

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

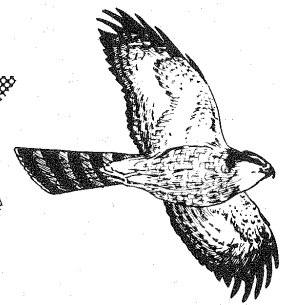
_____ Please send me a list of publications available from the GOS.

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 25 NO. 1

MARCH 1998

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 SPRING MEETING
Unicoi Lodge - Helen, Georgia
May 1-3, 1998

All members should have received a February mailing with registration information about the Spring meeting at Unicoi. This promises to be a great meeting in a beautiful setting, with a good variety of field trips organized by the local folks. As announced, we will be based at the Unicoi Lodge near Helen, where a block of rooms in Building "D" have been set aside for GOS participants. There are also many other lodging facilities in the area, as well as campgrounds. Note that although the registration form you received from Unicoi lists "smoking" rooms as an option, our entire building is "non-smoking." Also, rather than our usual banquet on Saturday night, we will eat dinner at the regular dining room buffet, as banquet facilities are not available. From all reports, the buffet is excellent, and participants can just purchase meal tickets at dinner-time. Therefore, no banquet fee is being charged or collected with meeting registration fee by GOS. For registration information call Eugenia Thompson 706-549-7318.

Friday night's speaker will be Dr. Bob Cooper of the University of Georgia. He has an encouraging report on "The Gypsy Moth and Georgia's Birds." At the suggestion of many members, we have delayed the time of Friday night's meeting to 8:00 p.m. rather than the usual 7:00 p.m. This should make it possible for more members to attend this session after working all day Friday.

The 1996 recipient of the GOS Graduate Research Grant, Dr. James Major, will be our speaker Saturday night. After receiving his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin in 1997, Dr. Major accepted a position on the faculty there. He will speak to us on "The Central Texas Tufted Titmouse *Baeolophus bicolor* Hybrid Zone." Dr. Major, like his father, is a long-time member of GOS, and has enthusiastically accepted our invitation to speak.

A special thanks to Frank McCamey for moving into his conference planning mode to handle most of our arrangements for this meeting. This function is normally done by our 2nd Vice President and Frank was a tremendous help while that position was vacant.

FALL MEETING PLANS
Holiday Inn - Jekyll Island, Georgia
October 2-4, 1998

We'll be back at our most popular coastal retreat, Jekyll Island, for the Fall Meeting. Plans are underway and details will be forthcoming in the June *GOSHawk*.



NEWSLETTER OF THE GEORGIA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1684
Cartersville, GA 30120

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Deadline for the next *GOSHawk* is May 1, 1998

Georgia

Ornithological Society

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

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

Text by e-mail or diskette is appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

© WELCOME NEW MEMBERS! ©

Christine Aldrich	Marietta, GA	Jeff Horseman	Marietta, GA
Roger Atchison	Monticello, FL	Carol McClelland	Savannah, GA
Ken & Janice Badke	Alpharetta, GA	Gail Russell	Atlanta, GA
Julie Bolen	Marietta, GA	Melinda Schaeffbauer	Athens, GA
Bob Chandler	Milledgeville, GA	Joseph Schlemmer	Riverdale, GA
Mark Freeman	Athens, GA	Andreas Smith	Valdosta, Ga
Orion Harrison	Statesboro, GA	Larry Sparks	Atlanta, GA

JAMES MILLER

Dr. James Miller died on November 4, 1997. Jim and his wife Anne were very active in the Georgia birding community and he served on the Board of Directors of Atlanta Audubon from 1993-97. He was retired as Professor Emeritus of Management at Georgia State University's Business College.

