

GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society



Georgia Rare Bird Alert: 770-493-8862

GOS on the web: www.gos.org

President's Message: How Do We Value Birds?

By Bob Sargent

Just recently someone asked me which bird species is my favorite. I'm convinced I've fielded that particular question dozens of times, and I bet many of you have been asked it, too. Frankly, I never seem to have a good answer, or at least the consistently disappointed reaction of the questioner always makes me feel as though I've let him or her down. You see, as a scientist I'm programmed to be uncomfortable with the notion of picking a favorite species of anything, be it a bird or a flower, because it smacks of the implication that I might value some species more than others based on appearance. So I flinch, start babbling about ecological values versus human values and the rarity of some species, try to bail myself out by describing some highlights of my birding experiences, and suddenly become conscious of a pained expression in the eyes of the questioner. It

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

7th Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival

October 8-12, 2009, Jekyll Island

GOS Winter Meeting

January 15-18, 2010, Tybee Island

GOS Spring Meeting

April 16-18, 2010, Athens

happens every time. You'd figure I would have worked out a concise, socially-acceptable answer to this question by now, but no – I crash and burn every time.

Okay, so some of my favorite birding memories involve spectacularly flashy species. I'll never forget my first glimpse of a male Scarlet Tanager. It was almost 20 years ago, and the bird was perched in full sunlight at the peak of a fir tree in the mountains near Franklin, North Carolina. Then there was the hike into the Monteverde Cloud Forest in Costa Rica in 2005 – 30 feet down the trail and I almost ran right into a Resplendent Quetzal. I was tempted to call it a day right then and there. Or the "booze cruise" in Trinidad's Caroni Swamp in 2003 when a flock of hundreds of Scarlet Ibis sailed over our boat, suddenly making the sinking sun seem bland by comparison. Of course, everyone who has birded long enough has memories like this and tales to tell. But I wouldn't call these species my favorites; instead I'd say that these are some of my favorite

(continued on page 3)

**Georgia
Ornithological
Society**

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*Deadline for article submission is the 1st
of the month prior to publication.
Text by e-mail is appreciated.*

Welcome, New Members!

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Members

Patty and Peter Jenkins	Atlanta, GA
John B. McClatchey	Atlanta, GA

Bachman's Sparrow Members

Roy Brown	Albany, GA
Kathryn Doyon	Plymouth, MA
Carole A. Noel	Rex, GA
Gerald Pommerenck	Richmond Hill, GA
Emily Toriani-Moura	Atlanta, GA

The 2009 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, 198 Ponce de Leon Ave NE, Unit 7C, Atlanta, GA 30308 for a paper copy. Available to members only.



**GRANT APPLICATION
DEADLINES**

Bill Terrell Graduate Student Grants
December 1, 2009

Bill Terrell Avian Conservation Grants
December 1, 2009

H. Branch Howe, Jr., Graduate Student Grants
December 31, 2009

For more information about GOS, visit www.gos.org

For information about the society's grants, visit
<http://www.gos.org/grants/grant.html>



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

memories because of the rarified sense of adventure associated with passing through someplace wild and new, and because I share those permanent mental snapshots with friends who were there with me. My favorite birding memories also include the Carolina Wren who insisted on building a nest in the grill of my pickup truck in 1994, the male Eastern Towhee in 1991 who fought with his image reflected in the side-view mirror of the neighbor's car every day during spring, the Northern Mockingbird in my current neighborhood who dive-bombs the neighbor's free-ranging (grrr!) cats, and the Song Sparrow who sings from the two bushes in the massive K-Mart parking lot in north Macon, accentuating an otherwise ugly landscape with beautiful music.

Getting back to tanagers and choosing favorite species.

When I was in graduate school in Athens, I recall being asked by a mountain-climbing friend how I felt about raptors – another question that instantly made me feel queasy. Before I could launch into my ecology-of-raptors spiel, he proceeded to explain how infuriated he felt when he encountered the remains of a raptor-killed Scarlet Tanager while climbing near Tallulah Gorge. At that moment on the cliff-side, had he the power, it seems he would have attempted to strike down all raptors in the state. I asked him if he would have felt differently if the remains had been those of a Song Sparrow, and his reaction went something like, "Sure, I would have reacted differently. What a stupid question. Who cares about a dull sparrow?" I recently encountered a similar mindset in a friend who expressed fury over a Cooper's Hawk that routinely roars through his backyard, sending the songbirds on his feeders into a panic. He wanted to know what he could do with the hawk. I politely suggested he pull up a lawn-chair and enjoy the show.

