

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

TO: Georgia Ornithological Society
P.O. Box 5825
Valdosta, GA 31603-5825
E-mail: gos@hom.net

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) _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

PLEASE SEND ADDRESS, PHONE OR E-MAIL CHANGES TO:
Kristi Avera, Membership Chair, 5406 Moss Oak Trail, Lake Park, GA 31636
<kravera@datasys.net>

GOShawk



Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society
P.O. Box 5825
Valdosta, GA 31603-5825

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
VALDOSTA, GA
PERMIT NO. 271



Environmental
Fund for Georgia
MEMBER GROUP

GOShawk



Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society

Georgia Rare Bird Alert: (770) 493-8862

GOS on the web: www.gos.org

SPRING MEETING REPORT

Macon, April 27-29, 2001
by Ken Clark

Eighty-one folks signed up for our "return to Macon," seventy of whom broke bread with us on Saturday evening. Twenty or so of those had been with us fifteen years ago for our 50th Anniversary meeting in that same Ramada Inn with Roger Tory Peterson as our honored guest. Dick Parks was observing the 55th anniversary on that very day of his first GOS meeting, making him the senior member present. The meeting space was much better than our first time there, the banquet quite tasty and the field trips and programs outstanding; but, sadly, the sleeping rooms and front desk expertise were not up to standard. That happens sometimes when you book nearly a year in advance.

Dr. Jim Ferrari, Ocmulgee Audubon President, got the meeting off to a fine start Friday evening with his entertaining and informative talk on bird-plant interactions, or how the apple can fall far from the tree with a little help, based on three year's observations on and around the Wesleyan University campus where he teaches. Jim found, for one thing, that more species are attracted to natural foods than to bird feeders, so plant those shrubs and trees around your homes, folks.

Field trips organized by Jerry Amerson and led by Jerry and Marie, Ty Ivey, Bob Sargent, Todd Schneider and Nancy Gobris rewarded participants with 135 species of birds in the two days of looking,

including 21 species of warblers. Noteworthy were American Bittern, Long-billed Dowitcher, Lesser Scaup, Cliff Swallow, Northern Waterthrush, White-crowned Sparrow and Baltimore Oriole.

A short business meeting Saturday evening gained approval for two additions to the society's by-laws creating the offices of Historian and Web-master. That taken care of, we reached the high point of the week-end with the presentation by Bob and Martha Sargent of Clay, Alabama, well known and highly regarded for their work as founders of The Hummer/Bird Study Group (HBSG). Since the group began the serious study and observation of hummingbirds in the early 1990s, they have documented eleven species east of the Mississippi in addition to the Ruby-throat, which was once thought to be our only eastern inhabitant. Eight of those species have been found in Georgia. Capturing our rapt attention with spectacular color slides of his subjects, Bob made the additional point that hummers are genetically imprinted with their migratory behavior and will not overstay their time at Georgia feeders, so leave the feeders up, by all means, and keep an eye out for unusual visitors. The vital work of HBSG is entirely supported by members, and membership is open to all interested persons at \$15 a year mailed to P.O. Box 250, Clay, AL, 35048-0250.

Website: <www.hummingbirdsplus.org>

Following the meeting, silent and live auctions of prints and other items of interest and value to birders raised over \$1,000 for the H. Branch Howe, Jr., Graduate Student Research Grant program. The success of this first effort encourages us to repeat the event from time to time.

Look for details later this summer of the Fall Meeting to be held October 5th-7th in Savannah.

CONTENTS

Spring Meeting Summary	1
Member News	2
Howe Grants awarded	2
Breeding Bird Atlas	3
Limpkin reported	3
Winter Hummers	4
Cumberland Island Plan	4
Swallow-tailed Kite Monitoring	5
Birding Ethics	6-7

Publication Date Change of GOShawk

Please note that the publication date of the summer issue of GOShawk has changed from June to July. Effective with this issue, the quarterly publication dates have changed to: March, July, September, December.