GEORGE A. PINDAR

George Pindar, husband of member and Conservation Committee Chair, Georgine Pindar, passed away on December 18, 1997 of Alzheimer's Disease. He was a respected attorney and the author of *Georgia Real Estate Law and Procedure* and other works on real property law.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

- ▶ A mistake was made in the address listing for Editorial Committee Chair, Georgann Schmalz. Please note that her correct address is: 2504 Brookdale Dr., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30345.
- ▶ If you need to contact GOS regarding issues such as address or telephone changes, problems getting your publications, or for information about GOS, meetings, etc., these can be e-mailed to our new listing (see p. 3) or mailed to GOS, P.O. Box 1684, Cartersville, GA 30120 or sometime in the near future called in to GOS general information phone number (see p. 3). PLEASE do not call, write or e-mail the *GOShawk* editor or the Rare Bird Alert with this information. These types of inquiries are the responsibilities of others within the organization and will be appropriately routed to them from our e-mail, regular mail and soon to be established telephone information line.
- ▶ There has been a delay in the publication of *The Oriole*. The last issue sent out was Volume 61 No. 1 with a cover date of March 1996 (published August 1997). We are now attempting to identify a way to resume publication of *The Oriole* on a more regular basis. We hope that you will be patient and bare with us while this problem is worked out.

found in a mall parking lot in Morrow off I-75 on 23 Sept. (fide Carol Lambert).

SANDHILL CRANE migration got off to a very early start when, on 29 Sept., Ceree Hitt saw 50 over Forsyth Co. Numbers during November, the normal migration period seemed a bit low, with more birds apparently awaiting colder weather in December before heading south. What may be the highest one day count of AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS for Georgia came on 19 Sept. when Brad Winn and Jeff Sewell counted about 200 on Wolf Island. Inland, the shorebird of note was BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, one staying two days at ELHLAF from 23 Aug. (Shawn Reed) and a huge count of six on 31 Aug. at the sod farm in Peach Co. (Aubrey Scott, Michael Bell). Does anybody recall a higher one place number of this species? Many other good shorebird reports were received and will be reported in *The Oriole*.

In a development that Terry Moore called "frightening" because of their predation on smaller birds, particularly nesting terns, unprecedented numbers of GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS were reported. On 18 Sept. Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert counted 31 at Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Island, and a few days later on 21 Sept. Mark Oberle estimated 40-50 on Sapelo Island. On 19 Sept. Carol and I saw one of the Gould's Inlet Great Black-backs approach an adult SANDWICH TERN who was distracted as it tried to swallow a fish. The gull seized the tern by the wing, dragged it to the water, struggled with it, and finally drowned and ate the smaller bird. In another event of dubious portent, Paul Hoinowsky found three EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE and a nest near the Macon airport in late Aug., the first sighted in the Macon area. Another was found at the Macon brickyards in September (Paul Johnson, Ken and Arlene Clark, Jerry and Marie Amerson). One BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO on 28 Sept. in Cobb Co. (Roy Hester) was about average for the fall.

Highlights of the fall hummingbird migration are as follows: several RUFOUS showed up, as are now expected, including one bird banded on 27 Sept. in Bluffton, Early Co., that was banded last year and an albino RUBY-THROATED banded in Columbus on 10 Sept. (Terry Johnson). The state's 6th or 7th ALLEN'S was banded on 31 Oct. in LaFayette by Donna and Dwayne Berger (fide Bob Sargent), but was not seen after that. Flycatcher noteworthies include: a WESTERN KINGBIRD at St. Simons Island on 14 Sept. (Jeff Sewell); a SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER near Byron, Peach Co., seen on 4 Aug. (Joyce Harrison) that stayed two days (Jerry Amerson); an OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER on 10 Sept. (Mark Davis); and a great fall for YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHERS for Jerry and Marie Amerson -- they had one in their yard in Jones Co. on 27 Aug. and three (possibly the same three from last year?) at the Ocmulgee National Monument on 20 Sept. There were several other reports of Yellow-bellieds. I hope everyone has read Kaufman's *Advanced Birding* on separating fall Yellow-bellied from Acadians. A few interesting swallow reports: 200 TREE SWALLOWS spent two days at ELHLAF, 27-28 Oct. (Carol Lambert) and on the record late date of 22 Nov., 2 were seen at ELHLAF (Jim Flynn) and 2 at nearby Lake Spivey in Henry Co. (Jeff Sewell); 10 CLIFF SWALLOWS on 9 Aug. in Bartow Co. (Aubrey Scott, Michael

