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GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society
www.gos.org

President's Message

By Steve Holzman

GOS once again returned to Tybee Island for our winter meeting on the weekend of February 12–15. Birders began arriving at the newly renovated Hotel Tybee on Friday afternoon, some after spending the day counting shorebirds during the annual winter shorebird count conducted on all of the beaches along the coast. The Friday night speaker was Mason Cline, a Ph.D student from the University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. Mason had been the recipient of GOS research grants in 2012, 2014, and 2015, and he spoke about the effects of plumage signals on breeding Black-throated Blue Warblers, most notably the white "handkerchief". Using a manipulative experiment involving darkening males' white wing spots, he found that this plumage characteristic was used as a signal of social status between males. This signal was still used to convey information even when males were on established territories and familiar with each other. The more we

learn about birds, the more fascinating they become.

GOS can only pick the dates of their meetings, not the weather. On Saturday, we awoke to a small-craft advisory effectively cancelling any of the trips involving boats. That meant no Wassaw Island and no Little Tybee. Our pelagic trips were cancelled a couple days prior to the meeting due to boat repairs (and it's pretty likely that even a working pelagic boat wouldn't have gone out Saturday morning). After some scrambling, many folks decided to connect with the field trip that was venturing south to see the Cinnamon Teal that had been wintering at Harris Neck NWR. Most visiting birders obtained pretty decent looks of this stunning bird, which was beginning to obtain its beautiful breeding plumage. After viewing the teal, we continued exploring the other ponds on the refuge, finding a pretty good variety of birds. Our group was able to pick out a lone Wilson's Snipe at Goose Pond only a few minutes before a Cooper's Hawk also picked out that same snipe for its lunch. I am glad we have come as far as we have in our appreciation of predators, for it was only a few

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President's Message (continued from page 1)

decades earlier that hawks, especially accipiters, were routinely shot simply for doing what nature intended them to do.

We gathered back at the hotel for “flocking” and a book signing by our keynote speaker, Dr. Stephen Kress. This is always a great opportunity for members to reconnect with old friends or make new friends over a beer, or a glass of wine, perhaps. I was busy running the credit card reader for Ashley Harrington, our business manager and hawker of GOS goods. I was glad that we could help Dr. Kress sell out of his great book, *Project Puffin*. By the way, we purchased the last two signed copies, and we’ll be happy to sell them to you at our Fall meeting, or you can pick up a copy from the website, projectpuffin.audubon.org. Our banquet featured some delicious food by the hotel’s restaurant, La Dolce Vita, including cannoli and tiramisu for dessert. A long day in the field has its rewards. After dinner, Dr. Kress began his presentation about his decades-long efforts to restore the Atlantic Puffin to the rock islands off the coast of Maine. Puffin chicks, called pufflings, were transported from the Canadian coast and brought to Eastern Egg Rock over a series of years. Decoys and audio lures were used once these translocated puffins achieved adulthood in the hopes of getting them to nest again on this island. The methods and techniques his team perfected have been used around the world to restore at-risk seabird populations. Although the project will likely require long-term commitment and human

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Dr. Stephen Kress presenting his keynote talk. Photo by Ed Maiorillo.

President's Message (continued from page 2)

intervention to keep increasing gull populations from decimating the colony, one could argue that if humans do things that hurt wildlife year after year, why should it be unacceptable for a project's success to depend year after year on humans doing good things?

After some questions from the audience, it was time to draw the winner of our raffle for a two-night stay on Little St. Simons Island. Through this raffle, GOS was able to present Dr. Kress with a check for \$2,000 to help continue his work in Maine and elsewhere. The winner of the raffle was Jill Tolbert of Bogart, Georgia. Jill had purchased her tickets online and was not present. Interestingly enough, Ms. Tolbert is the daughter of long-time GOS member and author of *Birds of Laurens County*, Tommy Patterson. For those who did not win the big raffle prize, Beth Roth and Jeannie Wright had graciously donated some bird books as consolation prizes.

