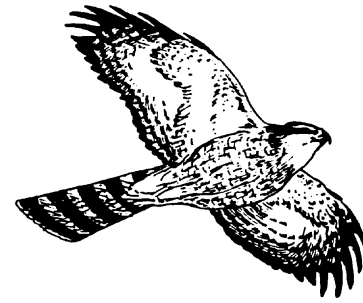


GOShawk



Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society

Georgia Rare Bird Alert: 770-493-8862

GOS on the web: www.gos.org

President's Message: "Five Years Already!"

By Bob Sargent

It's hard to believe that we're on the verge of participating in the fifth Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival, but it's true. It doesn't seem like it was all that long ago that those of us who've been involved with organizing this event got together for the first time to discuss how it would evolve, and how GOS could possibly reconcile our annual fall meeting with the advent of this much bigger meeting. But the festival has taken off, albeit even if it seems to be soaring on fledgling wings at times. Sure, we have challenges with respect to the adequacy of certain facilities, logistical issues associated with one or two field trip destinations continue to torment us year after year, and there have been times when we've wondered if we would have been better off providing TV dinners for the banquet meal, but Georgia birders have many reasons for which to be proud of their festival.

You see, the festival continues to attract many

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Save The Date!

Georgia's Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival

October 12-14, 2007

Jekyll Island

www.coastalgeorgiabirding.org

out-of-state birders, because the caliber and quantity of the field trips and seminars compares well with that offered at most other festivals around the country. How many states can boast of a string of barrier islands, anyway? Additionally, the event's featured speakers have been top-notch, and we're continuing that trend with this year's program presented by Dr. John Fitzpatrick of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Yes, the price for some of the field trips has jumped this year, but the increase was necessary to help offset the substantial expenses involved with arranging and operating this event. The feedback you've provided in past festivals has been heeded, and this year even more island trips have been added to the schedule, particularly to Little St. Simons and St. Catherines. Furthermore, this year's itinerary includes new offerings such as trips to Little Tybee Island, birding on the Little Satilla River and Cathead Creek, a trip on a working shrimp boat, hawk

(continued on page 3)

**Georgia
Ornithological
Society**

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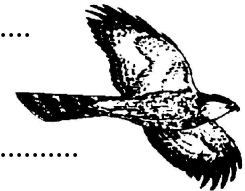
Welcome, New Members!

Bachman's Sparrow Members

Catherine Ritch

Dahlonega, GA

The 2007 GOS membership list is available electronically via e-mail or as a hard copy. Please send your request to membership@gos.org (Allison Reid) for an e-mail copy or to GOS, P.O. Box 181, High Shoals, GA 30645 for a paper copy.



GOShawk Now Available Online

Past and current issues of the GOShawk are now available online in .pdf format at the following URL: <http://www.gos.org/newsletters/newsletter.pdf>



President's Message *(continued from page 1)*

watching, and the ever-popular digiscoping workshop.

To be sure, there is room for the addition of even more frills to this festival, but the trade-off will likely be that we would have to further increase the cost. I just got back from the ABA Quito Conference, which was organized with additional support and talent from Tropical Birding and Swarovski, and was awed by their attention to detail and how smoothly everything seemingly went, from the nearly 20 buses lined up in front of the hotel every morning, to the professional speakers following dinner every night. Of course, the folks who run those conferences are not volunteers, and the cost for participants is much greater than that for attending Georgia's coastal festival. The bottom line is, as I've said in this column before, if you have suggestions for improving our festival, please provide them, and if you want to see it run it more smoothly, then don't hesitate to volunteer your talents to help the hard-working folks who do so much to make this festival a success each year.

If you're like me and are already planning ahead for birding events after next month's festival, don't forget to add our January meeting in Bainbridge and our May meeting in Clayton to your calendar. We're excited about the contrast these two meetings will offer, from one corner of the state to the other, as we seek out wintering waterfowl and spring mountain migrants. It has been about 10 years since we last met in the mountains, and I can't recall the last time we met in southwest Georgia.

