

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

TO: Georgia Ornithological Society
P.O. Box 1684
Cartersville, GA 30120

Please enroll the undersigned as a member of the Georgia Ornithological Society for the calendar year.
Dues are enclosed as follows:

_____ Regular \$16.00 _____ Sustaining \$25.00

_____ Patron \$50.00

(The above are annual rates for individuals or families.)

_____ Life Membership \$250.00 _____ Student \$8.00/per year

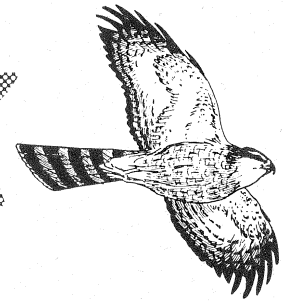
_____ Please send me a list of publications available from the GOS.

NAME(S) _____

COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE # _____

PLEASE SEND ANY ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER CHANGES TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS!

GOSHAWK



NEWSLETTER OF THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 24 NO. 3

SEPTEMBER 1997

GEORGIA RARE BIRD ALERT: (770) 493-8862 Statewide

(912) 244-9190 South Georgia

ALABAMA: (205) 987-2730

N/S CAROLINA: (704) 332-2473

FLORIDA: (561) 340-0079 (Statewide)

TENNESSEE: (615) 356-7636

(912) 244-9190 (N. Florida)

Chattanooga: (423) 843-2822

MEETING NOTES

GOS FALL MEETING

Ramada Inn - Tallahassee, Florida / October 10-12, 1997

All members should have received a Fall Meeting packet in the mail by now. This promises to be a great event in the north Florida panhandle, highlighted by an array of great field trips and interesting speakers. Our Friday night speaker from St. Marks NWR will describe the attractions there throughout the year, and the Saturday night banquet will feature Todd Engstrom of Tall Timbers Research Station.

Rooms at the Ramada Inn Tallahassee are available to GOS members for \$68.00 + tax/night/single or double. Phone (904) 386-1027 for "GOS" reservations - reservation deadline is September 20, 1997.

For meeting registration information, call: Bob Sargent (912) 746-1338.

Tentative Schedule of Field Trips - (See Site Descriptions on p. 3)

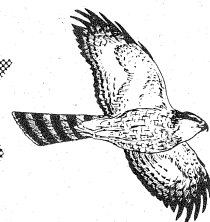
Saturday, October 11th

- North Tallahassee area: Lake Overstreet; Phipps Park; Lake Jackson
- Springhill Rd. Sewage Treatment Plant; Munson Landing; Tram Road (SE Farms)
- St. George Island (and possibly St. Joseph Peninsula)
- Ochlockonee Bay; Alligator Point (including The Nature Conservancy preserve)
- Wakulla Beach; Tiger Hammock Road; Apalachicola National Forest
- St. Mark's lighthouse area
- Wakulla Springs State Park (self-guided)

Sunday, October 12th

- Tallahassee: Tom Brown Park; Lake Lafayette; Black Swamp
- Springhill Rd. Sewage Treatment Plant; Munson Landing; Tram Road (SE Farms)
- St. George Island (and possibly St. Joseph Peninsula)
- Ochlockonee Bay; Alligator Point (including The Nature Conservancy preserve)
- Wakulla Beach; Tiger Hammock Road; Apalachicola National Forest
- St. Mark's lighthouse area (self-guided)
- Hamilton Co. phosphate mines
- Wakulla Springs State Park (self-guided)

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P.O. Box 1684
Cartersville, GA 30120

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U.S. POSTAGE

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CARTERSVILLE, GA

PERMIT NO. 97

Deadline for the next GOShawk is November 1, 1997

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

☺ **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!** ☺

Kimberly Brooks	Fitzgerald, GA
Stephen Butler	Dahlonega, GA
Claudia Caldwell	McDonough, GA
Linda Carroll	Atlanta, GA
Benjamin Cash	University, MS
Ed Turlington	Atlanta, GA
William Wiggins	New York, NY

JAMES GRADY HORNE, JR.

Dr. James Grady Horne, Jr., a GOS member since 1976, and Professor-Emeritus of Mathematics at The University of Georgia since 1989, died on July 25, after an extended illness. Grady published in *The Oriole* sightings from his home in a rural area of Clarke County. These included a summation in 1978 of ten years of spring and fall migrations of Sandhill Cranes and in 1984 a second state record for the Varied Thrush.

