



# **GOSHAWK**

NEWSLETTER OF THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 16 NOS. 3 & 4

DECEMBER 1989

Rare Bird Alert Phone Number: 912 987-1052

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## **TIMBER AND RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER DAMAGE CAUSED BY HUGO**

Hurricane Hugo came ashore on the night of September 21-22. In addition to the terrible damage to property in its path was the destruction of forest lands. The Francis Marion National Forest was directly in its path, suffering timber damage estimated at \$200 million dollars on its 250,000 acres.

Red-cockaded Woodpeckers suffered a loss of 80 to 90 per cent of their nesting and roosting cavities which were in live, old-growth pines. The population of this endangered species on the Francis Marion had increased to 470 colonies before the storm. It is now doubtful that more than half this number will survive because of inadequate habitat resulting from the destruction of at least half of the standing timber on the forest.

On September 27, an inter-agency team composed of Fish and Wildlife Service and Forest Service endangered species specialists met on the ground to plan to save the surviving birds. The major component of this plan is the excavation of artificial cavities to replace at least 200 of those lost. On Tuesday, October 10, biologists who have pioneered in cavity excavation work came into the Witherbee Ranger Station on the Forest to start the work. These people had been doing research on cavity construction at the Savannah River Nuclear Plant area. They were joined on Thursday by biologists from N. C. State University, who had just completed a research project on the construction and acceptance of artificial cavities at Fort Bragg. The Marine Corps sent a technician from Camp LeJeune, who is also familiar with the technique. These people will be training others as soon as they and the necessary equipment can be assembled.

Two techniques will be used: chain saw excavation of a rectangular section from the tree trunk in which is inserted a box containing a cavity insert, and drilling out a cavity itself with electric drills. The work is not as easy as it may sound so that training is important. The finished job includes scraping the bark around the cavity and drilling resin wells around the cavity to duplicate the work done by the woodpeckers themselves, to assure acceptance.

Fortunately, enough older trees were left standing by the storm so that they are available at over half the colony sites. It does not appear feasible to capture the birds who will not have enough foraging area or trees suitable for cavities. If these were transported to other areas such as Fort Stewart, their instinct would only compel them to try to return to the Francis Marion.

The project will be carefully monitored, and all compartments where Red-cockaded Woodpeckers have been located prior to Hugo will be inspected for any possible additional rescue work. Still, the loss will be serious since the Francis Marion is one of only three presently viable populations of the species.

John W. Thompson

# SPRING MEETING COUNTDOWN

As an enticement for you to attend the GOS Spring Meeting, look over the following checklist containing 143 species, which was tabulated by Vernon Waters at our fall meeting in Savannah. In addition to great birding, camaraderie among fellow birders from all over Georgia is an additional bonus.

## OBSERVERS GOS MEMBERS OCTOBER 28, 1989

LOON, Red-throated			
Common			
GREBE, Pied-billed			
Horned			
Red-necked			
Eared			
PETREL, Black-capped			
SHEARWATER, Cory's			
Greater			
Manx			
Audubon's			
STORM PETREL, Wilson's			
Band-rumped			
TROPICBIRD, White-tailed			
BOOBY, Masked			
GANNET, Northern			
PELICAN, American White			
Brown Pelican			
CORMORANT, Dbl-crested			
ANHINGA			
BITTERN, American			
Least			
HERON, Great Blue			
EGRET, Great			
Snowy			
HERON, Little Blue			
Tricolored			
EGRET, Reddish			
Cattle			
HERON, Green-backed			
NIGHTHERON, Blk-cr			
Yellow-crowned			
IBIS, White			
Glossy			
SPOONBILL, Roseate			
STORK, Wood			
WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous			
SWAN, Tundra			
GOOSE, Gr. White-fr			
Snow			
Canada			
DUCK, Wood			
TEAL, Green-winged			
DUCK, American Black			
MALLARD			
PINTAIL, Northern			
TEAL, Blue-winged			
SHOVELER, Northern			
GADWALL			
WIGEON, American			
CANVASBACK			
REDHEAD			
DUCK, Ring-necked			
SCAUP, Greater			
Lesser			
OLDSQUAW			
SCOTER, Black			
Surf			
White-winged			
GOLDENEYE, Common			
BUFFLEHEAD			
MERGANSE, Hooded			
Common			
Red-breasted			
DUCK, Ruddy			
VULTURE, Black			
Turkey			
OSPREY			
KITE, Am. Swallow-t.			
Mississippi			
EAGLE, Bald			
HARRIER, Northern			
HAWK, Sharp-shinned			
Cooper's			
Red-shouldered			
Broad-winged			
Red-tailed			
Rough-legged			
EAGLE, Golden			
KESTREL, American			
MERLIN			
FALCON, Peregrine			
CHACHALACA, Plain			
GROUSE, Ruffed			

