Vol. 32 No. 4 December 2005

GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society



GOS on the web: www.gos.org

The Third Annual Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival

Georgia Rare Bird Alert: (770) 493-8862

By Bill Lotz

Tropical Storm Tammy roared through Southeast Georgia shortly before Georgia's third coastal birding festival, but the birds and the birders persevered. About 300 people pre-registered for this year's festival, held October 6-10. Most were from Georgia, but visitors from 20 other states and Canada also attended. One hundred of the registrants identified themselves as GOS members. The weather kept some folks away and certainly limited the number of "walk-ins," but still there were 78 seminar and workshop tickets sold to local folks who came to visit The Rookery. And there were over 50 field trips scheduled, more than ever before.

The festival got underway on Thursday with the second annual Coastal Birding Challenge, organized this year by Sheila Willis, and used as a fund-raising event for the Hurricane "Birders & More" Relief Effort to benefit Gulf Coast birders and oth-

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Mark Your Calendar!

GOS Winter Meeting

January 27-29, 2006, Tallahassee, Florida (see page 6 for details)

2006 Pinewoods Bird Festival

April 7-8, 2006 Pebble Hill Plantation, Thomasville, Georgia

GOS Spring Meeting

April 28-30, 2006, Kennesaw, Georgia (see page 7)

ers affected by the 2005 hurricanes. On that day four teams competed to see or hear the most species on the sites that make up Georgia's Colonial Coast Birding Trail. The team of Sterling Blanchard, Chuck Saleeby, Dan Vickers and Bill Lotz managed an event record of 129 species, and were recognized on Saturday night by Lydia Thompson and the banquet attendees. Several birders had solicited pledges from generous donors, either per species or a flat amount. More than \$570.00 was raised to help get a Gulf Coast birder back on her feet.

The 2005 Georgia Bird Conservation Summit was held on Friday afternoon at the Jekyll Island Convention Center, the hub for all the festival activities. Peter Stangel, director of the Southern Partnership Program for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and a panel of the state's leading bird experts presented the latest information on what is being done to protect Georgia birds and their habitats. Next was the festival kick-off social, featuring an exciting raptor show conducted by the Georgia

(Continued on page 3)

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Georgia Ornithological Society

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Larry Russell, and Lois Stacey

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Jim Ferrari, Editor 242 Riverdale Drive Macon, GA 31204 478-757-0293 jferrari@wesleyancollege.edu

Deadline for article submission is the 1st of the month prior to publication.

Welcome, New Members!

Life Members

Sam and Mary Ann Teal Mableton, GA

Sustaining Members

Zelia Lebeau Marietta, GA
Kris Bisgard Stone Mountain
Mitchell Jarrett Athens, GA

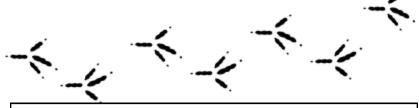
Regular Members

Robin Peterson Demorest, GA

GOS Membership lists are available upon request to Angela McMellen, PO Box 181, High Shoals, GA 30645 or gosmembership@gmail.com

Renew Your Membership For 2006!

It is that time of year again. Along with eating turkey, singing carols, and buying holiday presents, it is time to renew your Georgia Ornithological Society membership for 2006. If you have not yet received a renewal notice, one should be in your mailbox soon. Please take the time to renew your membership promptly. Sending in your renewal quickly saves us the cost of mailing multiple reminders. We depend on the support of our members to make all of our events successful. We hope that you will continue to support GOS.



GOS E-MAIL LIST

In order to more efficiently communicate with our members, GOS has established an e-mail list. The e-mail list will be used to communicate with you about bird conservation issues, membership renewals, birding events in Georgia, and occasional items that may be of interest to GOS members. If you wish to add your e-mail address to the GOS database, please contact Angela McMellen, GOS Membership Chair, at gosmembership@gmail.com.

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Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival (continued from page 1)

Southern University's Center for Wildlife Education and Lamar Q. Ball Jr. Raptor Center. Then E.J. Williams, assistant regional director for Migratory Birds and State Programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, gave an update on the status of Georgia coastal wildlife. This inspiring talk was in conjunction with a slide show highlighting some of the Georgia coast's spectacular wildlife and habitats.