.....H. Branch Howe, Jr.

GOS PATCH HAS A NEW LOOK!

Thanks again to the wonderful artistry of Dick Parks, we have a beautiful new patch depicting a Laughing Gull. Be one of the elite few to already have your's on your favorite hat, jacket, knapsack or whatever at the Fall meeting. The patch is available for \$4.00, postpaid from the Business Manager, GOS, P.O. Box 1684, Cartersville, GA 30120.



Mountain is a favorite locale for this arcane activity; but amazingly, Jim Flynn had the following count in his backyard in Forsyth Co. In the pre-dawn dark of 4/30: 150 Veeries, 3 Gray-cheeked Thrushes, and about 300 Swainson's Thrushes. Where do these birds go after sunrise? Numbers from other locations seemed down this spring. Banders at Zoo Atlanta re-captured a Gray-cheeked Thrush in early May that they had banded in the fall of 1994 (Brad Parks). Swainson's Warblers are also a hard to find species, but made several notable appearances this spring from a Macon area record early arrival on 3/25 (Jerry & Marie Amerson), to the three tallied by Paul Johnson in his subdivision near Macon in early April. A Mourning Warbler was reported near Athens on 5/7 (Earl Hunter, fide Chris Eberly). This is another species on the Record Committee's "Documentation Required" list and because of the difficulty in separating it from other look-alikes, should be carefully observed and written up. Two Connecticut Warbler reports were above average for one season: one at Fernbank Forest on 5/21 (Georgann Schmalz), and one at the Newman Wetlands Center, ELHLAF, on 5/24 (Carol Lambert).

Are Painted Buntings pushing further inland? There is a small breeding population in Macon and in Augusta, so perhaps the male seen at a Marietta feeder on 4/24 was scouting out new territory (Richard Cole). The same, or another, male was seen in Vinings, not too far from the first bird, on 4/29 (Nancy O'Gara). A few sparrow sightings were noteworthy. A Clay-colored Sparrow came to a feeder in Houston Co. on 4/26

(Dan & Pam Guynn); a Lark Sparrow was well documented, complete with sketches, by John McMahan, seen on 5/4 near Columbus; and a pair of Song Sparrows fledged two young in Macon in late May (Paul Johnson). This is Bibb County's first nesting record and the southernmost nesting record in Georgia according to Johnson. On the negative side, Dan Guynn saw only one Vesper Sparrow all year, that on 3/18. Ray Chandler found the only Yellow-headed Blackbird on 5/13 and 5/15 at the East Georgia Turf Farm near Statesboro. Purple Finches were seen in good numbers in March, with the 48 seen on Kennesaw Mountain on 3/22 (Bruce Dralle) being outstanding. House Finches have reached the coast! Doris Cohrs reported nesting in Darien on 4/18. Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks were noted for their absence even in the mountains (Denny McClure).

This report is not meant to be a comprehensive compilation of the season's reports. That will come in *The Oriole*. These are what I consider the highlights. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Let me hear from you, good birding, and PLEASE...if you find a good bird on Saturday, call the Rare Bird Alert THAT DAY. Please don't wait until Sunday night. Not many of us can go after a good bird on Monday.

The deadline for the Summer 1997 Report (June - July) is September 1st. Send reports and correspondence to: Jeff Sewell, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA 30084.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS???

Although it's only September, and only retailers and ultra-organized people are thinking about Christmas, we do need 1997 CBC information for the December issue of *GOShawk*.

Please send: CBC area, scheduled date, and compiler name/address/tel. no. by November 1st (earlier if possible) to:
Carol Lambert, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA 30084.

Georgia

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1995-97

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FIELD NOTES

The Spring Season - 1997

March, April, May

by Jeff Sewell

The memory of this spring season may fade quickly from the minds of many birders. There seemed to have been fewer rareties of the chase-able type than in past springs and two of the rarest birds of the season didn't stay in place very long: a female Black-headed Grosbeak seen on 4/5 and 4/6 at an Atlanta feeder (Tony Scardaci), and two Alder Flycatchers reported in Glynn Co. in May (Mike Chapman). This is not to say that there were not many "good" birds seen this spring, but my overall impression of this season is that it was rather dull. March was unusually warm and there was some evidence of early migration in some species. April and May were cooler than in recent years and several prime weekends in late April were rained out in my area. Still good numbers of warblers were seen in a few places, but the numbers of thrushes and shorebirds were way off except for the huge pre-dawn counts of thrushes undertaken by a few of the advanced birders among us who have learned the nighttime call notes of the thrushes and got themselves up well before dawn and out to, say Kennesaw Mountain, and counted call notes. More of this later.

