

GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society



Georgia Rare Bird Alert: 770-493-8862

GOS on the web: www.gos.org

Our Teens Are the Future of Georgia Ornithology and Conservation

By Bob Sargent

Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian Doris Kearns Goodwin has justly earned renown for the many popular presidential biographies she has penned. I am fascinated with history and have admired her work for years, but I wasn't a devoted fan until I discovered another passion we share – a love of baseball. Like so many other Brooklyn kids of the 1940s and 1950s, she was an ardent Dodgers fan, and so her heart was broken when Walter O'Malley moved the team to Los Angeles following the 1957 season. She movingly captured her devotion and her sadness in her memoir, *Wait Till Next Year*. One of the things

that resonated with me when I read that book was her description of the cultural changes that occurred in her neighborhood the year that television arrived. Ms. Goodwin wrote how her after-school youth was spent playing with other kids on tree-lined streets, while parents sat on front porch swings and said hello to passersby. Everyone on her street knew the names of their neighbors and their neighbors' children. When the first televisions appeared, children stopped playing outdoors, porch swings sat empty, and neighbors evolved into strangers.

The world Ms. Kearns described resides 60 years in the past, and computers have teamed with televisions to give today's children just one more reason not to play outside and give today's parents another reason not to know their neighbors. Shortly after we moved into our Macon home, my wife Carol and I made the rounds, knocking on the doors of neighbors. She carried a platter of homemade cookies, so everyone remembered her! Odds are that the only things they remembered about me were that I was the binoculars-toting guy who accompanied the gal with the great munchies and the radiant smile. When we got home after walking the neighborhood circuit, Carol was

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SHOULD THE GOSHAWK GO PAPERLESS?

The GOS Executive Committee has proposed that the *GOShawk* newsletter go electronic, beginning with the September 2010 issue, in order to reduce costs and be more environmentally responsible. Members would be advised when the latest issue is available and then would view or download the newsletter via the GOS website. Do you support or oppose this proposal? Please contact GOS President Bob Sargent with your views: kywarbler@cox.net and 1263 Clairmont Place, Macon, GA 31204.

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!

Bachman's Sparrow Members

Michael, Joshua, Joseph and Jacob Barrett	Temple, GA
Susan E. Callaway	Decatur, GA
Bert Fontaine	Decatur, GA
Paul and Brenda Grooms	Flowery Branch, GA
Shiras and Bill Guion	Canton, GA
Larry Hodges	Louisville, GA
Caryn Lane	Roswell, GA
Robert Orenstein	Atlanta, GA
Bob Sattelmeyer	Atlanta, GA
Don and Mary Williams	Columbus, GA

Fledgling Members

Brett Bailey	Athens, GA
John Harty	Rex, GA
Hunter Hebenstreit	Braselton, GA

The 2010 GOS membership list is available electronically via e-mail or as a hard copy. Please send your request to membership@gos.org (Cathy Ricketts) for an e-mail copy or to GOS, 108 W. 8th St., Louisville, GA 30434 for a paper copy. Available to members only.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

GOS FALL MEETING

October 8-10, 2010, Jekyll Island

GOS 75th Anniversary Meeting

January 14-17, 2011, Tybee Island

GOShawk Now Available Online

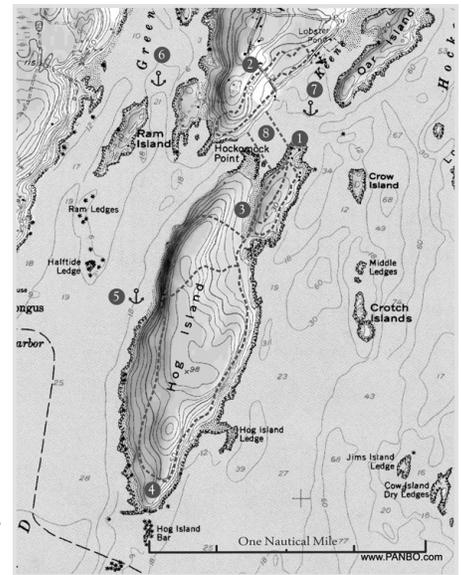
Past and current issues of the GOShawk are now available online in .pdf format at the following URL: <http://www.gos.org/newsletters/newsletter.pdf>