Sunday morning also began with some serious winds and another cancellation. The winds were just too much for the Little Tybee Island trip. I'm sure at least some of those participants were maybe just a little happy to sleep in. One trip involving a boat did go out Sunday morning. The boat trip to Little St. Simons Island is short and meanders through some tidal creeks, protecting it from the influence of the winds. Once on the island, however, wind breaks were hard to find while birding Sancho Panza Beach. Most of the birds were a bit far away, but we got some great views of Long-billed Curlews and a ridiculously close-in Northern Gannet. A little later we came across a very water-logged juvenile Red-tailed Hawk, perched two feet off the ground right on the road edge. It allowed numerous photographs from a respectful distance, and stayed put even after we walked the trail and returned to the vehicles. I hope it finally dried off enough to continue its hunting. By the end of the day, we were very happy to retire to the lodge to stand around the fireplace and enjoy a hot beverage before the boat trip back to the mainland.

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Red-tailed Hawk drying out on Little St. Simons Island. Photo by Rachel Holzman.



Birders watching and photographing the Red-tailed Hawk. Photo by Steve Holzman.

President's Message (*continued from page 3*)

A dozen or so folks were able to gather together for a third night of “flocking” on Sunday, sharing stories of the day’s birds and travels. Ed Maioriello had a nice trip to the Chatham Wetlands on Monday morning, with warblers and good looks at a Baltimore Oriole and Loggerhead Shrike. When all was said and done, 91+ GOS members found a total of 167 species during the weekend. That’s not too shabby for a cold and windy weekend.

GOS is foregoing a spring meeting this year but encourages its members to check out the Phinizy Birding Weekend in Augusta, April 22–24. See details in this newsletter or at this website: phinizycenter.org/event/phinizy-birding-weekend/.

GOS will return to the coast for the weekend of October 7–9 at Villas by the Sea, on beautiful Jekyll Island. Save the date, and watch for details in our June GOShawk.

Spring is coming. Keep up with returning warblers, tanagers, and other neotropical migrants by joining us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/groups/georgiabirds) or by subscribing to the Georgia Birders Online e-mail list (www.gos.org/georgia-birders-online). We have also added a second Georgia bird group on Facebook geared specifically toward sharing photos. Check it out or join here: www.facebook.com/groups/georgiabirdphotos/. See you on Jekyll if not earlier, perhaps when a Fork-tailed Flycatcher shows up somewhere in the state. We can dream, can’t we?

The poster for the Phinizy Birding Festival features a large, detailed illustration of a painted bunting perched on a branch. The bird's body is composed of various wetland scenes, including a wooden boardwalk, a cypress swamp, and a constructed wetland. The title "Phinizy Birding Festival" is prominently displayed in the upper left, with "at Phinizy Swamp Nature Park" below it. Logos for Audubon and the Georgia Ornithological Society are at the bottom left, and the "Augusta Georgia VisitAugusta.com" logo is at the bottom right.

PHINIZY
CENTER FOR WATER SCIENCES
SWAMP & NATURE PARK

Phinizy Birding Festival

at Phinizy Swamp Nature Park

See cypress swamps, creeks, constructed wetlands, open fields, and wooded trails at this International Audubon IBA with a 238 bird species list.

Come be a part of the 2016 Phinizy Birding Festival, **April 22-24**, and welcome the arrival of the beautiful painted bunting at this remarkable birding hot spot!

phinizycenter.org/birding

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Welcome, New Members!

Fledgling

Ryan Chitwood	Athens, GA
Zoe Cooper	Athens, GA
Brittney Ferrari	Athens, GA
An Hsiung	Athens, GA
Samuel Merker	Etna, NH
Christopher Thornton	Darien, GA

Bachman's Sparrow

Susan Bagwell	Flowery Branch, GA
Adam Betuel	Atlanta, GA
Mark Bishop	Calhoun, GA
Toni Bowen	Johns Creek, GA
Rebecca Branham	Cave Spring, GA
Linda Edwards	Peachtree Corners, GA
Jared Hamby	Covington, GA
Mary Harper	Seneca, SC
Stephanie Hudak	Madison, GA
Alison Huff	Bogart, GA
Mary Kamb	Atlanta, GA
Nerina Mann	Kennesaw, GA
James Neves	Athens, GA
Mary Nevil	Decatur, GA
Pamela Potter	White, GA
Stephanie Scott	Snellville, GA
Brian Shirley	Marietta, GA
Lawrence Stevens	Smyrna, GA
Lisa Van Der Merwe	Alpharetta, GA

