Phalaropes* discovered in numbers at Wayne's Poultry Plant (WPP) near Pendergrass May 5 by Joel and Vicki Volpi. Terry Moore enjoyed 18 of them plus some 50 White-rumped Sandpipers* - same date. Word spread, numerous birders saw the phalaropes that weekend; a f stayed around till May 13. Largest number counted was 20 May 6 by Joel. (Editor's Note - Rare spring and fall transient on coast in April and 4 August (1968) - 23 September (1959-specimen); accidental in interior at Atlanta 30 July (1971); Augusta 1 June (1975 photograph), 13-16 September 1962; Eufaula NWR (ENWR) 13 April (1975).

Other species of Shorebirds seen at WPP include Semipalmated Plover*, Com. Snipe, Sandpipers - Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral, Least, Semipalmated, Western* (Editor's Note - Common permanent resident on coast 27 July (1928-specimen) - 4 June (1957); rare fall transient interior.) Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and a nice Dunlin* in breeding plumage were listed. (No dates given for these sightings - Ed.)

In the same location Cliff* and Bank* Swallows, White-crowned Sparrow* May 7; two Black Terns*, Little Blue Heron, Osprey*, May 13.

The most interesting heron observation was the discovery of a small group of Yellow-crowned Night Herons* in the Shakerag area May 7 by Joel Volpi. As many as three of these beautiful herons were seen by Jeff Petit May 31. Am Bitterns were seen there May 7, 14; a Least Bittern May 14 by Joel. Hawks were recorded in small numbers.

Joel found a f. Cooper's Hawk* May 9, 22 near Lawrenceville. An Am. Woodcock nest was found in Vaughn Morrison's front yard on Stone Mtn. Two spotted Sandpipers were sighted by Billy Pulliam at Emory University's President's Estate (EPE) May 27 - nesting is a possibility. A very much out-of-season report was of two Sandhill Cranes* at L. Notteley May 13 told by Joe Greenberg. Michael Robison reports a Black-billed Cuckoo* at EPE May 5; Don and Doris Cohrs, Terry Moore sighted one at South R (SR) May 21. The Great Horned Owls* at Shakerag successfully raised one young to fledgling stage according to Jeff Petit and Joel Volpi.

An Olive-sided Flycatcher* was spotted by Billy Pulliam at John Ward Swamp May 13; two Gray-cheeked Thrushes* at EPE May 20. A flock of over 100 Bank Swallows* was seen by Joe Greenberg, et al, May 13 at Roger's Bridge (RB). Now that we know this species migrates through Atlanta in mid-May and mid-August, it is proving to be more common than previously thought.

Richard Parks spied seven Tennessee Ws this spring, more than ever before and saw a Wilson's W* in Piedmont Park (PP) May 10. Another Wilson's* was seen at EPE May 2 by Michael Robison (same bird? - Ed.). Two Connecticut Ws* were banded by Don and Doris Cohrs at SR May 14 -- Another was seen in the same locale May 21 (one of the pair seen previously? - Ed.). A Mourning W* was seen in the same place on the 14th by Don. This bird is probably more common in proper habitat than realized. A Blue-winged W* was found on territory just north of Cumming by Jack Carusos.

A small number of Bobolink was uncovered mostly in the RB area -- first observation May 7 by Joel Volpi. A N Oriole* was sighted at Smyrna May 12 by Terry Moore. A House Finch* was at the Cohrs' feeder in East Point May 2 - Bob Raymund has a m. coming to his feeder near Brookwood Station (July newsletter). Scarlet Tanagers, a pair, were seen by Joel Volpi and Dennis Chikozawa at the Yerkes Primate Center near Lawrenceville. This might be one of the few breeding pairs in the Atlanta area. Richard Parks found one of the few Song Sparrow* nests located in the Atlanta area.

Joe Greenberg and the class he instructs saw 112 species on a trip to the coast (no area or date given - Ed.) including Purple Gallinule, Glossy Ibis.

About the only news around Atlanta for June was a White-throated Sparrow* by Pam Allen (no date - Ed.) and the continued increase of House Finches*. In addition to the few still visiting feeders, a nest was located by Mrs. Fred Osterberg at Stone Mtn. and a m and f were observed building a nest at Colony Square June 27 by Terry Moore.

Billy Pulliam tells of finding a Bachman's Sparrow* on his Breeding Bird Survey near Rutledge (no date given, but month is June - Ed.) A Gray Kingbird* nest was found on Sea Is. June 11 and a late m Bobolink at Darien by Vic and Beth Alexander, Ken Blackshaw, Terry Moore (Editor's Note - 10 June (1878, 1925).