Although fifty-four field trips were scheduled for Friday through Monday, several could not be held. Among the most disappointing cancellations were the Little St. Simons Island trips, which could not go as scheduled due to flooding on the island caused by the heavy rains of Tropical Storm Tammy. Perhaps due to the poor weather, many more migrants were found this year, and the 210 species tallied for the long festival weekend was astounding! (Note: That is right at 50% of all the species on the Georgia Checklist.) Some of the birding highlights included Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Veery, White-crowned Sparrow, 27 species of warblers, Philadelphia Vireo and 11 species of raptors (including dozens and dozens of Peregrine Falcons). One of the Coastal Birding Challenge teams, consisting of out -of-state birders representing various optics companies, had a brief look at what may have been Georgia's first ever Zenaida Dove, blown here from the Bahamas by Tropical Storm Tammy. Alas, the bird was not photographed, and as of this writing, has not been relocated.

Throughout the weekend The Rookery, an interactive exhibition center located in the Jekyll Island Convention Center's Atlantic Hall, was the place to find several dozen artists, authors, professionals representing some of the best optics companies, displays and more raptor shows. Saturday night featured the festival dinner and keynote address. After a short GOS business session to re-elect officers, John Swiderski presented the Earle Greene Award to Terry Johnson (see full story on page 4).

The complete species list from the 2005 Colonial Coast Birding Festival, compiled by Steve Holzman, may be found at

http://www.coastalgeorgiabirding.org/birdlist2005.htm

Then Bob Sargent introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Scott Robinson, adventurer, birder and scientist, who gave a fascinating program on "Paving the way for Ecotourism and Birding in the Neotropics: What has science taught us?" While a student at Dartmouth College, Dr. Robinson took a year off from his studies to set a new North American Big Year record of 657 species, breaking the mark previously held by Kenn Kaufman. (This record was shattered just a few years later.) While working in the remote Manu National Park in Peru, he teamed with the late Ted Parker to set the world "Big Day" record of 331 species, a record that still stands. Notably, this record was set by foot and dugout canoe on about one square mile of the park! Dr. Robinson proved to be a wonderful speaker, and his presentation was excellent in every way. He emphasized the importance of preserving tropical habitats, reminding his audience that the survival of "our" birds will not be possible otherwise. He also explained the contributions to science that many of his co-workers have made, including the amazing Dr. John Terborgh, and how research and birding complement each other. The evening concluded with the countdown, led by Diana Churchill.

There were many more field trips on Sunday, including the Sunday Family Fun Day, sponsored by the Ogeechee Audubon Society. In spite of the bad weather, the Third Annual Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival was the best yet and we look forward to the fourth edition next October.

GOS ELECTION RESULTS ARE IN . . .

Congratulations to the "new" slate of GOS officers for the 2005-07 term:

President – Bob Sargent 1st Vice President – Bill Lotz 2nd Vice President – Anne Mursch Secretary – Dan Vickers Treasurer – Jeannie Wright



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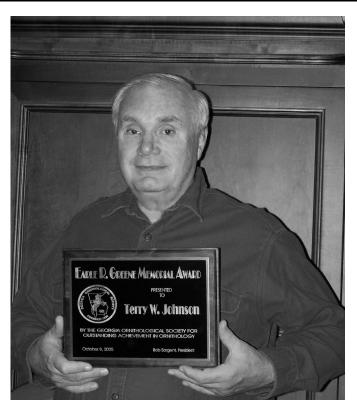
Earle R. Greene Memorial Award, 2005 By John Swiderski

Terry W. Johnson is the recipient of the Earle R. Greene Memorial Award for 2005. Johnson was recognized for his achievements in ornithology and for his work with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to protect nongame wildlife species and habitat in Georgia. He was presented with the award by GOS President Bob Sargent on October 8, 2005, during the evening banquet and program of the Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival at Jekyll Island.