Quail Covey

Debbie Bennett	Savannah, GA
Edward Burr	Evans, GA
William Chandler	Warwick, GA
Sherrie Coughlin	Grovetown, GA
Michael Dayoub	Johns Creek, GA
Jack and Martha Fasse	Atlanta, GA
Jim and Dawn Greenway	Ellijay, GA
Kathy Hagler	Pine Mountain, GA
Michelle Hamner	Peachtree City, GA
Stephanie Litz	Midland, GA
Dawn Lubeski	Bogart, GA
Willie Malpass	Augusta, GA
Jen McGruter	Augusta, GA
James and Sally Morgens	Atlanta, GA
Mark Seaman	Brookhaven, GA
Shane Sherwood	Grovetown, GA
Barbara Smith	Decatur, GA
Mike Stabler	Gainesville, GA
Candace Stevens	Winder, GA

Red-Cockaded Woodpecker

Marcia Bansley	Atlanta, GA
Robert Cotterman	Marietta, GA
Tammy Hester	Beaufort, SC
G.L. Penley Photography	Alpharetta, GA

Life

Jane Seward and Robert Berry Atlanta, GA

Eagles and Owls

By Rachel Holzman

Georgia has two famous pairs of nesting raptors this year, and they are both doing well. At Berry College, there is a nestcam on a pair of Bald Eagles which are currently raising their fourth brood. You can check them out here: www.berry.edu/eaglecam. And down on Skidaway Island near Savannah, Georgia, there is a pair of Great Horned Owls being watched via a live streaming nestcam as well. This is the second year that the owls have nested here in what was previously a Bald Eagle nest. They too have nestlings now that they are busy feeding. You can see them at this link: landingsbirdcam.com/.



Skidaway Island Great Horned Owl screenshot.

Golden Eagles in Georgia

By Nathan Klaus

I can still remember the first time I saw a Golden Eagle in the eastern United States. It was about a decade ago, and we were just about to start a burn on Sprewell Bluff WMA when I looked up and saw the unmistakable bird soaring several hundred feet above. Tim Keyes and Todd Schneider were there, too. I wanted to shout out “Golden Eagle!,” but it stuck in my throat. Maybe as a birder you’ve had that experience too, part appropriate self-censorship (Am I really seeing this?) and part not wanting to be the fool who yells “Golden Eagle” when a weird Turkey Vulture flies over. Anyway, one of us managed to get it out, and we enjoyed watching it a few more seconds as it headed down river and disappeared. I took this sighting as a good omen that we were in for a nice day of burning, but my thoughts beyond that were just that it must be a stray and that it was lucky we got to see it. And that’s what everyone has thought about the occasional Golden Eagle sighting in the south for decades, until researchers started trapping Golden Eagles in neighboring Alabama, then Tennessee and North Carolina. Hmmm, maybe there is more going on here.

Georgia put out its first bait station in 2015 near Sprewell Bluff WMA. It didn’t take long before we had photos of Golden Eagles on bait; in fact, it happened within 48 hours of us putting a game camera over bait in 2015. With the first download of photos we knew we had multiple birds!

Considering I have spent almost 15 years in these mountains working to restore montane longleaf pine and had only the one sighting, I found this incredible. Clearly, these birds were good at flying under our radar. A few members of a neighboring hunt club, Jodi Killen and Jim Faulkner, quickly became eager volunteers, taking on the thankless task of collecting dead deer from all over middle Georgia and driving a long rough road to the top of the lonely mountain, where we maintained a bait station. Many other partners stepped up as word spread. Many of the biologists and technicians working for game management took a strong interest in the project also, and soon we had more deer than we could handle. I think our one-day record was seven. T.E.R.N., the friends group of the nongame program, paid for the transmitters and covered the cost of researchers from West Virginia, Trish Miller and Michael Lanzone, to come and trap two of the eagles.



Volunteer Dave Hedeen securing Golden Eagle, Flint, for tagging. Photo by Trisha Miller.

