

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

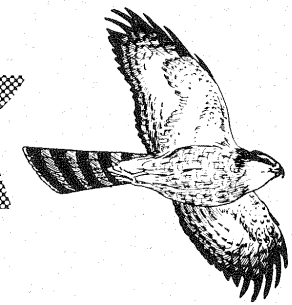
_____ Please send me a list of publications available from the GOS.

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. 4

DECEMBER 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 WRAP-UP

by Ken Clark

Close to 80 GOS and North Florida birders enjoyed a weekend of beautiful weather, lively birding and great food in Tallahassee, Florida, 10-12 October. Field trip coordinator Brad Bergstrom was well supported by knowledgeable field trip leaders from Appalachi Audubon and the Tallahassee Ornithological Seminar who led nine different and interesting field trips producing 172 species of birds identified. Accommodations at the Ramada Inn were first class and quite reasonable, and the Saturday evening buffet was delicious!

Friday evening James Cox, a biologist with the Florida Game and Fish Commission gave us a pictorial guided tour of St. Mark's National Wildlife Refuge, whetting our appetites for our visit there the following day. Saturday's speaker was Todd Engstrom, Staff Ornithologist at Tall Timbers Research Station, who told us why and how Tall Timbers was created and what they are up to now.

Dick Parks presented the Earl Greene award for outstanding service to ornithology to Emil Urban for his monumental series of publications on African birds (see Discovering GOS on p. 4 for the history of this award). The election of officers produced the slate which appears on p. 9 of this publication.

Brad Bergstrom conducted the bird species countdown for Friday and Saturday. As mentioned above, an outstanding 172 species were observed over the weekend, including 29 species of shorebirds and 19 warblers. Best birds included: Reddish Egret, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Virginia Rail, Purple Gallinule, Limpkin, American Golden Plover, Snowy Plover, Wilson's Phalarope, Gull-billed Tern, Vermilion Flycatcher, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Wilson's Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Bobolink...WELL DONE!

SPRING MEETING PLANS

Unicoi Lodge - Helen, Georgia

May 1-3, 1998

Facilities have been reserved at Unicoi Lodge near Helen, Georgia for the GOS spring meeting the first weekend in May 1998. Lodge rooms range from \$49-\$69, single or double. Cottages accomodating 4-6 people are available from \$80-\$100. Campsites and RV spaces are also available. Call 800-864-7275 for information and reservations. Senior discounts are available. Full details of this meeting will be forthcoming, but early reservations are recommended. Remember...this is a popular spot!

Deadline for the next GOShawk is February 1, 1998



NEWSLETTER OF THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1684
Cartersville, GA 30120

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

CARTERSVILLE, GA

PERMIT NO. 97

Georgia

**Ornithological
Society**

Executive Committee

1997-99

Ken Clark, *President*
(912) 474-1924

Eugenia Thompson, *1st V.P.*

Robert Sargent, *2nd V.P.*

Marie Amerson, *Secretary*

Jeannie Wright, *Treasurer*

John Swiderski, *Business Mgr.*

Helen Ogren, *Past President*

Kristi Avera, *Chair*

Membership Committee

(912) 559-6008

Georgann Schmalz, *Chair*

Editorial Committee

(404) 633-1527

Georgine Pindar, *Chair*

Conservation Committee

(404) 355-8454

Terry Moore, *Editor*

The Oriole

Carol Lambert, *Editor*

GOShawk

Other Committee Chairs

1995-97:

Doug Phillips, *Finance*

(404) 255-8017

Chuck Hunter, *Checklist & Records*

(770) 923-4742

Special Projects:

Jeff Sewell

Georgia Rare Bird Alert

(770) 493-8862

Joel Hitt

Birder's Guide to Georgia

GOShawk is published quarterly
(March, June,
September, December).

Editorial Office:

Carol Lambert, Ed.

Jeff Sewell, Field Notes Ed.