A Pied-billed Grebe summered at PP watched by Richard Parks. This is fairly unusual for the Atlanta area, especially a site so close to downtown. Yellow crowned Night Herons* were reported several times with Liz Bradshaw observing three im. at Windsor Parkway and Peachtree Dunwoody July 9. Jeff Petit found an im. at WPP, Pendergrass, last July. He also spotted sandpipers - 10 Pectoral, 4 Least, one each Solitary, Spotted and a Lesser Yellowlegs late July at WPP.

Near Gainesville, Jeff Petit had an interesting day July 30, watching one each Great Horned Owl*, Hawks - Red-tailed, Broad-winged, Coopers*, Sharp-shinned*. W.C. Taylor tells of a successful Loggerhead Shrike nesting at Dobbins Air Force Base near Marietta. Richard Parks saw a Black and White W, N Parula W, Am. Redstart at PP July 31 - early migrants or birds nesting close by to the north? A m. Scarlet Tanager* was in Pat Chapman's backyard July 19. Whether a local or migrant is unknown.

On a field trip to Sosebee Cove (that's U. S. Forest Service land - Ed.) a f. Solitary Vireo was seen with several young in a nest. At WPP same day, Grasshopper Sparrows* were noted.

THE FALL LINE - OCMULGEE AS - MACON -- A juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Heron* has been seen for several weeks on the Mercer University Campus. August newsletter.

CHATTAHOOCHEE NATURAL HISTORY CLUB - COLUMBUS - Mildred Pierce, Waverly Hall, mentions m. and f. Cardinals with no crests in her yard. Tops of the heads being black and bald. (Anne Hamilton and myself have noticed Cardinals in the same featherless state. Dr. Tom Payne, Dalton veterinarian, told me this is due to an infestation of mites. Sevin would take care of the situation. Instead of putting salt on a bird's tail, put Sevin on its head! - Ed.) Red-headed Woodpeckers raised young in her yard. Dr. Harry Brill saw a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher* on Cherokee Ave. (September newsletter - no date - Ed.)

THE OBSERVER - COLUMBUS AS -- White Ibises* seem to be on the increase in South Georgia. On August 2 Tom Williams saw three near Almond Rd; Bob Pedigo, August 9, found three im. at Calloway Gardens; on August 10, Gary Robinson noticed two im. near Ritch Haven Rd. (some overlap of birds? - Ed.) Jim Shirah saw a f. Chestnut-sided W, N Parula W, Am Redstart and a couple of Black and White W in Columbus August 19. A very pretty ad. Yellow-crowned Night Heron* was spotted in a residential area near Columbus Airport by Sam Pate July 9.

AUGUSTA AS -- Observation and field Notes -- Two Dickcissels* were seen by Clarence Belger May 21 in a field off Lover's Lane; one was there May 22. A King Rail was found in a pit; a Least Bittern nest was located in Cattails at Duck Pond and a Purple Gallinule* was also there. John Hatcher had fledgling Brown-headed Nuthatches in his yard May 3 and a Warbling Vireo* (newly added to state list - no summer dates - Ed.) bathed in a sprinkler in his yard -- no date -- July newsletter.

Ann and Vernon Waters vacationed in Okefenokee NWR early April, listing White Ibis*, Black-crowned Night Heron*, Swallow-tailed Kite*.

On a hot August day Ray and Eleanor Haddens and grandson John Brannen were sitting at the water's edge at Clark Hill (CH). Am im. Green Heron was busy feeding nearby, using an unusual method. It found a spider web and picked insects from the webbing. With the insect in its bill, the heron hopped up on a boat, dropping the insect into the water. Standing perfectly still, (they're great still hunters - Ed.) the bird waited till a fish surfaced to gobble down the insect. Then the heron gobbled down the fish. After using up all the insects in the web, the heron captured the spider, dropping the spider into the water. The spider had other ideas, running back up the web dangling from the bird's bill. Going ashore and rubbing its bill against a rock, the heron dislodged the spider, picked it up, dropped it in the water. A little bream rose to eat the spider; the heron ate the bream.

About the middle of August, a call came from a young man in Athens, down from Hartford, Connecticut to attend a series of conferences at the University (of Georgia). He was trying to locate a Barn Owl for his Life List. We told him to come over; we had one. He came, climbed the steeple with Clarence Belger, saw two Barn Owls*, and with only an hour to spare to catch his plane, went dashing to the airport.