Bell); and adding to a few recent reports of huge numbers of BANK SWALLOWS passing through the state, Tommy Patterson adds his: 400 on 9 Aug. in Laurens Co.; and "thousands" at Harris Neck NWR on 30 Aug. (Carol Eldridge, fide Anne Waters).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES invaded this year, arriving in early October. Many moved on but many lingered at feeders into November. Passerine migration was evidently good, at least from several of the usual hotspots. Some of the numbers are due, no doubt, to the heavy birder coverage in some locations such as Kennesaw Mountain in Cobb Co. Highlights, aside from the Virginia's Warbler already mentioned: six PHILADELPHIA VIREOS at Cochran Shoals NRA near Atlanta on 6 Oct. (Pierre Howard); three WARBLING VIREOS, two from the Atlanta area, one from Brunswick; two LAWRENCE'S WARBLERS, one at Kennesaw Mtn. on 19 Sept. (Giff Beaton et al) and one on 29 Sept. in north Atlanta (Jack Carusos). NASHVILLE and WILSON'S WARBLERS were seen in numbers much above average (10 Nashvilles and 8 Wilson's reported), many away from Kennesaw Mtn. As most of you know by now, NORTHERN ORIOLE has been split into BALTIMORE ORIOLE AND BULLOCH'S ORIOLE. Of Bulloch's only a handful have been seen in Georgia, so one in Atlanta on 1 Oct. is noteworthy (Jack Carusos). This species is listed by the Checklist and Records Committee as one requiring documentation.

Winter finch reports were few. A few PURPLE FINCHES were reported with even fewer PINE SISKINS, and no EVENING GROSBEAKS. These are apparently not following the RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES into the state; however we did have an invasion from the west of BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAKS, if all of the reports are documented and accepted by the Records Committee. First, Louis Schweizer reported that on 19 Sept. he had two at his feeder in Tiger, Rabun Co.; Bill Allen had a female in his carport in Rome on 9 Oct., and on 8 Oct. Ray and Earlene Mangham reported one near Macon. To date, I have received details from only one of them. I am sure everyone is aware that it is quite easy to mistake a first fall male Rose-breasted Grosbeak for a female Black-headed Grosbeak, so a good, careful look is required.

I apologize for all the good reports that couldn't appear here due to space limitations, so look for them in a future issue of *The Oriole*. As always, your comments are welcomed and encouraged.

The deadline for the Winter 1997-98 Report

December-February) is March 31, 1998.

Send reports and correspondence to:

Jeff Sewell, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA 30084
or e-mail: lambertsewell@juno.com

FIELD NOTES

by Jeff Sewell

The Fall Season - 1997 August, September, October

This was a very exciting fall season, more so for the impressive numbers of some species that were found by an ever increasing number of Georgia birders than for the occurrence of outstanding rareities, although the Bird of the Season, and probably of the year, Georgia's first VIRGINIA'S WARBLER, was truly remarkable. It's discovery is an example of the better coverage our large, and largely underbirded, state is getting nowadays. The Virginia's Warbler, a species that has been found in the East only about ten times or so, was found at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park near Marietta on September 17. What I found interesting about this was that when I first started birding in Atlanta in the late 1980's, Kennesaw Mountain was unheard of as a birding location. The second interesting fact about the sighting is that it was found on a Wednesday morning, when there might not normally have been any birders on the mountain. Pierre Howard was the first to see and recognize the bird, followed by Shawn Reed and Larry Edmonds. All were able to get good looks. It could not be located after 9:30 a.m. that morning, but surprisingly, it was located again the next morning by Pierre Howard and several others. Even more startling, it was found on a third straight day by Shawn Reed and Giff Beaton. Many folks left many places of business to look for this bird, some spending many hours on the mountain, but in the end, only 8 people saw it.

The weather this season was fairly normal with no significant weather events to provide additional excitement. Many observers felt it was a very good season for migrants, especially shorebirds. Only the most outstanding sightings will be mentioned here, so look for a more complete account in The Oriole.