Finally, let me close by reminding you that our grants programs have been expanded and revamped. In particular, we've established the Bill Terrell Avian Conservation Grants to support agency and non-profit group management needs at a larger (i.e., \$20,000 or more) monetary scale. Most importantly, the deadline for applying for these grants, including the graduate student research monies, is December 1. You can find the criteria and application information for all the GOS grants and the Parks scholarship at <http://www.gos.org/grants/grant.html>

Slate of GOS Nominees for 2007-2009

Georgia Ornithological Society members will vote on the new slate of GOS Executive Officers at the October birding festival. The nominees are the following:

Dr. Bob Sargent	President
Bill Lotz	1st Vice President
Dan Vickers	2nd Vice President
DeeAnne Meliopoulos	Secretary
Jeannie Wright	Treasurer

The next term will run from October 2007 to October 2009. Other members of the GOS Executive Committee are appointed by the GOS officers.



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 Allison Reid, GOS Membership Chair, at membership@gos.org.

Conservation Notes from the American Bird Conservancy (ABC)

By Carol Lambert

GOS Conservation Chair

GOS is a member organization of the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to conserve wild birds and their habitats throughout the Americas. ABC is the only U.S.-based group dedicated solely to overcoming the greatest threats facing birds in the Western Hemisphere. A growing human population, consuming ever greater resources, is critically impacting bird populations through habitat destruction, direct mortality from such harmful practices as the unwise use of pesticides, and the introduction of destructive species, including domestic cats. ABC believes adequate resources exist to overcome these threats and that unifying people, organizations, and agencies around common approaches to priority issues is the key to success.

ABC draws on people and organizations through bird conservation networks -- including the Bird Conservation Alliance, the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, Partners in Flight, and ABC's growing international network -- to identify the most critical issues affecting birds in the Americas.

ABC Announces Project PredatorWatch

Monitoring interactions between domestic pets, wild predators, and wild prey

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is conducting a citizen science project called Project PredatorWatch to determine the extent of predation on birds at bird feeders and in people's backyards. Your help is critical in determining how many and what types of birds are killed by cats, dogs, and other predators at bird feeders. This information will be useful to scientists and conservationists, and may be compiled and reported in scientific journals and other publications. The brief survey of 39 questions should be completed whenever you observe or find evidence of a predation event in your yard. The survey is divided into sections concerning the predator-prey event, surrounding habitat, etc. To participate, visit the ABC website: abcbirds.org

Climate Change and Birds

Globally, 1998 was the warmest year on record and the 1990s the warmest decade. The 20th century, at least over the Northern Hemisphere, was the warmest century in at least the last thousand years. There is a growing body of evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 or so years is attributable to human activities. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] projects an increase in global mean temperature of between 1.4° and 5.8° C (2.7° to 10.8° F) by the year 2100 [Source: IPCC Synthesis Report, 2001]. The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has produced a publication, *The Birdwatcher's Guide to Global Warming*, in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation. This is a state-by-state guide to the effects of climate change on America's birds. It can be downloaded from the ABC website: abcbirds.org

ABC Report Documents Top 20 Most Threatened Bird Habitats

(Washington, DC) -- Significant portions of the American landscape are no longer providing adequate habitat for many native bird species, according to the *Top 20 Most Threatened Bird Hab-*

Conservation Notes *(continued from page 4)*

tats in the United States, a new report by American Bird Conservancy (ABC). ABC's report is available online at abcbirds.org.

Hawaiian forests topped the list as the most threatened bird habitat, where 30 Hawaiian birds are listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Rainforests in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, Florida wetlands, longleaf pine forests in the Southeast, tallgrass prairies in the Midwest, sagebrush in the Intermountain West, coastal beaches, and seabird nesting islands were all among the most threatened habitats.