I've run into the same situation on the military base where I work, as each winter an accipiter usually figures out that pigeons like to roost in the rafters of aircraft hangars, and this free lunch is just too good for the hawk to pass up. Imagine my reaction the first time one of the hangar employees asked me what I was going to do to save the pigeons. "Could I kill the hawk?" The implication was that birds of prey are bad or evil, a typical case of anthropomorphizing, a mode of thinking which differs only to a slight degree from the mountain-climbing friend's firm belief that beautiful bird species have more value than plain ones. But what about the ecological roles that each bird species performs, such as the gift of aerial insect population regulation courtesy of foraging Chimney Swifts, the control of aquatic insects by Pied-billed Grebes, and the reduction of defoliating caterpillars by Yellow-billed Cuckoos? Let's face it: these three species aren't particularly flashy, but does that reduce or negate their value? I never tire of watching the acrobatics of swifts over cities; they remind me of outer-space combat scenes from the Star Wars movies. And there's something especially peaceful about watching a solitary grebe far out on a big lake on a bleak winter's day. Sanderlings in winter are neither flashy nor are they uncommon on Georgia's coast, but who hasn't stared in fascination at a flock of them, one moment fleeing an incoming wave, and the next moment boldly chasing the receding waters?

So the next time someone asks you about your favorite bird species, how will you answer? Let's use these question-and-answer moments with fellow birders and those who aren't knowledgeable about birds to promote an ecological ethic, an ethic that's grounded in the reality that all species have worth, even those that birders call dull brown jobs. Beautiful doesn't mean better, and predation doesn't mean bad.

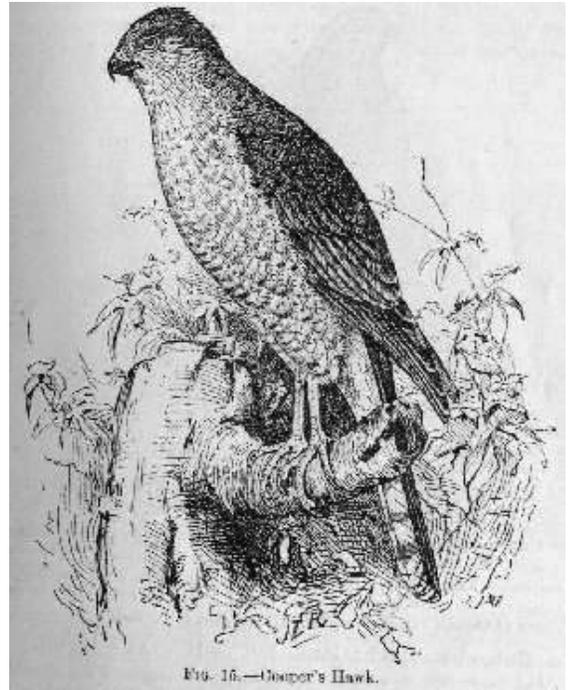
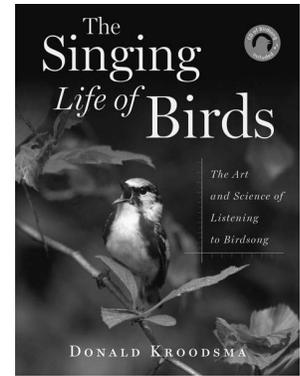


Fig. 16.—Cooper's Hawk.
Cooper's Hawk (from L. Bruner, 1896, *Some Notes on Nebraska Birds*, Lincoln, Nebraska).