Following are the season's highlights in, more or less, taxonomic order. PIED-BILLED GREBES nested again in Macon with at least two pair producing two-three broods, seen in August-September (Paul Johnson). HORNED GREBES were seen in greater than average numbers from many locations, a fact that is no doubt due to more birders/better coverage. Less clear is the increasing presence of EARED GREBE in the fall at locations that have for many years been well covered, so I think we can say we have been seeing a true increase with this species. The E. L. Huie Land Application Facility ponds in Clayton Co. (ELHLAF) had four on 11 Sept. (Patrick Brisse) and another three on 17 November (Shawn Reed); seven in Laurens Co. in early Sept. (Tommy Patterson), three at Lake Spivey in Henry Co. on 9 Nov. (Jeff Sewell), and 3 at Lake Lanier on 16 Nov. (Giff Beaton, Jeff Sewell).

Four very lucky birders were able to accompany a fishing boat out of St. Simons Island on 21 Oct. and had a remarkable day: 360 CORY'S SHEARWATERS, seven GREATER SHEARWATERS, three AUDUBON SHEARWATERS, six POMARINE JAEGERs, one PARASITIC JAEGER, 11 BRIDLED TERNS, and, amazingly,

14 AMERICAN COOTS, some as far out as 50 miles (Giff Beaton, Pierre Howard, Jeff Sewell, Brad Winn). Hopefully, this will be an incentive for more pelagic trips. Jim Flynn, Kevin Danchisen, Giff Beaton and Shawn Reed were amazed to see 3 AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS fly over them on 9 Nov. on the Chattahoochee River near the Walter F. Georgia dam.

REDDISH EGRETS continue to slowly multiply on the coast. Brad Winn saw 11 on 6 Aug. on the Egg Island Bar, the most I've ever heard of. Every now and then I get a report of this species away from the beaches and barrier islands. These sightings should be carefully studied and documented as, under certain conditions, there is the possibility of confusion with Little Blue Heron.

Thirteen GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE at the Bradley Unit, Eufaula NWR on 9 Nov. was an excellent count for this rare winterer (Giff Beaton et al). Ducks were in good numbers at most locations with the COMMON EIDER at Sapelo Island, a holdover from July (Brad Winn) and last seen on 12 Oct. (Helena Woods), and a male CINNAMON TEAL seen at close range on 2 Oct. in Augusta (Anne Waters, Clarence Belger) being the most outstanding for the period. Other noteworthy sightings: five female BLACK SCOTERS on 9 Nov. at the Walter F. George Dam, Lake Eufaula, very rare inland (Jim Flynn, Giff Beaton, Shawn Reed, Kevin Danchisen); and a WHITE-WINGED SCOTER seen on 28 Oct. by Art & Jan Smith at ELHLAF.

The amazing assembly of kites at a field in Tattnall Co., near the Altamaha River continued into August. Ray Chandler discovered them in July and on 19 Aug. counted 25 SWALLOW-TAILED KITES. On 2 Aug. Bruce Dralle had 20 there. All had left by the end of the month. Ray has written up a report for The Oriole for this remarkable event. Paul Johnson had a nest of MISSISSIPPI KITES in his subdivision near Macon that as late as 28 Aug. had a fledgling in it. The last adult was seen 10 Sept.

Other good raptor reports: 11 MERLINS on 12 Oct. and 8 on 13 Oct. at Jekyll Island (Pierre Howard), and an early Merlin in Bibb Co. on 20 Sept. (Jerry and Marie Amerson); PEREGRINE FALCONS were widely reported; one AMERICAN KESTREL in Bartow Co. on 2 Aug. may indicate a rare piedmont area nesting (Joe Greenberg et al); a very early, but not a record, NORTHERN HARRIER on 6 Aug. on Sapelo Island (Doris Cohrs). The flight of BROAD-WINGED HAWKS seemed poor, but numbers of BALD EAGLES are increasing per Terry Moore. COMMON MOORHENS nested for the second year in a row in Macon. There were at least two pair and young birds were seen Aug.-Oct. This is only the second nesting in Bibb Co. per Paul Johnson. Certain species seem to be poor flyers and/or navigators like the AMERICAN COOT found under a bush near Georgia State University in downtown Atlanta on 13 Nov. (Tim Nassar) and the SORA

GOS IS NOW ON THE AIR!

For those GOS members who have made the leap into the Information Age (whether willingly or kicking-and-screaming), the Georgia Ornithological Society Home Page is now officially in electronic circulation. The web site will function not only as the GOS billboard along the information superhighway, but also as a resource for birders from around the state, around the country and around the world.