TURKEY, Wild			
BOBWHITE, Northern			
RAIL, Black			
Clapper			
King			
Virginia			
SORA			
GALLINULE, Purple			
MOORHEN, Common			
COOT, American			
CRANE, Sandhill			
POLOVER, Black-bellied			
GOLDEN-POLOVER, Lesser			
POLOVER, Wilson's			
Semipalmated			
Piping			
KILLDEER			
OYSTERCATCHER, Am.			
STILT, Black-necked			
AVOCET, American			
YELLOWLEGS, Greater			
Lesser			
SANDPIPER, Solitary			
WILLET			
SANDPIPER, Spotted			
SANDPIPER, Upland			
WHIMBREL			
CURLEW, Long-billed			
GODWIT, Marbled			
TURNSTONE, Ruddy			
KNOT, Red			
SANDERLING			
SANDPIPER, Semipalmated			
Western			
Least			
White-rumped			
Baird's			
Pectoral			
Purple			
DUNLIN			
SANDPIPER, Silt			
Buff-breasted			
DOWITCHER, Short-billed			
Long-billed			
SNIBE, Common			
WOODCOCK, American			
PHALAROPE, Wilson's			
Red-necked			
Red			
JAEGER, Pomarine			
Parasitic			
GULL, Laughing			
Bonaparte's			
Ring-billed			
Herring			
Lesser Blk-b.			
Great Blk-b.			
KITTIWAKE, Black-l.			
TERN, Gull-billed			
Caspian			
Royal			
Sandwich			
Common			
Arctic			
Forster's			
Least			
Bridled			
Sooty			
Black			
SKIMMER, Black			
DOVE, Rock			
White-winged			
Mourning			
GROUND-DOVE, Common			
CUCKOO, Black-billed			
Yellow-billed			
BARN-OWL, Common			
SCREECH-OWL, Eastern			
OWL, Great Horned			
Barred			
Short-eared			
NIGHTHAWK, Common			
CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW			
WHIP-POOR-WILL			

SWIFT, Chimney			
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-th.			
Rufous			
KINGFISHER, Belted			
WOODPECKER, Red-h.			
Red-bellied			
SAPSUCKER, Yellow-b.			
WOODPECKER, Downy			
Hairy			
Red-cockaded			
FLICKER, Northern			
WOODPECKER, Pileated			
FLYCATCHER, Olive-s			
WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern			
FLYCATCHER, Yellow-b.			
Acadian			
Willow			
Least			
PHOEBE, Eastern			
FLYCATCHER, Great Cr.			
KINGBIRD, Western			
Eastern			
Gray			
LARK, Horned			
MARTIN, Purple			
SWALLOW, Tree			
N. Rough-winged			
Bank			
Cliff			
Barn			
JAY, Blue			
CROW, American			
Fish			
RAVEN, Common			
CHICKADEE, Carolina			
TITMOUSE, Tufted			
NUTHATCH, Red-breasted			
White-breasted			
Brown-headed			
CREEPER, Brown			
WREN, Carolina			
Baird's			
House			
Winter			
Sedge			
Marsh			
KINGLET, Golden-cr.			
Ruby-crowned			
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray			
BLUEBIRD, Eastern			
VEERY			
THRUSH, Gray-cheeked			
Swainson's			
Hermit			
Wood			
ROBIN, American			
CATBIRD, Gray			
MOCKINGBIRD, Northern			
THRASHER, Brown			
PIPIT, Water			
WAXWING, Cedar			
SHRIKE, Loggerhead			
STARLING, European			
VIREO, White-eyed			
Solitary			
Yellow-throated			
Warbling			
Philadelphia			
Red-eyed			
WARBLER, Blue-winged			
Golden-winged			
Tennessee			
Orange-crowned			
Nashville			
PARULA, Northern			
WARBLER, Yellow			