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

amused to find that I had drawn a map of the street on which we live, complete with house labels showing the names of each occupant. Of course, I also wrote down a list of every bird species I heard while I was talking to our new friends. Did you think I'd completely lost my mind? It has taken some work, and a lot of miles walked around the block, but we've managed to get to know several neighborhood families. One of the things we've also done in an effort to ensure we don't become disconnected with the outside world or books is to disconnect the cable television. When my co-workers found out that we don't watch television they were astonished, as though I'd informed them that I just flew in from the planet Mars. When they start babbling about who was eliminated on the latest episode of American Idol, I don't have to feign ignorance because I really don't have a clue. Okay, complete disclosure: the talking box does get some attention when the Red Sox make it to the baseball playoffs, or on Saturdays in the fall when the Gators are playing. A guy has to have priorities.

I don't have to convince you about the pleasures to be found in the outdoors, but you have heard me (ad nauseam) bemoan the fact that so few young people have a connection with nature. As evidence to support this assertion, I submit that, during the nearly seven years that I've taught evening classes in biology at a local college, I've consistently found that 75 percent or more of my twenty-something-year-old students have never entered a forest. We've got to right this wrong, folks, and the Youth Birding Competition (YBC) team is most certainly a sound beginning. I attended the YBC banquet in April and was thrilled to see all the avid young birders carrying binoculars. I was also very pleased to see a few young people apply for the birding camp scholarships GOS offered this spring, though I wondered why more teens did not apply for free week-long trips to Maine and Colorado. As I write this, Jordan Budnik, Andrew Theus, and Katie Moore are attending Audubon's Hog Island Camp, and Luke Theodorou and Hunter Hebenstreit will be heading to ABA's summer camp in Colorado this weekend. All of them were fully or partially sponsored by GOS' Richard Parks Birding Camp Scholarships, as well as unspent Camp TALON funds, and one of them (Luke) was partially sponsored by a \$500 donation from Jackee Major in memory of her late husband, Dr. James C. Major. Dr. Major worked as a physician and faculty member at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami, where he specialized in diseases of the eye and corneal disorders. He was an avid birder and blossoming scientist when he lived in Georgia, published articles in *The Oriole* at a young age, and received his M.S. in Ecology at the University of Georgia under Dr. Eugene Odum. Jackee has generously offered to make this an annual scholarship. We'll post more information about Dr. Major on the GOS website soon.

Although we didn't receive a lot of applications for scholarships considering the many teens who participated in the 2010 YBC, we did receive more quality applications than we could fund. That's a shame, and not just because some teens were disappointed, but also because these camps can be life-changing experiences for them. More than one of the past recipients of these scholarships has told me that his or her attendance at an ABA camp instilled in that particular teen a fervent desire to become an ornithologist or wildlife biologist. That's music to my ears, because Georgia's teens are the future of bird conservation in this state. Even if these teens do not become ornithologists, or GOS or Audubon leaders, they will become better educated voters, and we need those just as much as we need more scientists. If you would like to contribute to, or establish an annual scholarship, please contact me. It doesn't take much money to plant the passion of ornithology in a young person's mind. In my humble opinion, this is one of the best legacies GOS can claim.



Hog Island, Maine

Birding in the Land of the “Dawg”

By Bob Sargent

Nearly 80 members journeyed to Athens in mid April to enjoy GOS' first meeting in that vibrant university town since 1995. The weather was perfect, and the Georgia Center was an ideal venue for our meeting. As GOS meetings go, this one was especially chock-full of programs and field trips (see the species tally in this newsletter). We hit the ground running Friday night with presentations given by two graduate students, both of whom were former recipients of the society's grants. Cathy Ricketts, who is also co-chair of our membership committee, started the evening by explaining the fine, and sometimes hilarious, art of catching Clapper and King Rails in South Carolina marshes. Cathy is studying rail habitat use, nest-site selection, survival rates, and reproductive rates in the ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge. She managed to find 55 clapper nests, 31 of which failed due to predation or flooding. King Rails are less abundant than clappers in her study area, of course, and are more difficult to catch. Amazingly, one of the King Rails had a home range size of 68 ha (167 acres)!