Field Trip Reports -- June 25 -- a King Rail with three young at Merry Ponds (MP); July 8 - Mississippi Kite; August 5 - two Upland Plovers*, Rough-winged Swallow, Great Egret, Red-shouldered Hawk and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird chasing a Red-tailed Hawk appearing at one time to slap it on the back -- all at Farmer's Field. August 19 - Grasshopper Sparrows*, six im. Yellow-crowned Night Heron* at the airport eating grasshoppers and a tree full of m. Prothonotary Ws, one was seen putting nesting material into a cavity -- all at the Lock and Dam and levee. At the gate keeper's house a flock of Brewer's Blackbirds* was examined.

Gerald Knighton found a Broad-winged Hawk* July 13 at Farmer's Field Pond; Snowy Egrets*, White Ibis*, Cattle Egrets, Blue-winged Teal, MP, August 20. On August 27 at MP a Western Sandpiper* was sighted. Clarence and his wife, Peggy, were walking up from the boat dock at their CH home in full dark with the aid of a flashlight. Suddenly a Screech Owl swooped down and nailed a small prey. Both parties stared at one another, the owl clutching his catch with one foot.

Annual Picnic and Wade-in Report -- A new rookery - Pond #3 -- was located with an estimated 170 Cattle Egret nests, approximately 150 White Ibis* nests. being found. About half the ibis nest's contained ready-to-fledge young. Eight Anhingas were seen. Upon our entry into the area, the birds remained calm, cool, collected, some remaining on the nests. Pond #2 had only a few Little Blue Heron nests with eggs. Pond #1 (a rookery for some 20 years before it was deserted a few years ago) was not checked due to thunderstorms. Three Wood Ibis* were seen on the road to Pond #2.

THE KINGFISHER CHEROKEE AS - DALTON -- Anne Hamilton spotted a Black and White W in her yard June 29, 30, July 4; a Yellow-throated Vireo sang in her yard June 29, 30, July 4; a Hooded W uttered its "temp" notes about her house August 9, 13, 21, September 7. A N Parula W sang five times at the First United Methodist Church August 30.

Toby Dirks saw an im. night heron* on the roof of Con-Agra Poultry Company in shallow water around the air conditioner August 19. Delano Crowe on June 30, July 1 heard Great Horned* and Barred Owls along the Conasauga R, Whitfield Co. On September 9, he heard a Great Horned Owl* in the same vicinity; September 14, he saw an Am. Kestrel on the Cleveland Highway near Varnell School.

Harriett Di Gioia sightings on the Cohutta Ranger District, Chattahoochee National Forest; Murray, Fannin, Gilmer Cos. June 28- Dark-eyed Junco carrying food into root tangles of a blow-down along Sugar Cove Trail, Cohutta Wilderness; July 17- female-plumaged Western Tanager* at Cohutta Overlook, U.S. Highway 76, Gilmer Co. for the third area record (Editor's Note - Rare winter visitor . . .); July 29- Great Horned Owl*, L. Conasauga Songbird Management Area (SMA). August 1 - Wilson's W,* Forest Service Road (FSRd) 17 for one of the few area records and early date (Editor's Note - 2 September 1939 - specimen); August 8, Black-billed Cuckoo* and im. Chestnut-sided W in a wave of birds FSRd 78.

August 20 - Yellow-throated Vireo, Blackburnian Ws in wave of birds on the SMA; August 26 - im. Tennessee W (Editor's Note - 29 August 1976) FSRd 68; August 29 - Cerulean W* FSRd 68; August 31 - Blue-winged W* at a game plot on the Jack's R Ga. Highway 2; September 5 - Golden-winged W, N Parula W, Am Redstart, N Oriole* in a wave SMA; September 7 - Canada WFSRd 51; September 11 - ad and im Nashville W*, Magnolia Ws on the SMA; September 14 - 20 im E Wood Pewee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's and Gray-cheeked* Thrushes in a huge wave of birds sweeping through the Emery Cr logging areas FSRd 78.

On September 17, Harriett along with husband, Frank, and Mike Fuller of Columbus viewed an astounding number of birds, including 100+ Tennessee W; 30+ im. Magnolia W; 30+ im. Chestnut-sided W; 20+ im. Black-throated Green W and a few ad; Nashville W*; female plumaged Scarlet Tanagers; im. m/f Rose-breasted Grosbeak, many Swainson's Thrushes and a host of other birds FSRd 68 and SMA. The three observers could not handle all the birds passing through this birch forest. The numbers of im. birds of many species on the district is most rewarding.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR -- Lenn Sisson, Kingston, writes - "In reading the GOSHawk of March 31, 1978, I noted your comments about the low number of Hermit Thrush sightings this past winter. . . . I was fortunate enough to have a resident Hermit Thrush near my house throughout the winter. I had five breeding species around my house, the most interesting of which were a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers in April."