The site contains GOS membership information and announcements, Georgia Rare Bird Alert transcripts, trip reports from around the state, species accounts, Christmas Bird Count and North American Migration Count data, and links to web sites for our neighboring states. The site is maintained by GOS member Jim Flynn, but all GOS members are encouraged to participate and contribute to the content of the site, especially in the form of trip reports and species accounts. For more information on how to contribute, please contact Jim via email at jflynn@america.net or via US mail at 6360 Lillie Lane, Cumming, GA, 30040-4231. Jim has a scanner which accepts slides, 35 mm negatives and prints of up to 4x6 inches if you would like to donate images of Georgia birds (photographed in Georgia). All materials will be returned to their owners, but copies of originals are highly recommended.

The address (URL) of the GOS Home Page is: <http://america.net/~jflynn/>

GOS EVEN HAS AN E-MAIL ADDRESS!

gos@hom.net

Thanks to our new secretary, Marie Amerson, and her husband, Jerry, GOS now has an e-mail address:

gos@hom.net

Information or questions about GOS, membership, etc. will be routed to the appropriate individual or committee.

TELEPHONE INFORMATION LINE PLANNED VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDED!

Now that we are accessible to the entire planet via computer, we thought we'd really go hi-tech and install a telephone line for general GOS information and messages. Callers to this line will not talk to an actual person, but will hear a recorded message about membership, upcoming meetings and events, and who to call for what within the organization. Callers will be able to leave messages which will then be routed to the appropriate person or committee. WHO WILL DO THIS ROUTING? We need a volunteer - or even a few volunteers -- to take responsibility for updating the recording, checking it for messages daily, and routing them appropriately. This will not involve having any special telephone equipment at your house, but will only require calling in to whichever automated answering system we contract with. If we get more than one person, responsibility could rotate weekly, monthly or whatever.

This should not be a very time-consuming activity, but one that is very important to the communication abilities of GOS. This new telephone number will have an Atlanta area code so volunteers should also be in that area (404,770 or 678). All you folks who've been out there just wondering what you could do to contribute to this organization...this is it. You don't have to write newsletters, ornithological journals, compile field notes, document sightings, lead field trips, organize big meetings -- or even be able to identify anything beyond a Cardinal.

If you have the time and interest, please let us know...you can write us: P.O. Box 1684, Cartersville, GA 30121...you can e-mail us: gos@hom.net...or you can even call Ken Clark on this one: 912-474-1924.

GOS COMMITTEES & SPECIAL PROJECTS

1997-1999

Officers and committee members serve two year terms except for the Business Manager, Editors and Editorial Committee members (6 years). All terms are renewable. First year of continuous service in the positions specified is indicated in parentheses.

E	X	E	C	U	T	I	V	E
		Ken Clark, President (95)			Helen Ogren, Past President (95)			
		Eugenia Thompson, 1st V.P. (96)			Kristi Avera, Membership Ch. (93)			
		Gail Russell, 2nd V.P. (98)			Georgann Schmalz, Editorial Ch. (96)			
		Marie Amerson, Secretary (97)			Georgine Pindar, Conservation Ch. (86)			
		Jeannie Wright, Treasurer (95)			Terry Moore, Ed. <i>The Oriole</i> (81)			
		John Swiderski, Business Mgr. (76)			Carol Lambert, Ed. <i>GOShawk</i> (94)			

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 Doris Cohrs (83)
 Jack Cooper (87)

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT
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 Bill Lovejoy (90)
 William Van Eseltine (95)

RARE BIRD ALERT
 Jeff Sewell, Statewide (93)
 Lilla Kate Hart, S. Georgia (96)

BIRDER'S GUIDE TO GA
 Joel Hitt, Chr. (90)
 Ken Blackshaw (90)
 Giff Beaton (95)

INTERNET HOME PAGE
 Jim Flynn (98)

ENVIRONMENTAL FUND FOR GEORGIA / EARTH DAY '98

GOS has received another large check from EFG as our share of payroll deduction pledges. A big thank you to those of you who work where you have an opportunity to pledge to the environment and who do so each year.