“The Singing Life of Birds” Comes to the Coastal Birding Festival

By Bob Sargent

If you haven't started making plans to attend the Seventh Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival, what are you waiting for? Along with the usual array of seminars and fabulous field trips (Blackbeard Island NWR, Wassaw Island, Sapelo Island, etc.), this year's festival banquet will feature a speaker who is a pioneer in the world of bird song research. Most of us have learned to identify at least a few bird species via their distinctive songs and calls, and long-time birders may know the songs of a hundred or more species. Everyone knows that a Tufted Titmouse sings, “Peter, Peter, Peter,” but what does a titmouse's song sound like to other titmice, and to other species? Why does the tempo and character of an individual titmouse's song change with time of day or time of year? What information is the bird trying to convey with its songs and calls? Sure, most birders know that a bird sings to attract a mate and to defend a territory, but did you know that their songs can communicate very specific information, much like a spoken human sentence? So what are birds really saying? Come listen to birds as you've never listened before, using what they have to say as a window into their minds, using what they have to say not just to identify them, but to identify with them. Hear a song sparrow work through his repertoire, or listen to conversations among crows and jays. See and hear the exquisite beauty in songs of thrushes and how each male uses his songs to best effect. Listen to a babbling baby wren and baby human, and realize how much we have in common with these songbirds. Come and learn to truly listen to our most common birds in ways you never imagined possible. Join us on banquet night as Dr. Don Kroodsma, ornithology's dean of bird song, teaches you how to hear birds like it's the first time, because in a way it will be. And if this isn't enough to whet your appetite, Don will be leading a field trip to record bird songs on Jekyll Island and then will demonstrate how he uses computer software to slow down and analyze songs. This is the teacher and the class you always wished you experienced, so don't miss it!



GOS Winter 2010 Meeting on Tybee Island

By Bill Lotz

The Winter 2010 Meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society will be held on Tybee Island, Georgia, from Friday, January 15, through Monday, January 18, 2010. Please note that this meeting will be held over the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Weekend. Our headquarters hotel will again be the Ocean Plaza Beach Resort on Tybee Island.

The Friday night program will be presented by research biologist Jim Cox from Tall Timbers Research Station. Jim will talk about lightning-season burning and its effect on breeding birds.

Field trip destinations on Saturday, Sunday and Monday will include some wonderful birding sites around Savannah, including Tybee Island, Ft. Pulaski, Savannah NWR, Harris Neck, Fort Stewart, and Little Tybee Island.

Our featured speaker at the banquet on Saturday evening will be Dr. Sid Gauthreaux from Clemson University. Dr. Gauthreaux is recognized as the first person who applied the use of radar in understanding avian migration. His presentation will focus on recent advancements in thermal imagery and radar technology and how this has greatly benefited the study of bird migration.

There will also be a “Flocking” late Sunday afternoon, an informal gathering at the hotel with light refreshments and trip and/or bird slides taken and presented by our members.

Please plan to join us on Tybee Island for what should be an exciting weekend of birding and fellowship.

Editor's Note: This year, the Atlanta Audubon Society and GOS co-sponsored a young person (ages 13-18) to attend the American Birding Association's (ABA) Young Birder's Conference in San Diego in June. Jordan Budnik, a 17-year-old senior at Druid Hills High School in Decatur, was the 2009 scholarship winner; her report of her conference experience follows.

Watching

By Jordan Budnik

"Let me just start by saying that you are going to San Diego in June."—My eyes halted their frantic scrutiny of the letter I had opened seconds earlier, breath catching excitedly in my throat. I read the first line again, chasing away any chance that I'd misunderstood. No mistake. That once-distant dream of the scholarship to attend the ABA Young Birder's Conference had now landed in my hands. I stared blankly at the paper, heart ramming against my ribcage like a little bird itself. I was going far away from the Black Vultures and legions of warblers the Southeast offered, going somewhere new and thrilling.

Not 20 minutes after my first step on California soil, I was convinced I was on a different planet. I soon realized just how much my Georgia-girl accent stuck out, not to mention that when one of the trip's leaders engaged me in conversation about western birds, all I could contribute was a nod, oblivion etched in my face. I'd never heard of anything called a "life list," so when "lifers" became a common topic in the group, I found myself asking one of my roommates for the definition. At first, the realization of how green I was to professional birding felt a bit disconcerting, but that frame of mind fell away quickly. I wasn't there to show off, nor had that ever been a motivation of mine when birding, so why should I be discouraged? Each moment was humbling as a flurry of bird names I'd never heard fluttered around me. I rolled out of bed at 3 or 4 AM each day to beat the California sun, and promised myself I'd seize each experience I encountered and learn all I could from it. The names grew more and more familiar, as did the birds they belonged to. Even better, I could associate an experience with each new bird I saw. I will never just think of a picture of a bird when I hear the name Burrowing Owl; instead, my mind still jumps to the stout silhouettes along the roadside, made almost invisible against the background of matching dirt.