WARBLER, Chestnut-s			
Magnolia			
Cape May			
Black-throated Blue			
Yellow-rumped			
Black-throated Green			
Blackburnian			
Yellow-throated			
Pine			
Prairie			
Palm			
Bay-breasted			
Blackpoll			
Cerulean			
Black-and-white			
REDSTART, American			
WARBLER, Prothonotary			
Worm-eating			
Swainson's			
OVENBIRD			
WATERTHRUSH, Northern			
Louisiana			
WARBLER, Kentucky			
Connecticut			
Mourning			
YELLOWTHROAT, Common			
WARBLER, Hooded			
Wilson's			
Canada			
CHAT, Yellow-breasted			
TANAGER, Summer			
Scarlet			
CARDINAL, Northern			
GROSBEAK, Rose-breasted			
Blue			
BUNTING, Indigo			
Painted			
DICKCISSEL			
TOWHEE, Rufous-sided			
SPARROW, Bachman's			
SPARROW, Chipping			
Clay-colored			
Field			
Vesper			
Lark			
Savannah			
Grasshopper			
Henslow's			
LaConte's			
Sharp-tailed			
Seaside			
Fox			
Song			
Lincoln's			
Swamp			
White-throated			
White-crowned			
JUNCO, Dark-eyed			
LONGSPUR, Lapland			
BUNTING, Snow			
BOBOLINK			
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged			
MEADOWLARK, Eastern			
BLACKBIRD, Yellow-headed			
Rusty			
Brewer's			
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed			
Common			
COWBIRD, Brown-headed			
ORIOLE, Orchard			
Northern			
FINCH, Purple			
House			
CROSSBILL, Red			
SISKIN, Pine			
GOLDFINCH, American			
GROSBEAK, Evening			
SPARROW, House			

## SUMMER BIRDING IN NORTHEAST GEORGIA - RABUN COUNTY

North Georgia offers some good birding during the hot summer months, as well as slightly cooler temperatures. The following route passes through breeding territory for a number of species not seen elsewhere in the state during the summer.

Highway 23/441 passes, from south to north, through Clayton, Georgia. A Visitor's Center at the northern outskirts of Clayton offers free maps of Rabun County. The following route takes at least 4 hours including stops, and potentially much longer.

Entering Clayton along highway 23/441 from the south, follow the signs about 1 1/2 miles west to the entrance to Black Rock Mountain State Park. The park gate opens at 7:00AM. Camping is available. The drive to the top of the mountain is about 3 miles.

From the park gate, one can take a paved road east into a valley (4 miles). Be looking for Swainson's Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler, among other species. Upon reaching the valley, continue about 3 miles westward to Blue Ridge Gap Road, go left about 1/2 mile, turn right for about 0.7 mile, then turn right onto Patterson Gap Road (gravel).

The 9 mile drive along Patterson Gap Road to Betty Creed Road features Black-throated Blue Warblers, Parula Warblers, Black & White Warblers, Kentucky Warblers, Hooded Warblers, Ovenbirds, Scarlet Tanagers, and Acadian Flycatchers. Less common are Black-throated Green Warblers, Worm-eating Warblers, and American Redstarts.