4608 Westhampton Drive

Tucker, GA 30084

(770) 939-7668

lambertsewell@juno.com

*Deadline for submission is
the 1st of the month
prior to publication
unless otherwise noted.*

Text on diskette is appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

☺ **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!** ☺

Jay Adams	Macon, GA
M/M Allen Clark	Atlanta, GA
Julia & Tim Elliott	Lilburn, GA
Helen H. Epps	Watkinsville, GA
Harry B. Hooper	Tallahassee, FL
Thomas A. Lewis	Atlanta, GA
Mr. Gail E. Menk	Tallahassee, FL
Melissa Tufts	Comer, GA
Shirley A. Weller	Marietta, GA
Caroline W. Wyatt	Amelia Island, FL

NOTES FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

- ✓ A GOS membership folder is included in this newsletter. Please share it with a birding friend or use it for a gift membership this holiday season.
- ✓ If your mailing label shows 97 in the upper right hand corner, prompt payment of your dues for 1998 will keep you in touch with GOS. Dues and mailing address are shown on the back page of this newsletter.
- ✓ The correct address for GOS president, Ken Clark, with a recent zip code change is 6310 Stapleton Road, Macon, GA 31216-5233.

SANDRA CLAIRE MERSHON

Sandy Mershon,, a GOS member since 1984, died in July from cancer. Sandy was married to John Ball. She was very active in volunteer work in Atlanta including the League of Women Voters which she served as president from 1989 to 1991.

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

Ruth E. Shepler has made a donation to the Orange Trail
in memory of her father,
Roy C. Ericson.

GOS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

December 1997

Ken Clark, President

6310 Stapleton Rd.
Macon, GA 31216-5233
912-474-1924

Robert Sargent, 2nd V.P.

835 Johnson Rd., Apt. 25
Warner Robins, GA 31093
912-328-3426

Eugenia Thompson, 1st V.P.

2015 Morton Rd.
Athens, GA 30605
706-549-7318

Jeannie Wright, Treasurer

3851 Ashford Trail
Atlanta, GA 30319-1894
770-451-1518

John Swiderski, Business Manager

29 Town & Country Dr.
Cartersville, GA 30120
770-382-5188

Marie Amerson, Secretary

701 Plantation Dr.
Macon, GA 31211-9629
912-746-5697

Helen Ogren, Past President

110 Lower Victoria Rd.
Woodstock, GA 30189
770-516-2762

Terry Moore, Editor

The Oriole

13000 Bucksport Ct.
Roswell, GA 30075
770-641-9017

Carol Lambert, Editor

GOShawk

4608 Westhampton Dr.
Tucker, GA 30084
770-939-7668

Georgine Pindar, Chair

Conservation Committee

2633 Ridgemore Rd., N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30318
404-355-8454

Kristi Avera, Chair

Membership Committee

5406 Moss Oak Trail, E.
Lake Park, GA 31636
912-559-6008

Georgann Schmalz, Chair

Editorial Committee

2405 Brookdale Dr., N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30345
404-633-1527

most southerly breeding site I know of. Nesting Tree Swallows also were noteworthy. A pair nested in a bluebird box at E. L. Huie (Caroi Lambert et al) and Paul Sykes counted eight in Greene Co. on 28 June that included several very young birds. Cliff Swallows, too, made news being found in two new locations: Chris Eberly found one pair with two nests under the GA 15 bridge over the Oconee River in Greene Co. on 21 June and Joe Greenberg discovered several hundred nesting at the GA 109 bridge over West Point Lake in Troup Co. in June, these numbers indicating a well-established colony in an area of the state that is mostly unbirded.

Do Red-breasted Nuthatches and Golden-crowned Kinglets nest in Georgia? Several birders have found them in Rabun Co. near the South Carolina line for several years now, but no nests have yet been found; although just across the Chattooga River in South Carolina nesting has been confirmed. On 27 June, Mark Oberle saw or heard three or four Red-breasted Nuthatches at Burrell's Ford on the Chattooga River and on the same day saw two Golden-crowned Kinglets in the same vicinity. Two White-breasted Nuthatches were seen in the Macon area this period: one near his home on 1 June (Paul Johnson) and one in another yard on 6 June (Maurice Crenshaw). This species is rare in the Macon area.