Our curious group trekked to a new location every day, from the mountains that varied so differently from the humid foothills of my home, to the jagged coastline to the rugged scrublands. Jokes were exchanged by everyone but the moment a bird was sighted, excited hands fiddled with binoculars and scopes, interrupting any conversation. We melted hundreds of feet below sea level and nearly froze on a brutally cold boat ride to Santa Cruz Island, eyes straining against sun or wind for even a distant wing-beat on the horizon. By the time I boarded the plane to fly back home, I had 127 "lifers" to add to my list—birds I had seen for the first time in my life. Beyond even that, an inspiration had ignited within me.

The most inspiring and thrilling sensation of bird watching, I decided on my California adventure, is the moment when the bird begins to watch you back. Whether it be the haunting eyes of a Barn Owl holed up in a palm tree or the obsidian hue of a Common Raven's gaze, the chill that their stare instills in me never fades, no matter how often it happens. Turning around to find the challenging eyes of a Peregrine Falcon glaring down at me triggers in me an unrivaled wonder I doubt I will ever find outside the birding world. For this reason and many more, I am unwaveringly determined to pursue a career in birds and wherever it takes me, my heart is sure to be content.

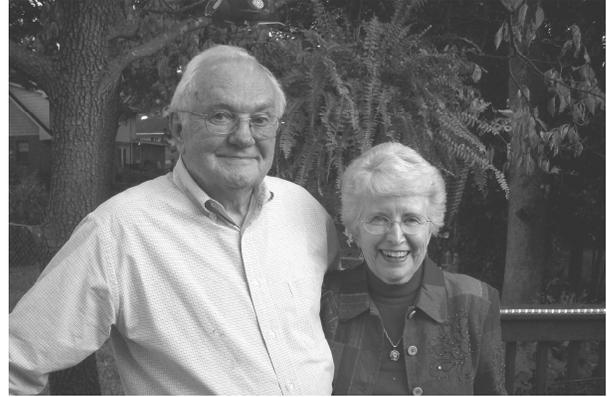


Jordan Budnik, an intern at Zoo Atlanta, with Mandela, a juvenile African Milky Eagle Owl. *Photo courtesy of Jordan Budnik.*

In Memoriam: Alice Hunter Patterson

By John Swiderski

Alice Hunter Patterson, 80, died June 25, 2009, in Decatur, Georgia. She was born and raised in Tupelo, Mississippi, and attended Mary Baldwin College before transferring to the University of Mississippi, graduating in 1950. Upon graduation she married Thomas K. (Tommy) Patterson, also of Tupelo. Tommy's career eventually brought them to Dublin, Georgia, their home for more than 50 years. Some 30 years ago, Tommy developed an interest in birds fostered by their late son, Hunter. Birding became his lifetime hobby, and he and Alice became members of GOS in 1974.



Tommy and Alice Patterson, 2008. *Photo courtesy of Jill Patterson Tolbert.*

Alice was not a birder; rather, her passions were people, volunteer work, and church service. The Pattersons were members of Henry Memorial Presbyterian Church in Dublin, and Alice held many offices locally and on the presbytery level of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and was recognized with an honorary life membership in Presbyterian Women. Her volunteer interests included both Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, Meals on Wheels, and the Dublin Service League among others.

Many GOS members and birders have pleasant memories of visits to the Patterson home to go birding in the area with Tommy or to participate in the Dublin Christmas Bird Count. Alice was always a gracious hostess and was genuinely happy to see you, as evidenced by her wonderful smile and warm greeting.

In addition to Tommy, her husband of 59 years, she is survived by her son Tom, daughters Calli and Jill, and six grandchildren.

Camp TALON Soars

By Bob Sargent

Early in 2008, DNR's Wildlife Resources Division, Atlanta Audubon Society (AAS), and the Georgia Ornithological Society (GOS) first kicked around the notion of teaming up to create a summer birding camp for teenagers. Given the fabulous success of DNR's Youth Birding Competition to that point, this seemed like the natural next step to take on the road to getting more young people involved with birds and conservation. All of us were enthusiastic at first, but as so often happens, everyone quickly got sidetracked, and the egg that would hatch to become the camp settled into our collective subconscious for a long incubation. It wasn't until last December that the idea again saw the light of day, and this time it gathered momentum like a falcon closing in on a pigeon.