At Betty Creek Road (paved) turn right and go into Dillard, GA., where you turn right (south) and then left before Betty Creek (about 0.3 mile). Continue about 1 mile past Dillard House Restaurant and check the willows for Willow Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler.

Submitted by Paul Raney

Note: The above article is the first in a series on good birding spots in Georgia. Please share your favorite spots by sending in a brief description of the area and species to look for as well as directions, for publication in future issues. Good Birding!

### NEW MEMBERS

Jeanette Brown	Dalton, GA
Kurt O. Diefenbach	Savannah, GA
James W. O'Neil	Marietta, GA

### NEWS ABOUT PEOPLE

Dick Parks has recently been hospitalized for an operation to correct a spinal disk problem. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Joe Greenberg was presented the Earl Green Award at the fall GOS meeting. Among his many contributions to the field of Ornithology, Joe has, for a number of years, taught a birding class at Emory University which has resulted in many people becoming serious birders. He is also coordinator for the Breeding Bird Surveys in Georgia.

## FIELD NOTES

COMMON LOONS were recorded by PR at Sweetwater Creed State Park, with a single bird on 4/2 and 5 on 4/9; FMc reported 12 from Lake Lanier on 4/14, and CL & HO reported 8 on 4/29, and a winter plumaged COMMON LOON stayed at a lake in North Atlanta from 7/12-7/14.

One adult and one young PIED-BILLED GREBE at Clayton County Water Treatment Plant seen during the month of August provided the first nesting record for the Atlanta area.

Seven AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were reported by LT on Little St. Simon's Island 7/30.

A HORNED GREBE, which is more common at large reservoirs, was seen in Merry Ponds on 11/25. (A&VW) Plant Sherer ash pond yielded an EARED GREBE 9/15 reported by TJ and Ocmulgee Audubon Society field trippers. An AMERICAN BITTERN was found in Merry Ponds on 11/25/89. (A&VW) A LEAST BITTERN at Wahoo Creek on Lake Lanier from 6/10 to 6/24 was unusual for an inland location (JP).

15 ROSEATE SPOONBILLS were seen 8/18-20, and 6 BLACK-NECKED STILTS were at St. Andrews Island near Brunswick 8/18 (BD,AM,BM).

On GOS weekend, 90 BLACK SCOTERS were spotted off Tybee Island. On 3/26, a late report, a GREATER SCAUP was seen by PB. 3 DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS were seen Clayton County Water Treatment Plant starting on 5/7 and continuing through 7/23 when their roosting spot was taken and they moved on (AAS). Plant which is the first summer record for Atlanta. A female RED-BREASTED MERGANSER at Sweetwater Creek State Park was seen on 5/6 by PR, and on 5/17 at Lake Lanier (JP). PB reported a NORTHERN PINTAIL at Clayton County Water Treatment Plant on 7/23 which was the first summer record for Atlanta.

Five late SANDHILL CRANES were sighted over Avondale on 4/5 by PB, and JP reported a flock near Canton on 4/21. MUTE SWANS at Rum Creek were still there on 5/6. (DH) A BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, considered to be a rare transient in the interior in fall, was seen at Merry Ponds on 11/25. (CB, A&VW)

For the first time in several years, UPLAND SANDPIPERS were seen in the Atlanta area. Three birds were found by HG on 4/9, and two others that same day by PB.

A WESTERN SANDPIPER, considered to be a rare fall transient, was in a pond off the levee of Merry Ponds on 9/16. (A&VW) BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS were reported at Jackson's Pasture in Laurens County on 8/12 (HP), at Jekyll Island 8/18 (BD), and at Macon Industrial Ponds 9/10 (TI). A BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER was seen in August at Macon Industrial Ponds.

Two LAUGHING GULLS were rare sightings seen at Clayton County Water Treatment Plant. (AAS) A SANDWICH TERN, which is very unusual inland was spotted at Merry Ponds on 9/23 by GR. He noted the black bills with yellow tips when viewed at close range with scope.