Johnson received his master's degree from Tennessee Tech, and it was our good fortune that he chose to work as a wildlife biologist with Georgia DNR. For more than 30 years he has worked with a variety of species including deer, turkey, quail, waterfowl, Peregrine Falcon and Bald Eagle. As the longtime Program Manager of the Nongame Wildlife and Natural Heritage Program based at Rum Creek near Forsyth, he has directed and fostered a number of programs of interest to birders. Among these are the popular birding trails established along the Georgia coast and also in the southwestern part of Georgia. He and his staff continue working to bring the Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas to completion.

Although Johnson has worked with all types of nongame species, it is safe to say that birds, especially hummingbirds, are of special interest to him. He was the state's first resident master humming-bird bander and continues to be active in banding winter hummingbirds. He has given literally hundreds of slide programs about hummingbirds and their life cycle all over the state.

In his spare time, Johnson uses his writing skills to promote the message of conservation. He writes regular columns for newspapers in Macon and Monroe County. His 2002 book, *Georgia Wildlife Weekends*, profiles 52 locations in the state that readers can visit to enjoy a variety of habitat and wildlife experiences. He has been recognized with a number of awards for his writing and his conservation leadership over the years. Examples include awards from the Georgia Wildlife Federation, the Garden Club of Georgia, Ducks Unlimited and the Georgia Outdoor Writers Association.



Terry Johnson, 2005 recipient of the Earle R. Greene Award.

Johnson has received much well-deserved individual recognition for his accomplishments and leadership in conservation, but he is quick to point out that his staff of biologists and technicians deserves equal credit as well. While expressing his appreciation for the GOS award, he also accepted it on behalf of all his staff who work with him.

Johnson first joined GOS in 1978 and he is a life member. He is the 30th recipient of the Earle R. Greene award since it was created in 1975. The complete list of recipients can be viewed on the GOS website, www.gos.org.

Address Changes

If your address changes, please notify us directly by mail (P.O. Box 181, High Shoals, GA 30645) or by e-mail (gosmembership@gmail.com). As a non-profit organization, we are able to mail items to you at a bulk (i.e., discounted) rate. This is a great cost savings for us, but it means that our items WILL NOT be forwarded to you if you move. We do not want you to miss out on any of our newsletters, meeting announcements, or journals!

GOShawk—5 December 2005

In Memoriam, Eulalie (Lee) Gibbs

By John Swiderski

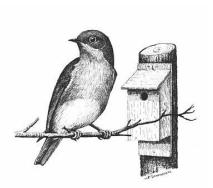
Eulalie (Lee) Elliott Gibbs, 87, passed away in Greenville, South Carolina, September 11, 2005. Her husband, Wilfred (Bill) Gibbs, preceded her in death two years earlier.

Lee was born in Dawsonville, Georgia, but she and Bill had lived in North Augusta, South Carolina, for more than 60 years. They moved to Greenville in 2002 to be closer to Tony and Chris Gibbs and the five grandchildren. Their daughter, Robin Gibbs, lives in San Clemente, California.

Both Bill and Lee were interested in birdlife. She shared her keen knowledge and love of birds in many ways over the years in the Augusta area. Lee was an early member of the Augusta Bird Club, which later became the Augusta Audubon Society. She produced the Society's newsletter for many years and used her writing talent to pen a weekly column, "Birds and Things," for the Aiken Standard newspaper. She also contributed bird and nature articles for publications including South Carolina Wildlife and the Augusta Magazine.

An avid gardener, Lee tended to favor plants that attracted birds and butterflies. She initiated many bird projects over the years, including a bluebird trail running from North Augusta to Belvedere, which she started and worked to maintain. She also accumulated an extensive nest collection that has been preserved and will be used for exhibits at the Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy and Phinizy Swamp Nature Park. Although Phinizy came along too late in their lives for the Gibbs to fully enjoy, Bill and Lee must have been very proud that such a significant piece of property in Augusta was preserved and now is such a good area for birding.

The Gibbs joined GOS in 1957 and regularly attended spring and fall meetings for some 30 years. Both served on the GOS Executive Committee. Lee was secretary from



1973 to 1977 and first vice president from 1979 to 1981. Bill served as business manager from 1979 to 1983, a function that they carried out together. They frequently documented bird sightings from the Augusta area in The Oriole.