Our first planning meeting was held at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center on January 7th, and it was clear from the start that everyone involved had the same vision: create a camp curriculum that introduced young birders to the world of professional ornithology, especially research and habitat management. We didn't want this to be all about making students super birders; instead, we wanted to recruit future biologists and science teachers to the team, educate voters-to-be, and give these young people some of the tools needed to teach their friends the conservation message. Oh, and along the way we planned to have a great time birding like crazy.

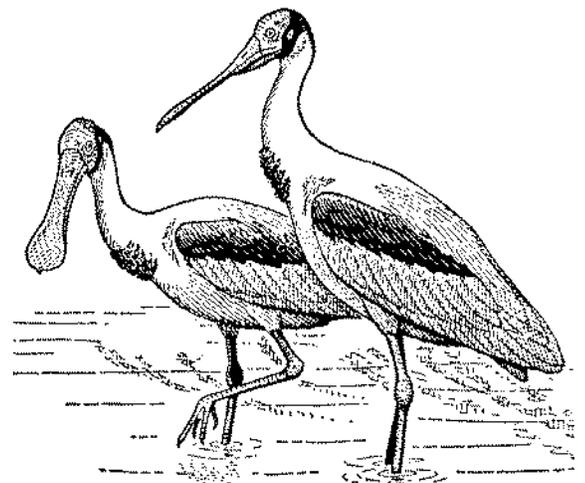
In its formative stages the nestling looked harmless and manageable. In fact, the only lengthy debate we had concerned what to name the camp, which was settled when Dan Vickers suggested a clever acronym “TALON” – Teen Adventures Learning Ornithology and Nature. So now we had a vision, a team, and a name. Just one more minor problem: we had just two months to figure out and advertise the where, when, what, and how much, as by April we assumed that most parents would have already made plans for how their teens would spend the summer.

By now, of course, most of you have probably heard that the camp successfully fledged in mid-June at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island. Six chaperones took turns guiding 10 eager teens up and down the Georgia coast by bus for six days of birding and biology instruction. The formula for each day looked like this: get an early start, visit a refuge or management area until noon, head back to St. Simons Island for a break, head off to birdwatch at a nearby beach for two hours in the late afternoon, break for dinner, and then conclude the day with a couple of hours of instruction in the classroom. Sure, we worried that the schedule might be too ambitious, just as we worried that the teens would out-endure the chaperones, but we figured we could adjust the schedule on the fly, and why wouldn't the teens be ready to crash early each night after such action-packed days? Okay, so maybe we were a bit naïve.

Monday morning, June 15th, started at Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge with Peter Range holding up a recently mist-netted male Painted Bunting before the eyes of 10 astonished and now fully-awake teens, as he demonstrated how to age, sex, measure, and band a bird. If that didn't turn them on to birds, nothing would. Of course, the other way to view this was that this was only day one, and how were we going to top this? We needn't have worried. The field trips and the birds couldn't have been better. The students were treated to an up-close encounter with an absolutely throbbing Wood Stork rookery, the dazzling sight of flocks of Roseate Spoonbills, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, and White and Glossy Ibis swirling over an Altamaha marsh, a peek into an active Red-cockaded Woodpecker nest and an opportunity to hold a Bachman's Sparrow at Ft. Stewart, a full day shore-birding and seine netting fish on Little St. Simons Island, and so much birding on Jekyll Island and at Gould's Inlet that, believe it or not, even the students were weary (in a happy way) by Thursday night. In fact, they were so “birded out” that they elected to spend Friday morning, the last day of camp, visiting the Sea Turtle Center on Jekyll Island!

Thanks to a collective teaching effort by Tim Keyes, Dan Vickers, and Bob Sargent, the evenings were filled with programs about the ecological values of birds, how to learn songs, bird photography, and censusing birds. To add some additional spice to the classes and to get the competitive juices flowing, we challenged the students every night to identify at least six birds by sight or sound and awarded points for each correct identification. By the end of the week, two students – Luke Theodorou and Mac McCall – were tied for the lead, leading to a head-to-head competition eventually won by Luke. For his efforts, Luke received a copy of *Birdwatcher*, a biography of Roger Tory Peterson. Other prizes, including field guides and binoculars, were awarded to students for a variety of accomplishments.