Jonathan Gray followed Cathy's program by describing his Loggerhead Shrike research at two study sites: Tall Timbers Research Station (diverse habitat types) and the Athens area (mostly grassland). He uses radio-telemetry to evaluate how the birds use habitats, noting that shrike territory sizes appear to be inversely related to the number of available nest sites. Shrike territory sizes in his study ranged from 2.4-5.7 ha (6-14 acres), and the birds appeared to prefer habitats that contained a high percentage of cover. One of the most talked about aspects of Jonathan's presentation was the series of photos of insects, small mammals, and birds shrikes impaled on fences and thorns. You might say that it was a gallery of butcher bird prowess.

The planning and implementation of the weekend's field trips were handled solely by members of the Oconee Rivers Audubon Society (ORAS). I've been going to GOS meetings since the last time we met in Athens, and the advance scouting, organization, and leadership of the trips at this particular meeting were among the best I've seen. I tip my salt-stained cap to the ORAS team, and extend a special thank you to the amazing Paul Sykes for getting our group onto a Black Rail five minutes into his Sunday field trip.

Saturday afternoon included a social, book-signing, and poster session, as well as something we haven't attempted at a GOS meeting since Milledgeville in 2004 – a scientific paper session. Saturday afternoon paper sessions used to be a fixture at GOS meetings, but the tradition has faded since the 1980s. Long-time members will recall that meetings in the early days revolved around presentations about research and management, and discussions among regional vice presidents concerning conservation issues. It was not unusual to have just two or three field trips on the agenda for the entire weekend, which often started on Saturday afternoon, not Friday night. Back to the present, we've learned that it's especially difficult to garner enough support to pull together a paper session at a current GOS meeting, unless we happen to be gathering in a university town. The paper session at this Athens meeting was enthusiastically supported by several of the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources' graduate students and faculty, and I was tickled to see more than 40 meeting attendees sitting in the audience, following along as the students explained their study conclusions. It's tough to sit through two hours of presentations in a warm room, especially when you rose before the sun, baked in the heat for half of the day, and didn't have time to jump in the shower before the programs started. Thank you, GOS members, for turning out to support and encourage these gifted young scientists.

The banquet on Saturday night was capped off by a program about the history of birding presented by Scott Weidensaul. Need I say more? Seriously, if you've ever read one of his many books, then you've heard Scott speak. He's the essence of eloquence, and his program was that dazzling class you wish you had taken in college. I had the pleasure of chatting with him at the dinner table before his program, and in the span of 30 minutes we must have conversationally wandered into a dozen subject areas. I think we even talked about birds! What a fascinating, down-to-earth guy, and a busy one, too. Five minutes after his program ended he slipped out the back door, on his way to another program the next day on Little St. Simons Island.

My admiration and gratitude go out, as always, to the GOS team who make these meetings run so seamlessly: Bill Lotz, Dan Vickers, Steve Holzman, Jeannie Wright, and Ashley Harrington. Have we been doing this forever or what? Don't forget to join us in October for the revival of the GOS fall meeting tradition. It will be just like old times, only there will be far more field trips to choose from.