Lee Gibbs checking a bluebird nest box (1980).



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GOS WINTER 2006 MEETING

By Bill Lotz

The next meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society will be held at Tallahassee, Florida, Friday, January 27, through Sunday, January 29, 2006. The last time we held a meeting in Tallahassee was in fall 1997, and we have never held a winter meeting in the bird-rich Florida Panhandle.

We will have two headquarters hotels, both of which are located on the same property and share a parking area. The Tallahassee Homewood Suites by Hilton, 2987 Apalachee Parkway, 850-402-9400, will be the site of our meeting, and is offering suites starting at \$89.00 per night. The Hampton Inn Central, 2979 Apalachee Parkway, 850-309-1300, has reserved rooms starting at \$69.00 per night. Either hotel can be booked by calling direct and asking for the "GOS" rate. (The hotels use a three-letter code for group bookings; if you ask for the Georgia Ornithological Society rate, the booking agent may not recognize that you mean the GOS rate). The deadline for reserving at the special group rates is January 5, 2006.

The registration table will open at 4:00 PM (EST) in the lobby of the Homewood Suites and the Friday night program will begin at 7:30 PM. Dinner is on your own.

The Friday night program will be presented by Jim Cox, biologist at Tall Timbers and author of one of the stories in *Between Two Rivers*. He will talk about Red-cockaded Woodpeckers in the Red Hills region, where the population of these endangered birds is more than 400. After the program, we will discuss the field trips for Saturday and Sunday, and then you will be given an opportunity to sign up for the trips. We will have field trips to St. Marks NWR, Wakulla Springs SP, Tall Timbers

Correction:

An earlier mailing regarding the Winter GOS Meeting indicated that Tallahassee was in the Central Time Zone. Tallahassee is in the EASTERN Time Zone. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

and various hotspots around Tallahassee. Winter birding in this area is fantastic!

Our banquet will be held Saturday night. Our featured speaker will be Susan Cerulean, who was associated with Ken Meyer, who did the Swallowtailed Kite studies and gave the wonderful program at the Valdosta meeting in 2002. Cerulean has just published her own book about the Swallowtailed Kite. She also was involved in the publication of the *Guide to the Great Florida Birding Trail* and was a co-editor of the recent book, *Between Two Rivers*, among many other things.

Please plan on joining us in the Florida Panhandle for a wonderful winter meeting.

GOS Needs Volunteers!

By Bob Sargent

Over the past 6-8 months we've been describing the various initiatives we hoped to put in motion. all of which wouldn't be possible without Bill Terrell's generosity. Fleshing out these initiatives necessitated the establishment of a five-person committee, every member of which already served on the GOS Executive Committee. To manage the funds, we've established a finance committee (Jeannie Wright, Joe Pugh, Jim Valentine, and me). To administer the new Bill Terrell Graduate Student Grants, we established a three-person committee (Joe Meyers, Steve Holzman, and Todd Schneider). Over the winter we will institute the Richard Parks Birding Camp Grants program, which, of course, will require a committee to oversee it. In addition to these grant opportunities. we're also establishing a committee (Jeannie, Mark Beebe, and Dan Vickers) to review applications from non-students for money to support research. You can see where I'm going with this note. Although we have the financial means to initiate many of the wonderful ideas that have been proposed thus far, the success of our efforts is dependent upon volunteer efforts of GOS members. Please consider serving on a committee for the society. Many of these positions will not require a substantial amount of your time, but the end result of your efforts could have a lasting positive affect on birds, young birders, and conservation. Contact me!

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Waterfowl Workshop in Clayton County By Carol Lambert

The E.L. Huie site of the Clayton County Water Authority is recognized by many as one of the best inland Georgia birding areas. More than 250 species of birds have been recorded on this metro Atlanta site. The winter months bring many species of waterfowl to the Huie ponds, reservoirs and wetlands.