It must have been a good year for Gray Catbirds as both Ray Chandler and Paul Sykes mentioned this species. Ray said the bird is becoming a much more common nester in Bulloch Co. and Paul reported more nests in Greene Co. than at any time in the past 5-10 years. Cedar Waxwings were all over the place, in north Georgia anyway. Many were most likely lingering late. I had reports in June from Macon, Cartersville, Marietta, Cherry Log, Greene Co. and six birds including one nest in Towns Co. on 27 June (Giff Beaton). The colony of Blue-headed Vireo (recently split from the Solitary Vireo) in the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, Jones Co., is doing quite well. On 11 June, Jerry and Marie Amerson counted 11 along a stretch of their BBS route. Although some assume their appearance here in summer indicates a new colony far south of its usual range in the mountains, Burleigh in Georgia Birds notes that in the summer of 1946 one nest and eleven males on territory were found in the refuge and in nearby Jones and Jasper counties.

Once again Cerulean Warblers were found in the mountains. Giff Beaton, on a Breeding Bird Atlas trip, counted nine males and one female along Ivy Log Mountain Road on 5 June, but could not find a nest, leaving for another summer the discovery of conclusive evidence of nesting in Georgia. Paul Sykes found eight Black-and-White Warblers on 28 June in Greene Co., including two pair with one fledgling each. A Kentucky Warbler was seen and heard on 4 June in Lowndes Co. where they are very rare (Brad Bergstrom). Scarlet Tanagers were reported from eight locations in the piedmont, further evidence of their southward expansion. Pairs were seen in two of these locations: in Kennesaw in mid-June (Chuck Saleeby) and at Watson Springs, Greene Co. on 28 June (Chris Eberly). Coming in the opposite direction is the Painted Bunting. The colony in Macon is well known. This summer Andy Kinsey found two pair in Burke Co. on 24 June, including a female carrying nest material. Ray Chandler reported that a pair nested near Statesboro. The Macon area had its first nesting Song Sparrow, found by Paul Johnson near his home on 19 June. As far as I know, this is Georgia's most southerly nesting yet. The species has very slowly pushed southward from the north with the first nesting in Georgia in Union Co. in 1913. Many Atlanta area birders can remember its arrival here as a breeder in the late '40's and '50's. There is one odd record of two pair nesting at Milledgeville in 1950 but this outlying colony apparently never spread, unless the Macon pair are their descendants.

So there you have it -- the breeding season of 1997. I know that there were many interesting sightings not mentioned here, but look for a more complete report in The Oriole. As always I would appreciate your comments and suggestions, particularly those pointing out noteworthy aspects of this year's breeding season that you have not read here.

The deadline for the Fall 1997 Report (August-November) is December 20th. Send reports and correspondence to: Jeff Sewell, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA 30084 or lambertsewell@juno.com

SARGENTS TO HOLD HUMMINGBIRD WORKSHOP

Saturday, December 13, 1997

Bob and Martha Sargent will give a hummingbird workshop in conjunction with the Georgia Hummers group in Newborn, GA (Newton Co.) On December 13th at 7:00 p.m....*Everything you always wanted to know about hummingbirds -- but didn't know who to ask.* For information and directions, call Buddy Rowe at 770-787-5560.

GEORGIA HUMMERS HOTLINE - 770-784-1636

1997 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

It's time again to plan to participate in one of the Christmas Bird Counts around the state. These counts have been held nationally for 98 years and are sponsored by the Audubon Society. Over 45,000 people are expected to participate in more than 2,000 counts this year throughout North America. Please call the contact person for any counts that you are interested in AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so that everyone can plan accordingly. Many thanks to Todd Schneider for compiling this list and sharing it with GOS members.