The primary causes for the loss of the 20 most threatened bird habitats include invasive species, sprawling development, fire suppression, agriculture, deforestation, poor habitat management, overgrazing, pesticides, and water diversion. The report identifies threats in each habitat, lists birds of high conservation concern, and offers solutions and opportunities to restore lost habitat.

Bird watching and other wildlife viewing by 66 million Americans contribute \$43 billion annually to the nation's economy, according to a 2006 report by the Outdoor Industry Foundation. Retail sales of birding gear and birding trips, and state and federal tax receipts comprise a substantial portion of this. "As well as a biological imperative, it makes good economic sense to conserve bird habitats," said ABC President, George Fenwick. "In addition to the direct economic benefits of bird watching, birds play an important role in maintaining the ecosystems on which humans ultimately depend."

The most threatened habitats include the following:

1. Hawaiian Forests
2. Open Ocean/Sea Bird Nesting Islands
3. Sagebrush (WA, OR, ID, MT, WY, NV)
4. Edwards Plateau Savannah (Central Texas)
5. Southwest Riparian (AZ, NM, CA, NV, TX)
6. Tallgrass Prairies (IL, IN, OH, MO, KS, IA)
7. Coastal Beaches and Marshes (U.S. coastline)
8. Gulf Coast Prairie (LA, TX)
9. Lake Wales Oak Ridge Scrub (Central Florida)
10. Mixed Longleaf Pine/Bottomland Hardwood Forest (NC, SC, GA, FL, MS, AL)
11. Great Plains Wetlands (MN, ND, SD, NE)
12. California's Central Valley (CA)
13. Florida Wetlands (FL)
14. Chaparral (CA)
15. Shortgrass Prairie (KS, NE, CO, OK, TX, NM)
16. Bottomland Hardwood Forest (LA, AR, MS, TN)
17. Ponderosa Pine (MT, ID, OR, and WA)
18. Oak Savannah (OR, WA, CA)
19. Early Successional/Eastern Deciduous Forests (eastern states)
20. Northwest Rainforest (AK, BC, OR, WA, CA)

Winter 2008 GOS Meeting in Bainbridge

By Bill Lotz

The Winter 2008 Meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society will be held in Bainbridge, Georgia, from Friday, January 18, through Monday, January 21, 2008. Please note that this meeting will be held over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend. Our headquarters hotel is the Charter House Inn in Bainbridge. The registration desk will open in the lobby of that hotel at 3:00 PM on Friday, January 18, 2008.

Dinner on Friday is on your own. The Friday night program, "A Bird's Eye View of Peru," will begin at 7:30 PM and will be presented by Nico Dauphine. Nico has been in love with birds since her earliest memory and aspired to become an ornithologist while growing up on California's central coast. She has a special interest in collaborating with indigenous and local communities in remote and little-known parts of the world to carry out research and outreach for bird conservation. She received B.A. and M.S. degrees from Yale and Cornell universities, respectively, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate under Dr. Bob Cooper in Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia. She has had a passion for international engagement since first going overseas in her youth, and spent four years as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer working on environmental issues in West Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Islands. As a graduate student, she has led ecological research projects in Egypt, Madagascar, and, most extensively, Peru, which will be the subject of her talk and for which she received generous support from the Georgia Ornithological Society.

Field trip destinations on Saturday, Sunday and Monday will include sites around Bainbridge, including the various access points around Lake Seminole, Lake Walter F. George, Birdsong Nature Center, and St. Marks NWR in Florida, among others. We will again have a Field Trip Reservation Form included with the registration packet, and field trips should be reserved in advance in order to get your first or second choice. (We will still have field trip sign-up sheets available on Friday evening for those who want to wait to hear the field trip descriptions before deciding.)