Carol Lambert
Editor

Georgia Ornithological Society

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	John Swiderski 229-242-8382
1st Vice President	Eugenia Thompson
2nd Vice President	Gail Russell
Secretary	Marie Amerson <gos@hom.net>
Treasurer	Jeannie Wright
Business Mgr. (Acting)	John Swiderski
Past President	Ken Clark
The Oriole, Editors	Ray Chandler John Parrish
GOShawk, Editor	Carol Lambert

Committee Chairs:

Checklist & Records:	Chuck Hunter 770-923-4742
Conservation:	Stephen Stewart 706-802-0686
Editorial:	Georgann Schmalz 404-633-1527
Environmental Fund for Georgia:	Georgine Pindar 404-355-8485
Membership:	Kristi Avera 229-559-6088

Special Projects:

Georgia Rare Bird Alert	Jeff Sewell, Compiler 770-493-8862
GOS Website	Jim Flynn, Webmaster Website: <www.gos.org>
GOS Historian	Ken Clark 912-472-1924

GOShawk is published quarterly
(March, July, September, December)

Carol Lambert, Editor
4608 Westhampton Drive
Tucker, GA 30084
770-939-7668
<lambertsewell@mindspring.com>

Deadline for article submission is the 1st
of the month prior to publication.
Text by email is appreciated.

Welcome New Members!

- John Barker, Roswell, GA
- Michael Bender, Athens, GA
- Kendall Cochran, Dallas, GA
- Jim Ferrari, Macon, GA
- Clay George, Athens, GA
- Phillip Hardy, Americus, GA
- Dorothy Hodges, Arlington, VA
- David Johnston, Fairfax, VA
- Jeff Martin, Winder, GA
- Connie McKee & Jim Durkin, Doraville, GA
- Lawrence Russell, Alpharetta, GA
- Steve Slayton, Norcross, GA
- Beth Wright, Athens, GA
- Stacy Zarpentine, Roswell, GA

H. Branch Howe Grant Awards

R. Clay George, University of Georgia, has been selected to receive a \$1,500 H. Branch Howe, Jr., Graduate Student Research Award from GOS. Mr. George is a Master's Candidate at the Warnell School of Forest Resources. He will be conducting research on the "Ecology of the American Oystercatcher, A State-listed Rare Species Dependent on Georgia's Coastal Resources." His research advisor is Dr. Sara H. Schweitzer.

The Howe Grant committee has further recommended that GOS award \$1,500 to Beth Wright, also a Master's Degree candidate at the Warnell School of Forest Resources. She is conducting field research on "Swainson's Warbler Breeding Season Density and Habitat Use at the Bond Swamp NWR" near Macon. She hopes to set up a volunteer monitoring program for the species following her summer field work. Her research advisor is Dr. Joe Meyers.

Terry Chesser

Former GOS member, Terry Chesser, has accepted the position of Curator and Research Leader of the Australian National Wildlife Collection and will be based in Cranberra, Australia. Terry edited the third edition of *A Birder's Guide to Georgia*, published in 1988 by GOS. Prior to his new position "down under" he was associated with the American Museum of Natural History.

(Continued from page 6) "Code of Birding Ethics"

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

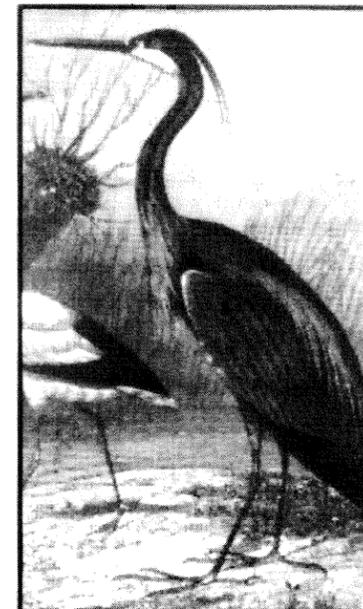
4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE AND DISTRIBUTE AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS.

The American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics may be freely reproduced for distribution/dissemination. Please acknowledge the role of ABA in developing and promoting this code with a link to the ABA website using the url <<http://americanbirding.org>>. Thank you.

Copyright © American Birding Association, Inc. 1997-2001.



THE HERON

by Theodore Roethke

The heron stands in water where the swamp
Has deepened to the blackness of a pool,
Or balances with one leg on a hump
Of marsh grass heaped above a musk-rat hole.
He walks the shallow with an antic grace.
The great feet break the ridges of the sand,
The long eye notes the minnow's hiding place.
His beak is quicker than a human hand.
He jerks a frog across his bony lip,
Then points his heavy bill above the wood.
The wide wings flap but once to lift him up.
A single ripple starts from where he stood.

Thanks to Thom Harrison
of Macon State College
for direction to the website:
"Cool Bird Poems: An E-Archology of Avian Poetry,"
the source of this selection.

Editor's Note:

With the rapidly increasing popularity of birding, it occurs to us that we have many new and enthusiastic birders in the field these days. The GOS encourages all birders to review the following "Principles of Birding Ethics," and to use special care and thoughtfulness when considering the rights of birds, other birders and property owners.