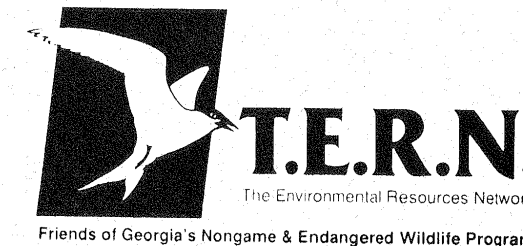
December

Friday, 19th	Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge (Sam Pate 706-327-2574)
Saturday, 20th	Athens (Branch Howe 706-543-1577) Columbus (Sam Pate 706-327-2574) Dalton (Harriett DiGioia 706-278-3858) Macon (Marie Amerson 912-746-5697) Peachtree City (Brock Hutchins 770-461-5042) St. Catherines Island (Emil Urban: by invitation)
Sunday, 21st	Atlanta (Bill Blakeslee 404-881-6570) Chattahoochee National Forest Songbird M.A. (Harriett DiGioia 706-278-3858)
Monday, 22nd	Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge-Rum Creek Wildlife Mgt. Area (Terry Johnson 912-994-1438)
Wednesday, 24th	Aiken, SC [near Augusta] (Anne Waters 706-793-2788)
Saturday, 27th	Albany (Alan Ashley 912-439-8232) Augusta (Anne Waters 706-793-2788) Dublin (Allen Rhodes 912-274-9791)
Monday, 29th	Bainbridge-Lake Seminole (Oscar Dewberry 912-246-1890)
<u>January</u>	
Friday, 2nd	Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge (Pat Metz 912-652-4415 ex.103)
Saturday, 3rd	Glynn County (Mike Chapman 912-262-6370) Sapelo Island (William Dopson: by invitation)
Sunday, 4th	Callaway Gardens (LuAnn Creighton 706-663-5192)

T.E.R.N. NEEDS YOU!

The Environmental Resources Network (T.E.R.N.) is a non-profit "Friends Group" of the Non-game-Endangered Wildlife Program of DNR. They provide volunteer in-kind service to the program, and they raise money to finance projects not funded through other initiatives such as the Income Tax Checkoff and Wildlife Conservation License Plates (the program does not receive project support from the state general fund).

T.E.R.N. is actively seeking additional members from the environmental community in order to increase its support of the Nongame-Endangered Wildlife Program. Annual dues are \$20 per individual, \$25 per family. Checks payable to T.E.R.N. can be mailed to: T.E.R.N., Inc., 116 Rum Creek Drive, Forsyth, GA 31029.



**The Earle R. Greene Memorial Award
by Richard Parks**

In April 1975 the Earle R. Greene Memorial Award was established in response to a resolution by Georgia Ornithological Society President Wallace D. Dreyfoos to honor the memory of Earle R. Greene for his contributions to ornithology. This award is presented at the annual fall meeting of the society to an individual or organization that has made outstanding contributions to either GOS or to ornithology and has some Georgia background connection. The selection of a recipient for the award is made from nominations received by a committee which is appointed by the president. It is not necessary to be a member of GOS to make a nomination or to receive the award. The award is normally made annually, but if no nomination is received that in the opinion of the committee warrants the presentation of the award, no award is made that year.

Earle Greene was born in 1886 in Atlanta and showed an early interest in natural history which became directed to birds by age 13. In 1933 his annotated list Birds of the Atlanta, Georgia Area, the first such list for any local area in the state, was published by the Georgia Society of Naturalists. He also co-authored with William Griffin, Eugene Odum, Herbert Stoddard and Ivan Tomkins, Birds of Georgia. A Preliminary Checklist and Bibliography, published in 1945 as Occasional Publication No. 2 of the Georgia Ornithological Society.

From 1934 to 1942 he served with the Biological Survey (now the Fish and Wildlife Service) at refuges at Mattamuskeet, NC, the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia, and at Key West, FL. The Key West work was ended because of World War II as was his service with the Biological Survey, but his avid interest in birds continued throughout his life.

Earle Greene died at St. Simons Island in 1975 at the age of 88.