After nearly a year of hesitantly wobbling on the rim of the nest, Camp TALON has not only successfully fledged; it has soared. Of course, it's hard to mess something like this up when you've got the Georgia coast and all its jewels as your playground, along with supporting resources of DNR, AAS, GOS, and TERN. But the success of this camp is primarily attributable to the organizational gifts of Julie Duncan, Mary Terry, Catharine Kuchar, and Walt Lane, and the immeasurable skills of the biologists and birding professionals who gave hours of their time to teach the teens: Dot Bambach, Larry Carlile, Brooks Good, Stacia Hendricks, Mary Moffat, Peter Range, and Brad Winn. Thank you, all. And the teens of Camp TALON will see you again next year.



My Birding Odyssey: Thank You, Tommy Patterson

By Donny Screws

I thought I was the only human being in Georgia who was interested in birds. Throughout my childhood, from the moment at age five when my daddy held me up in his arms to peer curiously into a mockingbird's nest, until I was in my early twenties canoeing the Ocmulgee in search of Swallow-tailed Kites, no one else in my world knew anything or anyone else who was into birding. My two passions in life were music and nature, sparked by the Beatles on one hand and a plum-picking trip with Aunt Judy on the other hand, where I saw a dog skeleton. That day was the reason I became a science instructor. All through my 1960s childhood, I watched, recorded, and fed birds at my home. You couldn't buy bird seed in my little town, so I made my own. This "Silent Spring" era of environmental devastation was very real: at that time you saw no hawks, owls, or Eastern Bluebirds, just to name a few. When it rained, huge brown suds filled the creeks and rivers, and you choked on dirty air on trips to Macon. But for some reason, the tiny hamlet of Chester, Georgia, was a haven for birds, and still is. My parents supported me, buying me countless copies of the small *Golden Guide* to birds and K-mart binoculars. Later, on trips to Florida, we found the Holy Grail: *A Field Guide to the Birds* by Roger Tory Peterson. My buddies, Jeff and Mark, accompanied me on birding expeditions as we walked miles through the woods and fields. Our Tom Sawyer–Huck Finn childhood is highly recommended. We had adventures!

Once, as I rode in my parent's automobile, we passed a local pond, and when I glanced out the window, I almost jumped completely out of the car. There, standing by the water, was a Great Blue Heron! As soon as we got home, I rode my bicycle three miles out to the pond, parked it in the woods, and literally crawled through the bushes to the water's edge to view this magnificent creature, which I mispronounced as a "great blue hee-ron." I would also ride to neighbors' homes to sit for hours admiring their Purple Martin colonies. My dad then built me a martin house out of Coca-Cola crates, and I had my own colony! But with no Internet in those days, my odyssey was largely in solitude. I read about Audubon societies, but they were always somewhere in Massachusetts, it seemed. Then I met Tommy Patterson. An acquaintance who knew my avian passion told me of a man in Dublin who had been the subject of a news article, and that he was a bird expert. I am not one to call people out of the blue, but I just had to talk to this man. When I called, Mr. Patterson was very accommodating and friendly. He answered my questions patiently and then invited me to go birding with him sometime.

I began to visit Mr. Patterson occasionally to go birding in his "hotspots" and quickly added many new birds to my life list. He was an enigma to me, and I tried to keep a respectful distance. I didn't want to intrude on this man's life, but he held the keys to the kingdom. I felt as if I had climbed the mountain to meet my guru. Mr. Patterson was the most knowledgeable birder I had ever heard of, and I learned that while he was president of the Georgia Ornithological Society, he had met Roger Tory Peterson! He was also funny. Once, while we birded a Laurens County pond, I spotted a Common Yellowthroat and became quite excited. Mr. Patterson came running over to see what I was so worked up about. When I told him, he replied indignantly, "A Common Yellowthroat? Why, they're . . . they're . . . COMMON!" We still laugh about that today. Any good scientist is a skeptic. You don't just accept what other researchers say without proof, and Mr. Patterson was a good scientist. Upon reporting a vireo I thought I had spotted, he would kindly say, "No, no, no. It was probably this other species."