Two birds I will remember from this season I saw only in photographs. One was of a Northern Cardinal that was red on one side and pure white on the other. This bird appeared at a feeder in Coweta Co. in March, and the photograph was published in the Atlanta newspaper. The photographer and other observers said the bird's "white" side was not a pure white as it appeared in the photograph, but more like an immature bird, that is buff-colored with a few red feathers coming in. I could find no explanation of such a molt sequence in any of my reference books. Does anyone have any ideas? Please let me know. The other memorable photograph was of a Brown Thrasher with an outrageously long, curved bill, longer even than the bill of a California Thrasher, taken in April by Anne Waters in Augusta. The bird was seen for about a week and has evidently disappeared. Paul Sykes, who examined the photograph, says he has heard of other Brown Thrashers with very long bills in Florida and elsewhere.

Several species were memorable this spring for having strayed so far from the coast such as the Brown Pelican seen near Valdosta on 4/16 (Brad Bergstrom), the two Black-bellied Plover at the E.L. Huie Land Application Facility (ELHLAF) in Clayton Co. on 5/3 (Dan Demko) and on 5/4 (Jim Flynn), the Willet spotted on 4/28 also at ELHLAF (Brock Hutchins), a Wilson's Phalarope at ELHLAF on 5/2 (Kevin Danchisen, Carol Lambert) that stayed several days; another Wilson's Phalarope seen at the protein plant in Dawson Co. on 5/18 (Jack Caruso, John Paget). A few White-rumped Sandpipers stray eastward from their mid-continent flyway and we have come to expect these late migrants at ELHLAF in late May in most years. This year two early arrivals were seen on 5/1 (Carol Lambert, Kevin Danchisen). As many as five were seen there on 5/4 (Jeff

Sewell), and two were seen in Laurens Co. on 5/2 (Tommy Patterson), but the big news were the 30 counted on the coast in Glynn Co. on 5/1 (Giff Beaton, Jim Flynn). The Upland Sandpiper, also a mid-continent migrant, seems to be popping up in areas of the state other than the reliable Laurens Co. site (also famous for its Brewer's Blackbird flock). One was seen on 5/3 in Greene Co. (Paul Sykes) for the second there in as many years.

Reports of roving raptors were scarce this spring with only two species making this column. On 3/15 an immature Rough-legged Hawk was seen in Floyd Co. (Aubrey Scott), the first seen in several years, and Bald Eagles had great nesting success around the state. Jim Ozier of the Non-Game Division of DNR says a record 30 active nests were found, two more than last year and the most since DNR began monitoring them in the 1960's. Rails were found this spring in good numbers at several marshes around the state, two of which (in Macon and in Greene Co.) are on private property, but the good news is that a relatively new marsh in the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park produced some very excellent counts of King and Virginia Rails and Sora (Giff Beaton). It's a bit of a hike to get to this marsh, but well worth the effort. Call me if you need directions.

Black-billed Cuckoos were seen this spring in numbers far exceeding the usual one or two seen around the state in the spring. Kennesaw Mountain was the hot spot with this species being seen on 5/4, 5/11 and 5/17. Comparison of plumages among the observers, several of whom saw more than one bird, led to the conclusion that all three were different birds. Of course, it helped that, nowadays, 15-20 birders can be found on the mountain road on a Saturday and Sunday morning. Not to be outdone, Fernbank Forest hosted a Black-billed on 5/12 (Lisa Hurt) as did the Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon on 5/6 (Jim Ferrari). One seen near Gainesville on 5/4 (Steve Moore) makes six Black-bills seen in the state this spring. This must be a record!

For me, the ones that got away this spring were the two Alder Flycatchers reported by Mike Chapman on 5/10 at Paulk's Pasture WMA near Brunswick, who was first attracted by their call notes. This is the first report of this species since spring 1982 with another record before that in the fall of 1963. This species was recently listed by the Checklist and Records Committee as requiring documentation so remember that my reporting it here does not mean that the committee has accepted the sighting. The same should be said for the Black-headed Grosbeak previously mentioned.