EARLE R. GREENE MEMORIAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

Harriett G. DiGioia	1975	T. McRae Williams	1987
Richard A. Parks	1976	Franklin McCamey	1988
J. Fred Denton	1977	Joseph Greenberg	1989
Milton N. Hopkins, Jr.	1978	Don & Doris Cohrs	1990
Leslie B. Davenport, Jr.	1980	Terry S. Moore	1992
Anne P. Hamilton	1982	H. Branch Howe, Jr.	1993
George A. Dorsey	1983	John C. Avise	1994
Eugene P. Odum	1984	H. Ronald Pulliam	1995
William W. Griffin	1985	I. Lehr Brisbin	1996
Roger Tory Peterson	1986	Emil K. Urban	1997
Norman H. Giles	1986		

EXCOM TO MEET IN JANUARY

The GOS Executive Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 24th at the Newman Wetlands Center in Hampton (Clayton County). GOS members are welcome to attend, and committee chairs and members are particularly encouraged to participate. The meeting usually ends by 1:00 p.m. and is often followed by birding at the Wetlands Center or the nearby "Huie" ponds.

by Jeff Sewell

The Summer Season - 1997

June and July

This breeding season, June and July, was a bit above average, it seems to me. Average would be a few extralimital breeders and a few vagrants for spice. This season we had quite a list of species that were found nesting outside their normal ranges and though we may have been about average in the vagrant department, the several we did have were spectacular. In a separate category altogether was a remarkable assemblage of kites over a small field in Tattnall Co. (more later).

Temperatures were somewhat below average for the period for most areas with no extended periods of extreme heat around the state, the only substantial weather event being the passage of the remnant of Hurricane Danny across the northwest corner of the state, which brought with it a Magnificent Frigatebird (more below).

It's the very rare birds that always get our attention, especially during these months. The following sighting would have been astounding at any time of year and although the species is not on the regular checklist (i.e., no accepted sightings in the state), some predicted that sooner or later Georgia would get one, but in the winter not in summer. This made the appearance of a pair of Common Eider on Sapelo Island all the more unusual, if not bizarre. First seen by Brad Winn on 9 July, the female disappeared by or before 16 July before anyone else saw it, but the male remained faithful to one spot and was seen and photographed by birders from all over the state. Indeed, the male, which appeared to be a first year bird, was never seen flying, so the conclusion was that it was molting its flight feathers. It remained through the end of the period.

Never forget that hurricanes can produce some very strange bird sightings. On 22 July, as a weakened Hurricane Danny, having traveled northeasterly from the Gulf, passed through Haralson Co., Michael Bell spotted a female Magnificent Frigatebird about 200 feet above him as he traveled down a road. He followed it for about one-half mile as it sailed along in a stiff wind. We should check North Carolina reports for it, as that's where Danny ended up. The Greater Shearwater that landed in a parking lot in Sandersville on 13 July, apparently mistaking it for a lake, arrived there without the assistance of a hurricane. It wound up with rehabilitator Lynn Schlup, was identified by Paul Sykes, but died on 6 August after appearing to do well in the interim, a pattern much like that of one of the same species which landed in a yard near Lake Lanier in July 1994. That bird was also found in July causing some to opine that such strays of this highly pelagic species must have some disorienting brain disease causing them to lose their way on their passage to the North Atlantic and stray overland, eventually crashing and finally dying of starvation.

Though each of these previous reports are quite remarkable, in my opinion the most unforgettable scene for this period involved two species that breed in Georgia, but before this, nobody had ever seen so many in one place at one time. On

9 July, Ray Chandler while driving on GA169 nine miles north of the Altamaha River in Tattnall Co. saw a huge flock of Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites swirling over a hay field feeding on June bugs. The birds remained through the end of the month with 22-35 Swallow-tails being seen consistently, peaking at 52 on 28 July (Ray Chandler). This is more Swallow-tails than some would have estimated as the entire Georgia population, even more remarkable because no immatures were seen among them. With the Swallow-tails were Mississippi Kites numbering from at least five up to a high of 22, which included seven juveniles.