American Birding Association's PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming. Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area; Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover. Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

(Continued on page 7)

Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas

Many of you have been very helpful during the last seven years of Georgia's Breeding Bird Atlas Project, and your help is much appreciated.

This is the last year of field work on the project, and although there are no quads left uncovered, there are a few species that breed in Georgia in varying numbers that seem to be under-reported. Since many of these species are easily noticed when present, we are asking for your help. If you are aware of any sightings within the dates shown or nests on any date (these can be from 1994 through this year), please gather the following information:

- 1) date of sighting
- 2) location as exact as you can describe it (mileage along a road, pole in a cove of a particular lake, intersection of two roads, a stream crossing a road, etc)
- 3) exact activity noted (this can include seen only, singing (especially if for a long period of time, several weeks), copulation, nest-building, chicks, etc)

This information should be sent to: Todd Schneider at Georgia DNR, 116 Rum Creek Drive, Forsyth, GA 31029 or by email: Todd_Schneider@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

Following is the list of species ("North" means above the Fall Line, "South" means below the Fall Line):

Double-crested Cormorant:

North: 5/15-7/15 South: 5/1-8/1

Canada Goose: North: 3/15-6/1 South: 3/1-6/1

Osprey: North: 5/1-8/1 South: 5/1-7/15

Mississippi Kite: Anywhere 5/1-7/20

Red-tailed Hawk: Anywhere 5/1-7/15

Barn Owl: Anytime, anywhere

Chuck-Wills-Widow: Anywhere 5/1-8/1

Whip-poor-Will: North: 5/1-8/1 South: 5/1-7/15

Common Nighthawk: Anywhere 5/25-7/15

White-breasted Nuthatch: Anywhere 3/1-6/15

House Wren: Anywhere 5/1-8/1

Black Vulture (Nests or young):

Anytime, Anywhere

Turkey Vulture (Nests or young):

Anytime, Anywhere

Please note that if you are reporting an actual nest the dates listed above do not apply, so turn them in for any date! Thank you very much.

Todd Schneider, Coordinator
Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas

Giff Beaton, Chair
Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas Steering Committee

Limpkin in McIntosh County

by Mary Ann Teal

Sunday, 29 April 2001 my husband Sam, my mother, Ann Phillips, and I stopped at Harris Neck NWR approximately 9:00 AM to retrieve a recorder we had left on the dike the evening before to tape the swamp sounds. After scanning the swamp for 20 minutes or so my mother asked about the large bird on the other end of the dike. We watched with binoculars as it slowly sauntered across the dike and down into the corner of Woody Pond. We pulled out *The Sibley Guide to Birds* and *The National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America* and in all innocence decided it was a Limpkin:

- chocolate body with white streaks
- fairly thick bill
- dark legs

It didn't act anything like the Glossy Ibis we had seen two weeks before at Savannah NWR, and the bill didn't look like an ibis'. Besides, the map in Sibley looks like Limpkins might be found regularly in southeast Georgia. We watched other birds and animals for some time, then Sam located the Limpkin again in the far corner of the pond and suggested I to get some shots of it. Good idea. We got several shots as it calmly fed, looked at the rest of the pond some more, got another few shots and left the pond around 11:00 AM to see the rest of Harris Neck. At that time, the Limpkin was still in the same corner of the pond. Later in the day I was trying to confirm my ID by checking in *Birding Georgia* where and when Limpkins might be seen in Georgia. I started getting nervous when I couldn't find a bar chart...and then couldn't find the species listing! At that point, we decided to call the Rare Bird Alert.

Editor's Note: Mary Ann was able to get some good photographs of the bird she saw, which will be submitted to the Checklist & Records Committee. They can be viewed on the GOS website at www.gos.org (Species Accounts). Unfortunately, they would not print well in this publication. Even more unfortunate was the fact that searching by many birders on subsequent days did not relocate the Limpkin at Harris Neck. Brad Bergstrom's photo, shown above, is of a different bird taken in Florida.



Photo by Brad Bergstrom

2000-01 was a hummer of a winter

by Rusty Trump
Suwanee, Georgia

What a year for winter hummingbirds in Georgia! Thanks to all of you that reported or verified hummingbird sightings, a total of 95 hummingbirds were reported this year! Prior to 1998, there were no records of Calliope Hummingbirds in Georgia, but this winter we had 5 records! Another interesting statistic for this season is the fact that 15 fortunate people hosted multiple hummingbirds at their feeders. Enjoy the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds this summer and as they make their way south in the fall; and remember, leave those feeders out next winter, and please let us know if you get a visitor!