Some birders, and true fanatics they be, are tallying huge counts of thrushes by listening to their night call notes in the period just before dawn as the birds pass overhead or come in to roost after flying all night. Not surprisingly, Kennesaw

FALL MEETING - FIELD TRIP SITES - WHAT TO EXPECT

by Brad Bergstrom

Lake Overstreet & Phipps Parks (N. Tallahassee)-- forest; good fall migrant traps; resident White-breasted Nuthatch; Wild Turkey common; Golden-crowned Kinglets, Pine Siskins in some winters.

Lake Jackson & Lake Lafayette-- loons, grebes, terns, gulls, eagles, herons; grassy margins good for sparrows (esp. L. Jackson)

SE Farms (Tram Rd.)-- shorebirds, waterfowl, gulls, sparrows, hawks; in past falls/winters, this site has hosted 2 Ross's Geese, Eared & Horned Grebes, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, many spp. sparrows (e.g. Grasshopper) & raptors (1 record of Ferruginous).

Springhill Rd. Sewage Treatment Plant-- great place for shorebirds, ducks.

Wakulla Beach & Tiger Hammock-- dense, semi-tropical hardwood hammock, can be great for fall migrants; beach area good for shorebirds, rails, storks, loons, scoters, sparrows (e.g. sharp-tails), White Pelican; Amer. Woodcock winter.

Apalachicola NF & Ochlockonee Riv. SP-- Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, Bachman's Sparrows (hard to find in fall), Brown-headed Nuthatch, Henslow's Sparrows (may be early), Sedge Wrens.

Alligator Pt. & Phipps Preserve (Nature Conservancy)-- fall migrants, Snowy & Piping Plover, may be sea ducks, gannets, Loons offshore; Gray Kingbird, Common Ground-Dove, maybe Red-breasted Nuthatch. Roseate Spoonbill possible at east end of Peninsula (Mashes Sands Pk.)

St. Marks NWR-- one of premier birding sites in southeast. Mounds Pool, Stoney Bayou Pools, Picnic Pond, lighthouse area, Apalachee Bay all off of one 7-mile drive from headquarters (go south from Newport on U.S. 98); a bit early for waterfowl, but look for sparrows, rails (5 spp.), migrating raptors, both bitterns, White Pelican, Glossy Ibis, Reddish Egret, Western Kingbird, and who knows what? A few sightings in recent years: Groove-billed Ani (rare but regular), Greater Flamingo, White-tailed Kite, Common Eider, Oldsquaw, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Lapland Longspur, Lark Bunting, and Yellow-nosed Albatross. One to several Vermilion Flycatchers now spend each winter along Stoney Bayou Pool #2.

St. George Island-- causeway gets American and sometimes Sprague's Pipits in winter; Piping and Snowy Plovers on beach; possibly Henslow's Sparrows under pines in park; songbird and raptor migration; Gull-billed Terns; Magnificent Frigatebird possible. Possible extension to St. Joseph peninsula (road to State Park): can be great area for raptor migration (esp. Sharp-shinned & Broad-winged Hawks, Amer. Kestrels).

Wakulla Springs State Park-- if you've never taken the 45-min Jungle Boat cruise down the river, you must spend the time and the \$4.50 to do so. Most trips get good looks at Limpkin, Purple Gallinule, and Yellow-crowned Night-heron, and "best ever" looks at Osprey, Common Moorhens, Wood Ducks, anhingas & cormorants (swimming alongside the boat) not to mention lots of roosting vultures and gators and snakes.

Hamilton Co. (PCS) phosphate mines-- great diversity of shorebirds, including many Black-necked Stilts; early grebes (3 spp.), waterfowl; gulls, terns; night-herons; small resident population of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks; falcons, osprey, eagles.

JIBS (Jekyll Island Banding Station) / BIAS (Butler Island Altamaha Station)

Plan to visit and/or volunteer at the Cohrs' banding operations on the coast this fall. All volunteers will receive individualized hands-on training. The activities involve collecting, identifying, measuring, banding, photographing, and recording bird species data. The banding stations operate from 7 a.m. until about noon. For more information about this important and fun work, call Doris or Don Cohrs at 912-437-3333 between 6-9 p.m. Rental group housing is available. The dates for this year's operations are as follows:

JIBS: September 20 through October 19

BIAS: August 30 through November 2

ENVIRONMENTAL FUND FOR GEORGIA - WHAT IS THAT?