Interesting sightings of late northward bound migrants include the pair of Greater Scaup at the E.L. Huie facility near Jonesboro, first seen in late May, and last seen on 1 June (Aubrey Scott), and the three Caspian Terns seen on 21 June over Lake Tallapoosa in Haralson Co. (Giff Beaton). An even rarer stray was the White-winged Dove seen in Lowndes Co. on 1 June (Brad Bergstrom). Several other noteworthy sightings of vagrants will have to await *The Oriole* field notes as space requires I get on with breeding species, or at least species that spent the period in the state even though they may not breed.

In this last category is the American White Pelican colony situated at the mouth of the St. Mary's River on the Georgia-Florida line, near the King's Bay Submarine Base and on the ferry route to Cumberland Island. On 12 June ten were seen here by Helen Brackett. Perhaps they are first year birds that prefer to hang out here rather than follow the adults to their mid-continent breeding grounds. Least Bittern were seen more frequently than usual being reported from four inland locations, including one that is new: northeast Tattnall Co. where on 12 June Rick West saw two in a farm pond.

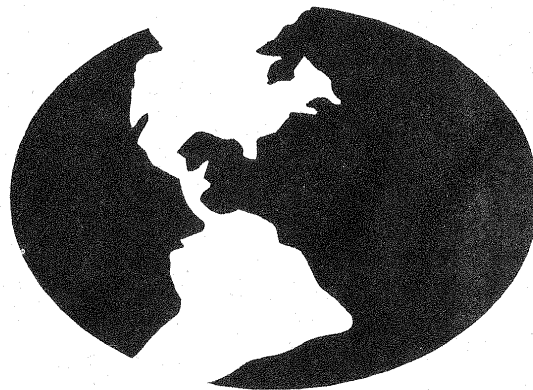
Will we find Reddish Egrets nesting in Georgia? The most northerly breeding site I know of is near Cape Canaveral, Florida, so how do we account for two immatures seen on 21 June and 6 July on Ossabaw Island and three immatures seen on 2 July in the Altamaha River Estuary? Well, as the first adult was seen on 1 June on Ossabaw Island, I suppose, for now at least, we can only conclude that these birds are the first to spread north from their breeding grounds (all reports from Brad Winn).

Interesting breeding reports include a Hairy Woodpecker with young in Betty Derrick's backyard in Lowndes Co. (Brad Bergstrom), thought to be a first county record, and a new location for Willow Flycatchers in southern Dawson Co. On 8 June, Joel Volpi heard one singing on territory near the Etowah River. The species seems slowly to be expanding its range across the northern piedmont. Also spreading south is the Eastern Phoebe. On 1 June, Dan and Pam Guynn saw and heard one near Vienna on their BBS route. Three Horned Larks including one immature were seen at a sod farm in Bulloch Co. throughout the period (Ray Chandler). This is even further south than the sod farm in Peach Co. which is the

PROTECTING THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

EARTH SUMMIT

When government leaders, including 108 heads of state, gathered in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 for the Earth Summit (the UN Conference on Environment and Development), they adopted Agenda 21, a global plan for sustainable development. Now, five years later, leaders have found that, despite progress in many areas,
THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE.



CLIMATE CHANGE

The UN Convention on Climate Change has been ratified by 166 nations, but we must wait until the conference in Kyoto, Japan this December to determine what legally binding emission targets developed countries will be willing to adopt. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) reviews scientific research on all factors that impinge on climate worldwide.

OZONE DEPLETION

Industrialized countries have banned production of CFC's as of 1996, but developing countries have been given ten years to comply. Other ozone-depleting substances will be phased out on schedule.

ACID RAIN

Acid rain has been significantly reduced in Europe and North America, but much work remains to be done.

HAZARDOUS WASTES AND CHEMICALS

The Basel Convention on hazardous wastes, negotiated in 1989 in an effort to regulate some 3 million tons of toxic waste crossing national borders each year, has been ratified by 108 countries. The treaty was amended in 1995 to outlaw the export of toxic waste to developing countries who may not have the technology for safe disposal.

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, signed in 1992 and now ratified by 161 nations, governments must protect plant and animal species through such means as habitat preservation.