The Social Hour will begin Saturday night at 6:00 PM, followed by the banquet at 7:00 PM. Our featured speaker will be Dr. Lynn Fowler, a naturalist who leads expeditions to the Galápagos on behalf of Lindblad Expeditions. She first visited Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands in 1976 and was captivated by the fearless island inhabitants and the stark beauty of the volcanic archipelago. After receiving her master's degree in zoology from the University of Florida, studying sea turtles, she returned to the Galápagos and worked as one of the first female naturalist guides for the Charles Darwin Research Station. Her research projects have covered the feral burros and giant tortoises of Volcán Alcedo on Isabela Island, as well as the rainforest white-lipped peccary. Dr. Fowler's presentation will, of course, be on the Galápagos Islands, truly one of the most magical places on Earth.

There will not be a formal meeting Sunday evening, but those who are staying are invited to join us in the meeting room of the hotel to view slides presented by some of our members from their birding trips around the world. We have borrowed this idea from the Florida and Alabama ornithology societies. FOS calls it "flocking," and we thought we would try it at this meeting. If you would like to present a short, 10- to 15-minute presentation of slides you have taken while birding in Georgia, around the U. S., or indeed anywhere in the world, please contact me at blotz@mindspring.com or 404-261-1906.

On Monday we will offer one or two half-day field trips in the Bainbridge area and one or two to great birding spots that should be on your way back home, such as Reed Bingham State Park and/or the Bradley Unit of the Eufaula NWR.

Please plan to join us in Bainbridge for what should be an exciting weekend of birding and fellowship.

Support the Georgia Ornithological Society through Earth Share of Georgia

By Mark Beebe

One easy way to support the work of the Georgia Ornithological Society (GOS) can be through your donation in a workplace giving campaign sponsored by your employer. Many local employers partner with Earth Share of Georgia to make workplace giving to an environmental organization such as GOS a simple choice.

Earth Share of Georgia plays a vital role in promoting environmental education, volunteerism, and charitable giving by partnering with businesses across Georgia. Since its founding in 1992, employees across the state have generously pledged their financial support and time to the important work of Earth Share's member organizations, including GOS. These contributions are growing as more and more businesses move to place the environment alongside United Way and other approved charities as a key recipient of annual employee payroll pledges. Earth Share now participates in more than seventy corporate and government campaigns such as those sponsored by American Express, Kaiser Permanente, McKenna, Long & Aldridge, Microsoft Corp, REI, the State of Georgia, and many local governments and schools.

Employees can check with their payroll offices or with Earth Share of Georgia to determine if they have the option to contribute to Earth Share of Georgia. If your workplace already has a partnership with Earth Share, it's as

simple as filling out a pledge card and designating how much money should be taken out of each paycheck. Earth Share allows employee donors the unique option of designating a pledge to one or more organizations of their choice or making one gift (to be shared among all member groups).

If your workplace isn't a current Earth Share partner, ask your human resources department to consider this option. Check out www.earthsharega.org for more information.

FEED THE BIRDS

Please remember to feed the birds as fall and winter approach because the mast and other wild foods and seeds may be diminished due to the spring freeze and the drought.



A Bird Bath

From *The Bird Study Book*, 1917, by T. Gilbert Pearson, with illustrations by Will Simmons.

Address Changes

If your address changes, please notify us directly by mail (P.O. Box 181, High Shoals, GA 30645) or by e-mail (membership@gos.org). 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!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please complete the form and mail with your payment to: Georgia Ornithological Society, P.O. Box 181, High Shoals, GA 30645

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Annual membership rates for individuals and families:

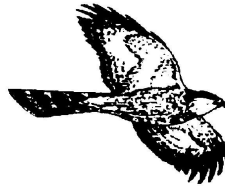
- | | |
|---|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachman's Sparrow (Regular) | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-cockaded Woodpecker (Sustaining) | \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Bobwhite (Patron) | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fledgling (Students only) | \$10 |

Life Membership Rates for individuals or couples:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Goshawk | \$400 |
|---|-------|

Yes, I would like to make an additional contribution of \$_____ in support of GOS and its programs.

GOShaw



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