The CCWA Newman Wetlands Center will hold its annual Waterfowl Workshop on Saturday, February 4th from 9 AM to 1 PM. The instructors are Carol Lambert and Jeff Sewell. Participants will spend approximately one hour at the Wetlands Center in a discussion of the species, habitat and waterfowl migration patterns; in addition, they will receive helpful resource materials. The group will then drive to the Huie ponds and other nearby waters, as time permits, for a field study of these birds.

Space is limited, and reservations are required. A non-refundable program fee of \$20 is payable by January 25. For information and reservations, call or email Carol Lambert: 770-603-5603, clambert@ccwa1.com



SPRING 2006 GOS MEETING

By Bill Lotz

Mark your calendars now for the 2006 GOS Spring Meeting in Kennesaw, to be held April 28-30, 2006. This will be our first meeting in the Atlanta area in quite some time. There will be lots of field trips to Kennesaw Mountain. one of the best sites in the U.S. for neotropical migrants, and late April is prime time! Twenty or more species of warblers in three or four hours is not unusual in spring with occasional daily tallies of 28 to 30 species. There will also be field trips to the Cochran Shoals Unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area and a few other sites around the Atlanta area. Our featured speaker will be Greg Miller, one of the three Big Year birders featured in Mark Obmascik's wonderful book The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession. If you have not yet read this book. buy it, borrow it, or check it out of your local library and read it before April. (I also understand that the book has been optioned for a full-length motion picture.)

Come join us in Northwest Atlanta this April.

Bill Terrell Grants Announced

By Bob Sargent

GOS is pleased to offer a new grants program named in honor of the late Bill Terrell. As with the Howe grants, this money will be available only to graduate students conducting ornithological research, but certain areas of research (e.g., ecosystem function, rare species, etc.) will be allotted greater emphasis. Additionally, the geographic reach of this grant funding will be broader than that of the Howe grants, being available to students enrolled at universities in six southeastern states. The three-person committee overseeing these grants (up to \$10,000 per year) will be chaired by Joe Meyers, and the deadline for the receipt of applications is January 31st. Visit the GOS website at www.gos.org for more details.

H. Branch Howe Grants

The deadline for applying for the 2006 H. Branch Howe grants is January 31st. GOS has elected to increase to \$7,500 the amount awarded to deserving applicants. These grants are provided to support graduate students conducting ornithological research, and are administered by a three-person committee chaired by Bill Van Eseltine. For details concerning the application process, visit our website at www.gos.org.

GOShawk—8 December 2005



Help Spread the GOS Conservation Message

By Carol Lambert Conservation Chair

Conservation "calling cards" are available, free of charge, to all GOS members. Help promote our habitat conservation goals by leaving this card behind in restaurants, hotels, stores, visitors centers and other businesses as you travel around Georgia. Birders have a huge impact on local economies and we need to let them know why we're there. Many cards were distributed at the Colonial Coast Birding Festival on Jekyll Island. We have a special card for use on Jekyll Island, as we will for all areas that we feel have high priority for conservation. Pick up some cards at the Tallahassee Winter Meeting. If your local Audubon or other bird organization would like a large quantity for their membership, contact Steve Holzman, GOS Business Manager.

Chandler Robbins to Retire

The legendary ornithologist Chandler S. Robbins is retiring this December after a remarkable 60year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and then the U.S. Geological Survey. Dr. Robbins worked at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland, where he published hundreds of papers about birds, from population biology to bird distribution and conservation. The North American Breeding Bird Survey was developed by Dr. Robbins in 1966. Robbins joined GOS as a life member in 1952 and was the recipient of the Earle R. Greene award at the fall 2000 GOS meeting in Statesboro, where he was the featured speaker. Among his other honors, he was presented with the Elliott Coues Award by the American Ornithologists' Union in 1997 and the National Audubon Society's Audubon Medal in 2000.



Dr. Chandler S. Robbins receives the 2000 Earle R. Greene Memorial Award from Terry S. Moore (R) and GOS President, John M. Swiderski (L) at the Fall Meeting in Statesboro, Georgia.

2005 Georgia List Information

For those GOS members who keep life and year lists of bird species seen in Georgia, the *GOShawk* will again publish these state list totals in the March 2006 issue. Totals should reflect numbers as of December 31, 2005.