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) launched the Global Biodiversity Assessment in 1995 and the 1,500 scientists working on the project worldwide report that the rate of species extinction and habitat loss, largely due to human activities, is unprecedented.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has been in place since 1973 with countries meeting periodically to determine which plant and animal species or products should be protected by quotas or outright bans.

FORESTS

About 13.7 million hectares of forest, an area the size of Nepal, is cut and burned each year worldwide. At the June 1997 UN session on the environment, an Intergovernmental Forum on Forest was set up to consider, among other things, a possible forest treaty.

WATER

One-third of the people in the world live in countries facing moderate to severe shortages of usable water. By 2025, that figure may rise to two-thirds of the world's population if action is not taken. At the 1997 meeting, governments called for talks to plan strategies.

FINANCING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), jointly run by the World Bank and agencies of the UN, is the main source of loans to developing countries for environmental projects. Donor countries contributed over \$2 billion in 1994.

GEORGIA BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

by Rick West

The Advisory Council of the Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas met on October 25th. Todd Schneider provided a map showing a number of new blocks from which significant data has been reported. Target completion in the year 2000 still seems secure, but Todd would like to see a higher standard for completed blocks before the project is done.

Put this on your calendar! Memorial Day weekend at the beach...away from the crowds on the coastal islands... for good birds, good fun and good sport (also known as Atlasing). Todd will arrange for transportation and over two nights on Ossabaw Island, Sapelo Island and possibly one of the federal islands (depending on participation). You do not have to be an expert to participate.

Two other weekend Atlasing parties are planned: June 5-6 for south Georgia and June 20-21 for north Georgia. Co-leaders will be Giff Beaton, Mark Oberle and Malcolm Hodges building on successful weekends they led this year. Look for more details in the next *GOShawk* or register with Giff Beaton 770-509-1482.

Todd announced that the state will put up funds for blockbusting for the next three years. This will assure survey of the remote and unpopular blocks so the project will reach a successful completion by 2000. These funds are meant primarily for students who are already good birders. We want the best qualified, hardest-working people we can find, so please help Todd find good candidates -- it won't be easy.

Great Horned Owls found on Christmas Bird Counts also count for the Atlas. Each CBC circle has been plotted on the grid used for the Atlas project, and is available from your Regional Coordinator. Please plot the location of any owl species heard -- Great Horned Owls for direct inclusion and the others for later followup.

We still need continuing and new atlasing help from the GOS membership. Again, you don't need to be an expert birder to contribute. Please contact Todd Schneider (see below) or Rick West 800-707-4382.

The Publication Committee is seeking candidate editors/co-editors for the final publication. If you would like to be considered, or know someone who would, please contact chairman Mark Oberle 404-982-0166.

OPEN LETTER TO BIRDERS AVOIDING THE GEORGIA BBA...

If you are an active Georgia birder and have not yet contributed data to the Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas project, this message is for you. Georgia desperately needs the participation of all its birders in order to make this atlas a success. This is a vast area, the largest state east of the Mississippi, with relatively few birders. I know that there are highly skilled birders in this state who are not yet atlasing, which is hard to understand considering the importance of this work and the talent out there. Please don't wait any longer. Help us! Call Todd Schneider for the name of your regional coordinator and sign up to atlas a block TODAY. Too many are still available.

...from a frustrated Georgia birder/Atlaser



Georgia's Breeding Bird Atlas will serve as a snapshot of the distribution of birds in the state at the end of the 20th century. It will provide an important baseline from which future changes in distribution can be compared. Another atlas project completed 15-20 years after this one, would provide information about significant changes that have occurred. With this information in hand, appropriate conservation actions can be taken. This atlas project and future work will greatly enhance our understanding of bird distribution in Georgia and will make large-scale conservation planning and action possible.

STATE COORDINATOR

Todd Schneider

**DNR, Wildlife Resources Division
Nongame-Endangered Wildlife Program**

116 Rum Creek Drive

Forsyth, GA 31029

Phone: 912-994-1438

e-mail: forsyth_nongame@mail.dnr.state.ga.us