I got to know his sweet wife, Mrs. Alice Patterson, and also his beloved son, Hunter, who as a child had sparked his daddy's interest in ornithology. Mr. Patterson was more kind and patient with this young upstart than he had to be, and I am eternally grateful and flattered that this man would spend time with me. I became a life member of the GOS and attended many state meetings, where I met wonderful people such as Ken and Arlene Clark, Ty Ivey, and many others.

As time went on, my music career heated up and my focus shifted from birding to playing all over the Southeast with rock and country bands. I saw Mr. Patterson less and less. But I am so thankful for those good times together in the field, being able to hang out with someone who shared my passion for birds and nature. Even though I am not as active as I once was, I plan to get more involved in the near future. The wonderful thing is, after a childhood of solitary birding, I now know that there are thousands of others in the Peach State who share my passion for birds. They are out there at this moment doing the business of birding, researching, stomping through the swamps and fields and just having fun. These are my people, and I will be rejoining them soon. Thank you, Tommy Patterson!

Donny is a teacher, writer, and musician from Chester, Georgia. Write him at donnyscrews@bellsouth.net

Camp **TALON**

(Teen Adventures Learning Ornithology and Nature)

What?

- A week-long camp for teens interested in birds and nature
- Sponsors: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Ornithological Society, and Atlanta Audubon Society

When? Tentatively June 5-11, 2010

Where? The camp will kick off with a Saturday night get-together at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, before spending the week based on St. Simons Island. We'll be birding at Harris Neck NWR, Altamaha WMA, Little St. Simons Island, Ft. Stewart, Sapelo Island, and Jekyll Island.

Who? Will host 20 students, age 13-17



How much? About \$500 per student, which includes meals, lodging, and transportation. Some scholarships will be available. A chartered bus will pick up students at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center on the morning of the 5th, and will return them on the 11th for a last-night celebration.

For info, call Julie Duncan (770) 784-3059, or Bob Sargent (478) 397-7962.

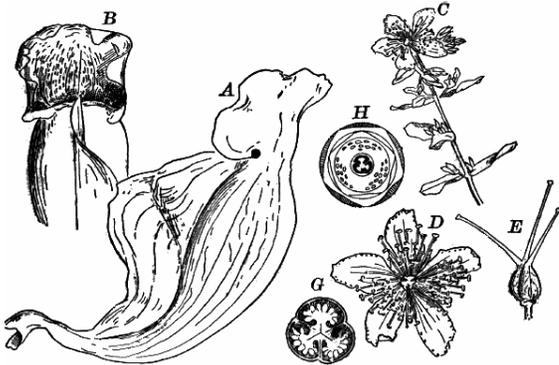
In Memoriam: Leo T. Barber, Jr.

Leo T. (Tommy) Barber, Jr., 86, died June 15, 2009, in Atlanta. He was born December 4, 1922, in Moultrie, Georgia, where he lived most of his life. He graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in civil engineering, although his studies were interrupted by his service in the U.S. Army in the European theater during World War II. Tommy was an officer in the Corps of Engineers and saw combat in France and Germany. He continued to serve in the Army Reserve until 1972, when he retired as a lieutenant colonel. Following his graduation from Georgia Tech, Tommy married Ann Lee. They returned to Moultrie, where he went into the construction contracting business. His engineering career spanned all types of projects in the public and private sector.



Along with Ann, Tommy did not let his numerous business and civic interests in Moultrie interfere with a growing interest in botany, wildflowers, birds, and conservation efforts. As the story goes, he and Ann began taking pictures of wildflowers when their four children would no longer hold still for the camera. That shared hobby led to photographs published in wildflower guides and numerous magazines, and they regularly presented programs about wildflowers and nature. They also realized the importance of conservation and preservation and were founding members of the Georgia Conservancy; moreover, Tommy served as a board member and chairman. The Barbers were active members of the Georgia Botanical Society and GOS since 1983.

In 1971, Tommy was appointed by then-Governor Jimmy Carter to the Board of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), serving in that capacity until 1978. In 1982, he was named Conservationist of the Year by the Georgia Wildlife Federation, and in 1984 he received the Rock Howard Award from the Georgia DNR Board for his outstanding contributions to the betterment of Georgia's natural resources.