Mary Lou Cypert, Waycross, encloses the following -- "Note to Eugene Cypert, Okefenokee Swamp Park. Gene - I observed a Swallow-tailed Kite* over Satilla Square Shopping Center, Waycross, July 9 at 5:30 PM. I observed the same bird (I assume) across US 84 from Satilla Sq. on July 11 at 8:00 a.m. Thought you might like to have this information." John Eadie, Manager, Okefenokee NWR.

She writes - "July 11 at 1:45 PM I was riding with a friend. At City Boulevard and Central Avenue we saw a pair of Swallow-tailed Kites*. A day or so later, a man called Gene and told him he saw one in the same area (all sightings were in the same general area); this one was somewhat southerly from John Eadie's sighting and our viewing. These birds are sometimes seen in the swamp, but it is quite unusual for them to be seen within the city limits."

Joseph Jones, Albany, sends this -- "Barn Owls*, rare in Dougherty Co. raised a brood in a hollow tree on Tift Ave; the young fledged in July. A brood was also raised in this same nest last January."

News of People -- L. A. Wells is in the Oak Manor Nursing Home, Columbus, recuperating from a broken hip. We wish you a speedy mending, L.A.

Billy Pulliam (who may be Atlanta AS's youngest board member, ever) was awarded a National Science Foundation Scholarship to work this summer on a science project at the Jackson Laboratory at Bar Harbor, Maine. While there he saw Goshawk, Black Guillemot, Black-capped Chickadees. Our congratulations to you, Billy!

Dr. Joe Greenberg is teaching a fall quarter course "Birds of Georgia: Autumn and Early Winter at Emory University's "Evenings at Emory" series. Don and Doris Cohrs are banding birds. Doris, along with Terry Moore, and Frank McCamey, holds a Master Bander Permit and are the only people who can trap/net birds. Joe Meyers bands under the University of Georgia's license. Don holds a subpermittee status.

Travelers -- The Jack Cooper family journeyed to Sanibel Is, Corkscrew Swamp and the Everglades in Florida, seeing Reddish Egret, Black-whiskered Vireo, Mangrove Cuckoo.

Jack and Helen Speltz went overseas to England, Wales, Scotland, Holland. They noted Pheasants, Magpies, Jackdaws. The J. H. Whitemans visited Craggy Gardens and the Blue Ridge Parkway to see the spectacle of the Rhododendron in bloom. They also went to the Ozark Mtns. Vince and Trina Jackson, Jean and Pat Bevis spent nine days in southeast Arizona in June listing an Aztec Thrush, Violet-crowned and White-eared Hummingbirds among the 150 species seen.

Dan and Ann Forster saw 112 species on a trip to St. Mark's NWR, Fla., Memorial Day weekend, including six Black-necked Stilt and four Active Osprey nests. Sam Pate and Bill Matheny saw a Golden Eagle, Red-faced Warbler, Broad-billed Hummingbird, Rufous-winged Sparrow on their trip to southeastern Arizona in June. Joel Volpi went out to Durango, Colorado spotting Cinnamon Teal, Lewis' Woodpecker, Lazuli Bunting; in three days 78 species were listed, including 25 "lifers."

MISCELLANEOUS -- If you see Semipalmated Sandpipers with green or blue dyed breasts, please report them to the following address. Some birds will also sport a wing tag. Please give color of wing tag, character printed on tag and character color. Shorebird Survey, David Lank - Langmuir Laboratory, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., 14853.

Terry Johnson, Wildlife Biologist, Game and Fish Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (and a new GOSer) sent information of a new program, Georgia Acres for Wildlife. This program is designed to provide conservation-minded groups and individuals with the opportunity to personally assist in the preservation of Georgia's diverse plant and animal communities.

Two pamphlets are available "Making Acres for Wildlife Produce" and "Acres for Wildlife" - discussing habitat improvement and goals of program, plot qualifications, application and awards for participation.

"Our wildlife biologists stationed throughout the state stand willing and able to present a colorful and informative slide presentation dealing with the Acres for Wildlife program to interested groups."

Contact Terry W. Johnson, Wildlife Biologist, Georgia Acres for Wildlife,
Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area, Route #3, Box 180, Forsyth, Ga. 31030.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY -- Climb the mountains and get their tidings. Nature's
peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees . . . while cares
will drop off like autumn leaves. John Muir.

Harriett G. Di Gioia, Editor
U. S. Forest Service
401 Old Ellijay Road
Chatsworth, Georgia 30705

GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 38214
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334

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