Birds Counted During the GOS Spring Meeting in Athens, April 16-18, 2010

List compiled by Bill Lotz

Canada Goose	Eastern Phoebe	Palm Warbler
Wood Duck	Great Crested Flycatcher	Black-and-white Warbler
Mallard	Eastern Kingbird	American Redstart
Blue-winged Teal	Loggerhead Shrike	Prothonotary Warbler
Wild Turkey	White-eyed Vireo	Worm-eating Warbler
Northern Bobwhite	Yellow-throated Vireo	Swainson's Warbler
Common Loon	Blue-headed Vireo	Louisiana Waterthrush
Double-crested Cormorant	Red-eyed Vireo	Kentucky Warbler
American Bittern	Blue Jay	Common Yellowthroat
Great Blue Heron	American Crow	Hooded Warbler
Great Egret	Fish Crow	Yellow-breasted Chat
Green Heron	Purple Martin	Summer Tanager
Black Vulture	Tree Swallow	Scarlet Tanager
Turkey Vulture	N. Rough-winged Swallow	Eastern Towhee
Osprey	Barn Swallow	Chipping Sparrow
Bald Eagle	Carolina Chickadee	Field Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk	Tufted Titmouse	Savannah Sparrow
Red-shouldered Hawk	White-breasted Nuthatch	Grasshopper Sparrow
Broad-winged Hawk	Brown-headed Nuthatch	Song Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk	Carolina Wren	Swamp Sparrow
Black Rail	House Wren	White-throated Sparrow
American Coot	Marsh Wren	Northern Cardinal
Killdeer	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Solitary Sandpiper	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Blue Grosbeak
Spotted Sandpiper	Eastern Bluebird	Indigo Bunting
Wilson's Snipe	Hermit Thrush	Bobolink
American Woodcock	Wood Thrush	Red-winged Blackbird
Bonaparte's Gull	American Robin	Eastern Meadowlark
Ring-billed Gull	Gray Catbird	Common Grackle
Rock Pigeon	Northern Mockingbird	Brown-headed Cowbird
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Brown Thrasher	Orchard Oriole
Mourning Dove	European Starling	House Finch
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Cedar Waxwing	American Goldfinch
Barn Owl	Orange-crowned Warbler	House Sparrow
Great-Horned Owl	Northern Parula	
Barred Owl	Yellow Warbler	
Chuck-will's-widow	Chestnut-sided Warbler	123 species
Whip-poor-will	Yellow-rumped Warbler	
Chimney Swift	Yellow-throated Warbler	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Pine Warbler	
Belted Kingfisher	Prairie Warbler	
Red-headed Woodpecker		
Red-bellied Woodpecker		
Downy Woodpecker		
Hairy Woodpecker		
Northern Flicker		
Pileated Woodpecker		
Eastern Wood-Pewee		
Acadian Flycatcher		



GOS 75th Anniversary Meeting: The Essentials

The 75th anniversary meeting of GOS promises to be a gala affair. Be sure to set aside the weekend of January 14-17, 2011, to attend the meeting on Tybee Island. The meeting highlights will include:

Great field trips led by expert birders

Coastal Big Day competition on Friday the 14th

Two Friday evening speakers: Giff Beaton on the history of birding in Georgia, and Todd Schneider on the status and future of bird conservation in Georgia

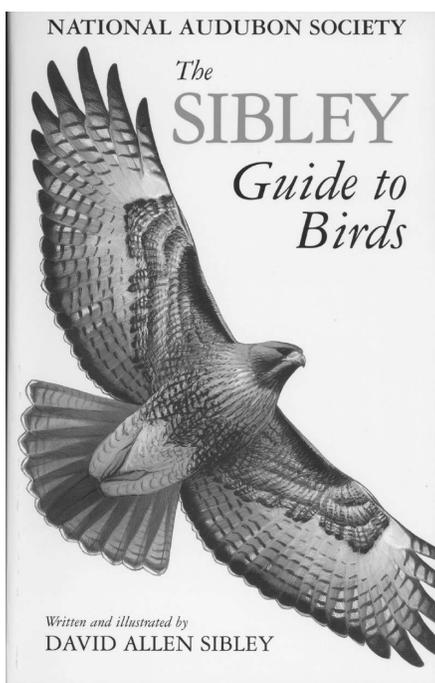
Scientific poster session on Saturday

Saturday evening banquet with guest speaker David Sibley, the acclaimed artist and author

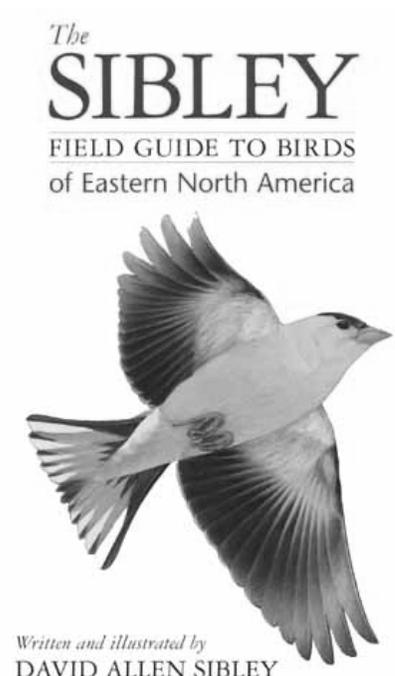
Sunday evening: “open mike” night for poetry or essay readings, bird call imitations, or other ornithology-inspired performances

Exhibits of art, photos, and the history of GOS

Recognition of past winners of the Earle Greene Award and past GOS presidents (Meeting registration and banquet fees will be waived for these distinguished guests.)