Data must be received by January 15, 2006, and must include your name, city, state, telephone and email address. Send the number of Georgia species seen in your lifetime (200+) and, if you wish, the number of Georgia species seen during 2005.

Send information to: Carol Lambert, 4608 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA 30084 or email: lambertsew-ell@mindspring.com.

GOShawk—9 December 2005

Georgia Christmas Bird Count Schedule 2005-2006 106th Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count

Check the GOS Website for the latest updates to the CBC schedule: http://www.gos.org/cbc/106schedule.html. For the CBC page of the National Audubon Society, visit www.audubon.org/bird/cbc

DATE	CBC AREA	COMPILER / CONTACT INFO		
Dec 16 (Fri)	Harris Neck NWR	Contact: Dot Bambach 912-598-2764 dotbam@bellsouth.net Compiler: Steve Calver		
	West Point Lake	Paul Miliotis 334-705-4381 hemlockwarbler@yahoo.com		
Dec 17 (Sat)	Albany	Alan Ashley 229-439-8232 pa521aa117@prodigy.net		
	Athens	Mary Case 706-548-3848 mecase @uga.edu Eugenia Thompson 706-227-9328 eroberthom@bellsouth.net		
	Augusta	Anne Waters 706-793-2788 birdannelady@earthlink.net		
	Cumberland Island	Sheila Willis (by invitation)		
	Macon	Marie Amerson 478-746-5697 jaamerson@cox.net		
	Peachtree City	Brock Hutchins 770-461-5042 brockhutchins@msn.com		
	St. Catherines Island	Emil Urban (by invitation)		
Dec 18 (Sun)	Atlanta (Marietta)	Bob & Deb Zaremba 770-422-5830 bobzarem@prodigy.net		
	Chattahoochee N. F. Songbird Mgmt. Area	Johnny Parks 706-937-7163 ringgold_birdchaser@juno.com		
Dec 19 (Mon)	Eufaula NWR	Sam Pate 706-327-2574 spate@brookstoneschool.org		
	Piedmont NWR/ Rum Creek WMA	Terry Johnson 478-994-1438 Terry_W_Johnson@dnr.state.ga.us		
Dec 20 (Tues)	Columbus	Sam Pate 706-327-2574 spate@brookstoneschool.org		
Dec 26 (Mon)	Amicalola Falls	Jim Greenway 770-630-3854 mtnpathfinder@msn.com		
Dec 27 (Tues)	Bainbridge- Lake Seminole	Oscar Dewberry 229-246-1890 boscar@mchsi.com		
Dec 30 (Fri)	Callaway Gardens	Cory Croft 706-663-2281 ccroft@callawayonline.org LuAnn Craighton		
	Dalton	Phil Riner 706-226-0956 karen.phil@alltel.net		
	Dublin	Bob Sargent 478-397-7962 bsargent7@cox.net		
	Okefenokee NWR	Sheila Willis 912-285-0419 swillis@wayxcable.com		
Dec 31 (Sat)	Floyd County	Owen Kinney 706-234-6248 okinney@darlingtonschool.org		
	Glynn County	Mike Chapman 912-262-6370 mikelchap@adelphia.net		
Jan 1 (Sun)	Savannah	Contact: Dot Bambach 912-598-2764 dotbam@bellsouth.net Compiler: Steve Calver		
To be announced	Lake Blackshear	Terry Johnson 478-994-1438 Terry_W_Johnson@dnr.state.ga.us		

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

TO: Georgia Ornithological Society

P.O. Box 181

High Shoals, GA 30645

Please enroll the ι Dues are enclosed		is a member of th	ne Georgia Ornitholog	ical Society for the calendar year.
	Regular	\$20.00		_ Sustaining \$30.00
	Patron	\$50.00	-	_ Student \$10.00
	(Tł	ne above are anr	nual rates for individ	luals or families.)
	Life Mem	nbership \$300.00)	
Ple	ease send me	a list of publicati	ions available from the	e GOS.
NAME(S):				
MAILING ADDRES	SS:			
		F	-MAIL:	

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