30 BONAPARTE'S GULLS were seen by FMc on Lake Lanier on 4/14. JP spotted a late BONAPARTE'S GULL on Lake Lanier on 5/17. TI reported a LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL far inland near Macon from 1/24-3/7.

OSPREYS were reported with single birds at Peachtree City Lake on 4/7 PB, and at Sweetwater Creek State Park on 4/9 by PR, and a number of birders saw the very rare MERLIN on 4/9 at Clayton County Water Treatment Plant. TPH had a MERLIN in his yard in the heart of Macon 11/17 feeding on the remains of a MOCKINGBIRD.

It is encouraging to receive numerous reports of BALD EAGLES in the state. DF spotted a BALD EAGLE in Union County near Blairsville 4/24, and BALD EAGLES were seen near Darien

on 5/5 (JG) and at Rum Creek on 5/6 (DH). In late July, DH observed the species at Clark Hill near Augusta. TJ reports that 7 BALD EAGLES have been successfully hacked at the Alatoona Water Management Area this past summer.

The rarely reported BLACK RAIL was heard near Andrews Island at Brunswick on 4/30 by HG, PB, PS, and TM, and PBo saw an adult BALD EAGLE at Little St. Simon's Island on 7/30.

On 10/7 during an Augusta field trip, a PEREGRINE FALCON was spotted when it spooked up 15 FISH CROWS by diving at them (A&VW, CB), and one spotted near downtown Atlanta on 8/29 was likely one of the birds hacked at the Georgia Power Building.

A SWALLOW-TAILED KITE was at the Conyers Monastery from 7/13-16 (FM), and on 8/14 TJ saw 7 doing acrobatics line in Lamar County. Two MISSISSIPPI KITES were seen at Conyers Monastery by FM.

JG reported a RUFFED GROUSE in the Blairsville area 5/25, and HD reported one in the Cohuttas on 8/18. Two WILD TURKEYS were recorded on the 5/7 Clayton County Water Treatment Plant migration walk, and continued to be seen through August.

STILT SANDPIPER (8/13) AND SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS (8/12 and 8/20) were among a variety of shorebirds seen at Clayton County Water Treatment Plant (PB, BD, PR).

Two BANK SWALLOWS were in with 80 ROUGH-WINGS at a field/pond off the levee on 9/16. (A&VW)

SW saw 1 male RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER 12/2 at Laura S. Walker State Park near Waycross. T&GR spotted two RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES on Jekyll Island on 10/27.

A GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was seen in the Lithonia area near Atlanta on 4/15 by JH.

HO & CL saw an OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER in the Dawson Bottoms on 4/29. From 4/1-4/16, there were six sightings of ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS in the Atlanta area. JG reported BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO, WILLOW and LEAST FLYCATCHERS in the Blairsville area 5/25. For the third straight year, the SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER has returned to Cartersville. (J&KS) SW reports that the female VERMILLION FLYCATCHER is back at Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge 12/16. WILLOW FLYCATCHERS were seen 6/3 near Lake Nottely on 6/3 (JG), and near Mountain City on 6/10 (PR). HD reported an early OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER on 8/18.

Four GRAY KINGBIRDS (two adults and two young) were seen on Jekyll Island 8/18-20 (BD, AM, BM, AW).

PR found 2 CLIFF SWALLOW nests at Lake Oconee and 5 nests at Lake Sinclair.

DHarl spotted a BROWN CREEPER and 3 SWAINSON'S THRUSHES at Clark Hill Reservoir the second week in Nov. A SOLITARY VIREO was seen 12/7 by SW at Waycross, and by DHarl 11/10 at Clark Hill Reservoir.

A NASHVILLE WARBLER was in Atlanta's Norcross area 5/14 & 5/15. (JS&CL)

A YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD was at Commerce Lake near Atlanta on 4/22. The 5/6 AAS migration walk at Fernbank Forest yielded 8 NORTHERN ORIOLES.