Pitcher plant (*Sarracenia*). From D.H. Campbell, 1890, *Elements of Structural and Systematic Botany*, Ginn and Co., Boston.

Truly, Tommy and Ann were a couple who made a difference on behalf of the natural world we care about in Georgia. It is a fitting memorial to them and the Barber family that the Doerun Pitcher Plant Bog Natural Area has preserved what was Barber family-owned farm property.

Tommy was preceded in death by Ann, his wife of 50 years, and a daughter, Anna Lee. He is survived by his children Leo T. III, Nancy and Brian, and five grandchildren including Leo T. IV.

Slate of GOS Nominees for 2009-2011

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
Darlene Moore	Secretary
Jeannie Wright	Treasurer

The next term will run from October 2009 to October 2011. Other members of the GOS Executive Committee are appointed by the GOS officers.

Best Birding Morning Ever

By Ted Reissing

When you are in sales for 35 years and have accounts throughout the U.S., it is possible to accumulate a lot of frequent flyer points. Then if one wishes to bird outside of the U.S. and your local airline (Delta) decides to focus on foreign travel, there are lots of options from which to choose. As a result, I have been able to visit most parts of the world to do at least some sort of bird watching. Many great experiences have occurred since retirement 10 years ago, but the morning that stands out as the best was spent at Napo Lodge in the upper Amazonian basin of Ecuador.

To reach Napo it is necessary to fly east from the capital of Quito a short distance to the city of Coca on the Napo River, a tributary of the Amazon. After a two-hour boat ride in a large, fast, open canoe, one arrives at a creek in the Yasuni National Park. This area is the home of the Anangu Quichua people, the owners of the lodge and dedicated protectors of the surrounding forest. I believe this was the first totally eco-oriented facility in South America. From the Napo River, the lodge is reached by a one-hour paddle (no motors so wildlife is not disturbed) up the creek to Lake Anangucocha.

This Napo site has excellent local guides and more than 565 species of birds. There are two canopy towers, with one rising well above the surrounding area. To reach this spot, you must wake before dawn, paddle across the lake, and walk about half a mile on a good trail. A steel stairway takes one more than 100 feet up, to the top of a large kapok tree, where a platform has been built in the highest branches. The early-morning departure is necessary because usually it gets so hot after the first hour and a half of viewing that guests want to descend and complete the morning's birding in the cooler forest. But on the morning we were there, the sky was clouded over, the weather stayed cool, and we had more than four hours of great birding. We left only because the guides wanted lunch. During our visit we spotted more than 50 species, many of them life birds. One interesting thing to us was that the birds mostly did not fly in, but suddenly appeared on top of surrounding trees, having reached there by moving through the canopy and coming up from below. This meant we needed to be constantly watchful.

Cool weather, an unobstructed 360-degree view, and sensational birds will make this morning remain in my mind as the best ever.

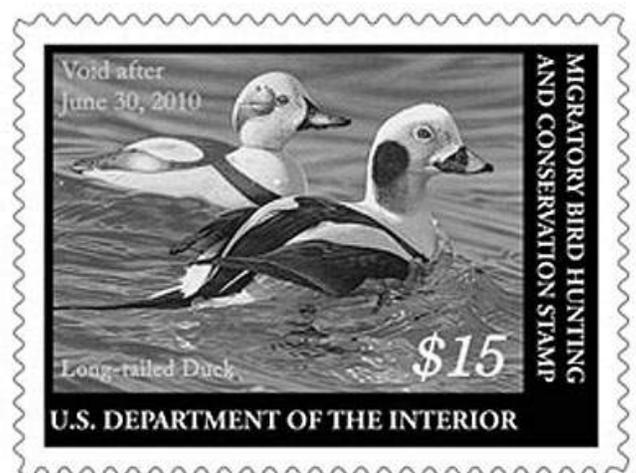
Buy a 2009-2010 Duck Stamp from GOS

By Steve Holzman

If you do nothing else for conservation this year, buy a duck stamp. We'll even throw in a keychain for you. See <http://www.gos.org/duckstamp/duckstamp.htm> for more information or send a check for \$17 (to cover the keychain & postage) to

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