Did you know the Environmental Fund for Georgia (EFG) represents 22 organizations, including GOS? EFG works with public and private employers throughout the state to raise funds and awareness for its member groups by incorporating an environmental choice in their workplace giving campaigns. Since its foundation in 1992, EFG has gained access to public and private worksites representing more than 250,000 employees and raising \$367,000 for its member groups. GOS has received a total of \$8,116.05 and that amount is growing rapidly.

If any of you work at any of the following companies, you already have the option to support GOS and EFG through your payroll deduction campaign:

Public:

Combined Federal Campaigns: Athens; Atlanta; Columbus; Lowndes; Macon; Savannah; Southeast Georgia.

City of Atlanta, City of East Point, Bibb County, Clayton County, Clayton County Schools, Fulton County, Newton County, State of Georgia.

Private:

Atlanta Landmarks; CNA Insurance; Glass, McCullough, Sherrill & Harrold; Kawneer; LEAF; Life College; Long Aldridge & Norman; Lotus Development; Memorial Medical Center; Piedmont Hospital; REI; Rosser International; Southern Federal Credit Union; Turner Broadcasting Systems; USA Today; Roy Weston.

If your place of business is not listed and you would like an environmental choice in your workplace giving campaign, please help us introduce EFG to your employer. If you would like further information, please call Georgine Pindar at 404-355-8807 or Alice Rolls, Executive Director, EFG at 404-873-3173.

MEMORIAL GIFT PROGRAM - ORANGE TRAIL, STATE BOTANICAL GARDEN IN ATHENS

Doug and Betsy Phillips have made a generous donation to the Orange Trail in memory of their sister-in-law, **Velma Phillips**, an active GOS member who passed away on April 22, 1997. This memorial will be shown on the plaque at the head of the Orange Trail.

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act

A compromise version of the "National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997" (HR 1420), was approved by the House in early June with only one dissenting vote. This bill clearly makes conservation the primary purpose of our National Wildlife Refuges. It also outlines management guidelines and requires that recreational uses of refuges be compatible with the refuge. The bill is supported by the Clinton Administration, Resources Committee Chair Don Young (R-AK) and Resources Committee leading Democrat George Miller (D-CA).

Wildlife refuges comprise the only network of public lands dedicated to wildlife conservation. There are 511 refuges totalling 92 million acres, and they have 30 million visitors per year.

California Condor Release

Four more California Condors have been released in Arizona. The remote Coconino County terrain of northern Arizona provides condors with needed remoteness from man, caves for nesting and ridges for soaring. Five more condors are scheduled for release. They are currently held in a large netted area on cliffs north of the Grand Canyon. The original five birds released last December are doing well and extending their flight range to the south of the Canyon.

Source: *Ornithological Council Newsletter*, Volume 3, No. 1, June 1997

***MIGRATORY SONGBIRDS FACE UNCERTAIN FUTURE
From the Sierra Club, Georgia Chapter***

This spring has seen the most dramatic shift in U.S. bird conservation policy in the last 80 years since Congress passed the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918.

Not only did the federal government recently exempt itself from the MBTA, but two U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeals held that the law does not apply to federal agencies, including the destructive clearcut logging practices of the U.S. Forest Service.

Three years ago, the Sierra Club initiated a series of lawsuits aimed at protecting declining songbird populations in the eastern U.S. from indiscriminate logging by the Forest Service on national forests during the songbird nesting season.

The club was victorious with *Sierra v. Martin* in which Judge Frank Hull granted a preliminary injunction which temporarily halted seven federal timber projects in Georgia national forests. However, now that decision has been overturned, and the Sierra Club is calling for President Clinton and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt to issue an executive order and guidelines clarifying that the MBTA applies to federal agencies and their employees, just as this law and its criminal penalties apply to all citizens of the United States.

National forests are vital for the recovery of songbird populations since they act as "sources" or large breeding areas from which birds can spread to other areas for recovery. Birds like the Cerulean Warbler, the Blackburnian Warbler and at least 20 other songbirds have seen alarming declines of up to 90% over the last two decades. While many of these declines have been blamed on habitat destruction in the tropics, habitat elimination and the timing of logging practices in the U.S. deserve a closer look.

"In the southern region of national forests alone it is estimated that 1.2 million baby songbirds and eggs are destroyed each year by logging between April and the end of June," said René Voss, chair of Sierra Club's Forest Reform Campaign. For more information, contact René Voss at 404-872-9453.