EFG has established the Georgia EcoNetwork with information about the environmental groups of the 22 member organization, including GOS. You can access the new web resource at: www.efg.org

In celebration of Earth Day this year, GOS will take part in the Rain Forest Adventure at the State Botanical Garden in Athens on Saturday, April 25th. This will be a family festival emphasizing the needs of migratory birds. We are asking for volunteers to lead a bird walk at 9:30 along the Orange Trail, which GOS helps support. We also need volunteers to help with other activities during the day. If you are willing to help please call Georgine Pindar 404-355-8454 or Branch Howe 706-543-1577.

If you cannot take part in the Rain Forest Adventure, why not join whatever activities have been planned in your part of the state for Earth Day -- or initiate plans of your own?

MEMORIAL GIFTS TO THE STATE BOTANICAL GARDENS - ORANGE TRAIL

Georgine Pindar has given to the Orange Trail Memorial Fund in memory of:
 Ida L. Sherman
 George A. Pindar

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❖ **TOWER SUNSET OWL PROWL - OKEFENOKEE NWR** ❖
 March 14, 5:00 P.M.
 Call 912-496-7836

❖ **LAKE EUFAULA'S FINS, FEATHERS & FLOWERS WEEKEND** ❖
 March 27,28,29
 A weekend Waterfowl/Wildlife Program sponsored by the Alabama Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at the Lakepoint State Park Resort.
 Call 800-252-7275

❖ **1998 NORTH AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONFERENCE - ST. LOUIS, MO** ❖
 April 6-12
 Call 314-516-6224 or 314-516-6578

❖ **RAIN FOREST ADVENTURE - STATE BOTANICAL GARDENS, ATHENS, GA** ❖
 April 25
 Call 404-355-8454 or 706-543-1577

❖ **GOS SPRING MEETING - UNICOI LODGE, HELEN, GA** ❖
 May 1-3

❖ **INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY** ❖
 Saturday, May 9
 Participate in bird activities/events in your area during the week of May 2-10

❖ **WETLANDS FESTIVAL - REYNOLDS NATURE PRESERVE, MORROW, GA** ❖
 Saturday, May 9
 Call 770-603-4188

COUNTY LISTING IN GEORGIA?

by Jim Flynn

Almost every birder who is also a lister is familiar with the concept of "state listing," whereby an observer attempts to see as many species of birds within the boundaries of a state in a given period of time, usually defined as a day, a year, or a lifetime. The American Birding Association can probably be held accountable for this practice more than any other organization due to their yearly publication of listing results for their membership (at least those who care to participate). Naturally, state- year- and life-listing is also a regular feature of most state ornithological societies, including the GOS.

I suppose that one of the reasons as to why county listing is on the increase in many states is that state listing just doesn't have the same appeal as when you first started keeping track of what you observed in the state. Perhaps the ennui of state listing drives people to a new level of obsession. Or maybe it's because some birders don't have the means to participate on a statewide level, but they can on a county level. Whatever the reason is, county listing has a strong foothold in many states (our neighbor to the northeast, South Carolina, being one of them).

It is understandable why county listing has not taken off in Georgia. One reason is the sheer number of counties, 158 of them (most states have between 40 and 80). I haven't personally done the research, but probably no state other than Texas (of course) has more counties. Another is perhaps because Georgia is lightly birded, save some of the bigger metro areas and the coast.

In spite of these challenges, I am proposing that we Georgia birders attain that next level of organized data accumulation by monitoring what we see in each county. Many of the counties in the state are tiny, with little variation of habitat, but you'd be surprised what you will find once you start looking. Here are some examples and all due to county birding:

1) Giff Beaton located a Clay-colored Sparrow in Lamar Co. on his way back from Piedmont NWR CBC, to get some exposure to that lightly birded county.

2) Giff also found a couple of Brewer's Blackbirds in Cobb Co. while chasing a Snow Goose, which would have been a new county bird for him.

3) I found an Oldsquaw in Forsyth Co. while searching for a Common Goldeneye (which I did not see) at Lake Lanier in Gwinnett Co., and ended up with American Black Ducks in Gwinnett to boot.

In each of these chases, those species probably would have otherwise gone undetected. County birding can quickly result in mini "Patagonia Picnic Table Effects."