GR & A&VW found one immature LAPLAND LONGSPUR in with 6 WATER PIPITS in Merry Ponds in a newly plowed field on 11/23. The pink bill and dark triangular face pattern below and behind the eye were distinctive, and it had a definite chestnut patch on the upper wings with primaries being dull slate when folded.

A LINCOLN'S SPARROW was singing at Pendergrass near Gainesville on 4/16. (JPa)

A FOX SPARROW and PINE SISKINS were two excellent sightings on a 11/19 fieldtrip in Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS were reported in Atlanta

with single birds at Tucker on 5/5 (JS&CL), at Chattahoochee River National Recreational Area on 5/6 (AAS), and at Powder Springs on 5/12 (C&EG). DH listed the BACHMAN'S SPARROW from Piedmont NWR on 5/25. JA saw a LARK SPARROW at Sapelo on 8/5.

Observers: Jerry Amerson, Clarence Belger, Phyllis Bowen (PBo), Patrick Brisse, Bruce Dralle, Harriett DiGloia, Dot Freeman, Hugh Garrett, Chris & Elane Geller, Joe Greenberg, T. P. Hanes, Dale Hardee, Dewight Harley (DHarl), Joel Hitt, Ty Ivey, Terry Johnson, Frank McCamey, Carolina Lane, Bob Manns, Francis Michael, Adrienne Miles, Terry Moore, Helen Ogren, John Paget (JPa), Hunter Patterson, Jeff Petit, Paul Raney, George Reeves, Jeff Sewell, John & Kate Swiderski, Paul Sykes, Lydia Thompson, Anne & Vernon Waters, Shlela Willis, Anne Wyand.

A special thanks to Dick Parks for helping edit the field notes.

### FUTURE GOS MEETINGS

If you missed the fall meeting, make plans now to attend the spring meeting in Valdosta, April 27-29. (See registration form and further details in the next issue.) The fall 1990 meeting will be held at Lakepoint State Park Resort, Eufaula, Alabama, October 12-14, 1990. The spring 1991 meeting is planned May 4-6 at Amicalola Falls State Park.

### EARTH DAY 1990

The 20th anniversary of Earth Day will be April 22, 1990, with many activities being held throughout Georgia and worldwide calling attention to the need to protect our environment on this planet. Some activities include tree plantings, parades, teach-ins, special media broadcasts, public service ads and announcements, and rallies. On Earth Day we are encouraged to wear green clothing as a demonstration of solidarity and to show concern for the fate of the planet. If you wish to become involved in planning or to find out more contact Bryan Ripley-Hager Georgia Environmental Council, meeting organizer at (404) 373-2938.

### CONSERVATION ISSUES

Developers seem to be adhering to restrictions at the Swamp of Toa by applying for individual permits from the EPA for any filling and draining.

The VEGETATIVE IMPACT STUDY OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS is completed, including effects of aerial herbicide spraying, which reduces plant diversity that birds depend heavily on. There are now 45-50 forest types in the Chattahoochee National Forest. Only 10-12 will be left if spraying is allowed.

At Fort Fredrica, apparently the Sea Palms Marina will be built, although on a smaller scale, and at Fort Benning, the gross mismanagement of RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER habitat may be determined to be a criminal act. A formal response was due mid-November to Atlanta Audubon Society and the Sierra Club's Notice of Intent to Sue.

The Bond Swamp southeast of Macon was purchased by the Nature Conservancy and the United States Fish and Wildlife Department as a National Wildlife Refuge.

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Deadline for the next issue is March 5th.

THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY \*\* SALES LIST

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ANNOTATED CHECKLIST OF GEORGIA BIRDS

Prepared by the GOS Checklist Committee, J. Christopher Haney (chair), Patrick Brisse, Daniel R. Jacobson, Mark W. Oberle and John Paget. Lists 410 species with range, status, dates of occurrence, in Georgia. 55 pages, 6 x 9, 1986. \$5.00

AN INDEX OF GEORGIA BIRD RECORDS IN "AMERICAN BIRDS" AND "AUDUBON FIELD NOTES"

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