David Allen Sibley. *Photo by*
Erinn Hartman.

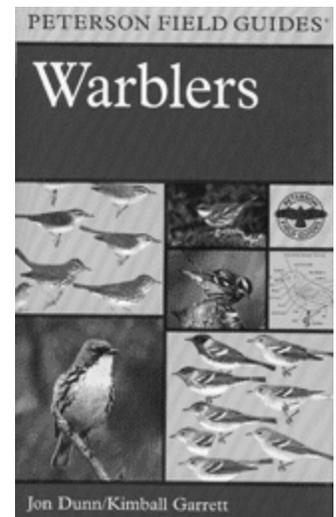
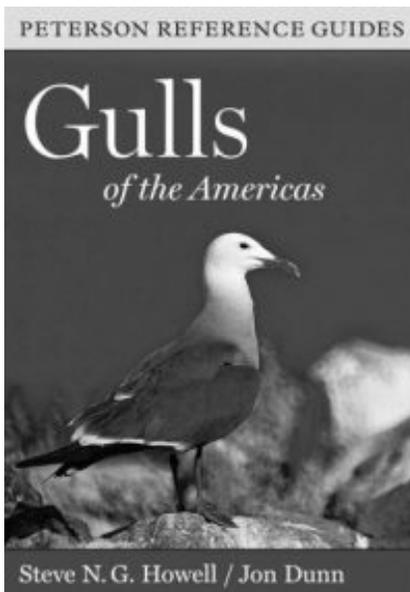


Write the October 2010 GOS Meeting on Your Calendars Now

By Bill Lotz and Bob Sargent

The society's fall meeting returns this year following an eight-year hiatus. Come join us on beautiful Jekyll Island, site of our former traditional fall meeting location, for three days of superb programs, birding, and fellowship. You do not have to be a member of GOS to participate! The meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 8, through Sunday, October 10, 2010, and we'll be headquartered at Villas by the Sea on the north end of the island. If you're a fan of the coastal festivals and have never been to a GOS fall meeting, you might be wondering if this will be a much less activity-filled event. Rest assured, we will be offering most of the same great field trips you've come to expect on that weekend, including multi-day opportunities to bird some of the most popular islands, and trip participants will be guided by the same gifted leaders you've come to know. And, as always, the meeting that weekend will feature a dinner banquet and outstanding guest speakers.

Unlike our winter and spring meetings, this meeting will offer a full slate of field trips on Friday, and a social at the hotel that evening. The Friday evening program will be capped off with a presentation about Wild Turkeys by Dallas Ingram, a recipient of an H. Branch Howe Research Grant from GOS in 2007. The Saturday evening program will feature noted field guide author and birder extraordinaire Jon Dunn. Jon grew up in California, where he became a birder at age eight, an event triggered, he says, by the life-altering appearance of a bright male Hooded Oriole in his garden. Jon has extensive knowledge of the identification and distribution of North American birds and is widely published in ornithological journals. He has also long been interested in Asian avifaunas. Jon has been chief consultant and editor for all five editions of the National Geographic Society's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. He is the co-writer and host of the two-video set *Large and Small Gulls of North America*, as well as co-author (with Kimball Garrett) of *Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution*. He is the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Warblers* and coauthored (with Steve Howell) the *Gulls of the Americas*. Jon is a member of the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature of the American Ornithologists' Union and the ABA Checklist Committee, and he has served more than 20 years on the California Bird Records Committee. Most importantly, everyone who has ever heard him speak raves about his exceptional teaching skills.



Make plans now to spend this October weekend with GOS. We'll soon provide more details, including a list of field trips and registration information, on our website (www.gos.org/meetings/meetings.html) and via listservers. See you on the coast!



GOShawk



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Annual membership rates for individuals and families:

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