On the surface, of course, this appears to be just a competitive game designed to drive Georgia birders nuts. However, a fine-tuned state avifaunal distribution understanding and the location for that next local hot-spot are the ultimate goals. (My hidden agenda may be to get the semi-retired birders back into the field.)

To organize something that will undoubtedly be as chaotic as county listing in Georgia, I am volunteering to be the maestro of the mayhem, at least at the data accumulation level, by serving as a clearinghouse for observers' county lists and significant sightings. Obviously, neither the GOS (nor myself) is of the means to support the hard copy publication of the data, so distribution of results will have to occur via electronic format (either email or, most likely, via a web site). Naturally, if you do not have a PC or email capabilities, we will have to work something out so that anyone who wants to participate can.

If you are interested, please scrutinize the years of data and email (or snail mail) the following information to me (you must be a GOS member in good standing):

- * Name and County where you reside
- * Total number of species observed in applicable Georgia counties; I know this will take a lot of research.
- * Some county highlights, if you can, with dates and locations

Also, if you would like to have a list of Georgia counties, let me know and I will email them to you.

My email address is jflynn@america.net and my "snail mail" address is 6360 Lillie Lane, Cumming, GA, 30040-4231.

I will contact everyone who participates with the monthly results and where to view the data.

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS - BLOCK BUSTING PARTY SCHEDULE

Please contact one of the trip leaders or Todd Schneider to reserve a space. People of all skill levels are welcome!

Memorial Day Weekend (May 23-25). This trip will include atlasing for one day on the mainland just west of the coast and one or two days atlasing on some of the less accessible state and federally owned barrier islands (e.g. Ossabaw Island). Leaders are Giff Beaton (770)509-1482 or e-mail: giffbeaton@mindspring.com and Todd Schneider (912)994-1438 work or (912)746-4523 home or e-mail: forsyth_nongame@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

Fitzgerald Area (May 30-31). This trip will include visiting a site where several Swainson's Warblers occur and atlasing nearby areas with Mark Oberle (404)982-1066 or e-mail: oberle@mindspring.com and Joel Volpi (770)963-9283 or e-mail: jvolpi@hotmail.com

Athens/Augusta (May 30-31). This trip will include atlasing in the area between Athens and Augusta. Leaders are Giff Beaton (770)509-1482 and Malcolm Hodges (770)997-1968.

GEORGIA BIRDERS AND THEIR LISTS

(As of 12/31/97)

<i>NAME</i>	<i>HOME</i>	<i>GA LIFE LIST - 1997</i>	<i>GA LIFE LIST - 1996</i>	<i>GA YEAR LIST - 1997</i>	<i>GA YEAR LIST - 1996</i>
Bob Manns	Atlanta, GA	363	361	-	-
Joe Greenberg	Atlanta, GA	336	336	-	-
Bill Blakeslee	Atlanta, GA	332	330	-	-
Jeff Sewell	Tucker, GA	331	323	271	275
Patrick Brisse	Tucker, GA	330	330	-	-
Bruce Dralle	Marietta, GA	330	328	-	-
Billy Dunbar	Watkinsville, GA	329	328	-	226
Giff Beaton	Marietta, GA	327	324	286	293
Paul Sykes	Watkinsville, GA	325	325	-	-
Mark Oberle	Atlanta, GA	322	319	-	-
Brenda Dunbar	Watkinsville, GA	320	319	-	215
Pierre Howard	Atlanta, GA	319	299	248	278
Carol Lambert	Tucker, GA	319	317	245	256
Anne Mursch	Aberdeen, MD	317	317	-	-
Anne Waters	Augusta, GA	315	311	-	-
Jerry Amerson	Macon, GA	306	-	-	-
Marie Amerson	Macon, GA	301	-	-	-
Jim Flynn	Cumming, GA	299	278	285	278
Johnny Parks	Ringgold, GA	296	286	-	-
Mike Chapman	Brunswick, GA	293	-	-	-
Kevin Danchisen	Marietta, GA	283	276	-	-
Joel Hitt	Lawrenceville, GA	283	282	-	-
Karen Theodorou	Lawrenceville, GA	278	261	-	-
Bob Zaremba	Marietta, GA	278	-	250	-
Brad Bergstrom	Valdosta, GA	277	-	-	-
Deb Zaremba	Marietta, GA	241	-	-	-