The breakdown of species for the 2000-2001 winter season is as follows:

Ruby-throated Hummingbird - 1
Black-chinned Hummingbird - 4
Unknown Archilochus Hummingbird - 1
Anna's Hummingbird - 1 (3rd State Record)*
Calliope Hummingbird - 5 (3rd - 7th State Records)*
Broad-tailed Hummingbird - 1 (3rd State Record)*
Rufous Hummingbird - 59
Unknown Selasphorus Hummingbird - 15
Unknown Hummingbird - 8

*At this time, these state records are pending acceptance by the GOS Checklist and Records Committee.

For those of you interested in distribution, following are the county totals for Georgia. Gwinnett County was, by far, the hotspot in the state of the 35 counties reporting winter hummingbirds.

Gwinnett-19, Fulton-9, Chatham-8, Cobb-6, Baker-4, Loundes-4, Cherokee-3, Decatur-3, DeKalb-3, Richmond-3, Seminole-3, Catoosa-2, Clay-2, Columbia-2, Habersham-2, Hall-2, Monroe-2.

The following counties reported 1 hummingbird :
Bartow, Bibb, Carroll, Coweta, Dodge, Dougherty, Fayette, Forsyth, Glynn, Heard, Houston, Newton, Rabun, Rockdale, Towns, Troup, Walton, Whitfield.

Rusty Trump is a member of the Georgia Hummer Study Group, which operates a hotline November—March for reporting winter hummingbird sightings. Call 770-784-1636 to report winter sightings, and visit their website at <www.gahummer.org> for more information .



Study: "The Cognitive Ecology of the Upper Chattahoochee Watershed Project"

This is a project of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Georgia, conducted by Sherrill "Swis" Stockton, a PhD candidate. It is hoped that this project will help develop a better understanding of how people in Georgia understand different components of knowledge concerning water resources and aquatic environments in this area. This understanding may, in turn, help develop better programs to protect water quality and quantity in the region. *Watershed protection is of crucial importance to the stability of many of the ecosystems upon which our avian habitats are based.*

Birders can help with this research by completing a questionnaire on the project's website: <www.arches.uga.edu/~sstocktn>. For more information or questions about the project, contact Swis Stockton: (706)552-1619 or email: <sstocktn@arches.uga.edu>. Thank you.

Your comments needed to keep Cumberland Island wild

Over 300 bird species are found on Cumberland Island, including the federally listed Piping Plover and the Wood Stork. American Alligators are common and Cumberland's nesting population of threatened Loggerhead Sea Turtles is one of the largest along the Georgia coast.



The National Park Service has extended the deadline for the public to submit comments on the draft Management Plan until **July 16, 2001**. Your comments are needed! For more information on the issues involved, and how to respond to the draft plan, check the

National Park Service website
www.nps.gov/cuis/plan or the website of
The Wilderness Society
www.wilderness.org/ccc/southeast/island.htm

You may also directly contact:
Richard H. Sussman, National Park Service
100 Alabama Street SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Email: rich_sussman@nps.gov

Georgia Department of Natural Resources Swallow-tailed Kite Monitoring Project

The first Swallow-tailed Kite of 2001 was reported soaring over I-95 near Eulonia On March 6th! Since 1997, Georgia DNR has been able to map over 400 observations of Swallow-tailed Kites in Georgia. That data contributed greatly to our finding 20 active nests in the state in 2000. Two of the juvenile kites that were radio-tagged near the Satilla River in June of 2000 were found on their wintering grounds in Brazil in November and December of 2000 and has, hopefully, arrived back in Georgia by now. Observations and documented nests are critical to our understanding of kite distribution, habitat and management requirements, ecology, and future needs. YOU CAN HELP!

The reports we receive from birders and the public are very important. Without these reports to fine-tune our helicopter searches for nests, we would find far fewer nests. They are very hard to find and knowing where to look is critical.

Please report all Swallow-tailed Kites seen from now through early September to EJ Williams by either email, phone,

mail...or you can report your sightings online via the GOS website: www.gos.org (Species Accounts). The location will be included in the kite database and EJ will forward the information to the Swallow-tailed Kite field biologists for follow-up searches for nesting or roosting activity. Please be specific about the location and if possible reference the page, grid letter and number, and position from the DeLorme Georgia Atlas. We have to be able to locate the kite observation on a map and assign a Latitude/Longitude.

Project Contact Information

EJ Williams

Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Georgia Wildlife Resources Division
116 Rum Creek Drive, Forsyth, GA 31029

Phone: 912-994-1438

Fax: 912-993-3050

Email: ej_williams@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

Swallow-tailed Kite Observations 1997-2000