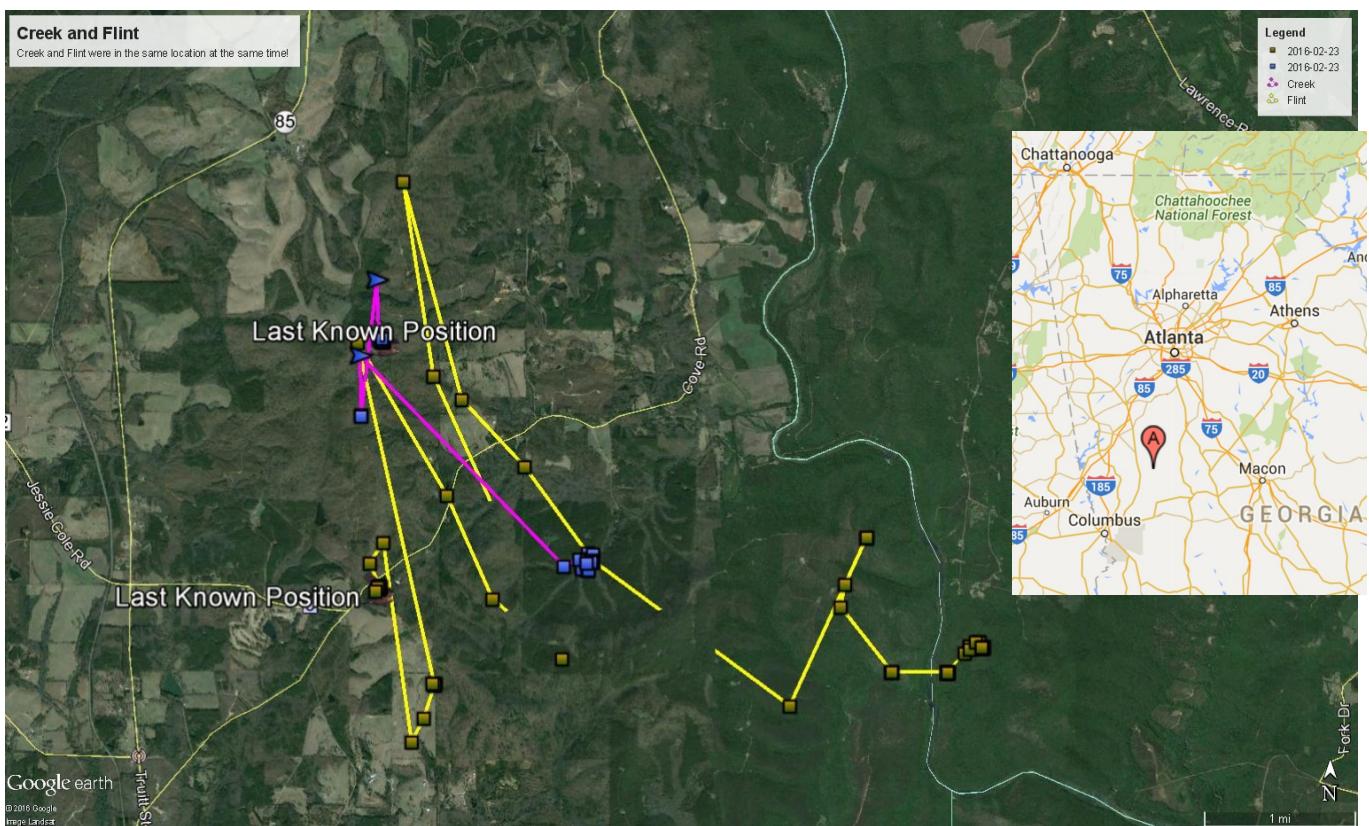
The first year, Jim Ozier set up bait stations elsewhere around the state, and in 2016, when I took over the larger project, I did as well. While one station on the Cohutta Ranger District of the Chattahoochee National Forest gets some photos of Golden Eagles, no other station has. And no other station has the astounding numbers we are finding around Sprewell Bluff WMA, where we have documented at least five Golden Eagles in one season, probably even more. What is so

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Golden Eagles in Georgia (continued from page 6)

great about Sprewell Bluff WMA to an eagle? Hopefully, this research will eventually provide an answer. I have two hunches: 1) it is some of the most remote and rugged country in middle Georgia, and I think Golden Eagles do their best to avoid people (with good reason, as some people still view such birds as “vermin”), 2) the open fire maintained woodlands of Sprewell Bluff WMA and surrounding lands make for easier hunting for these big birds. Brush and mid-story have been greatly reduced by years of regular fire. Regardless of why they enjoy my neck of the woods, I count myself lucky to be a part of such an amazing animal’s life.

Perhaps equally enjoyable has been watching the telemetry data on these birds. I take personal interest in our two tagged birds, noting daily where they wander in Georgia in winter, taking pride when they visit properties where I’m involved, and watching with fascination as they migrate north. First, they visit familiar landmarks like Tallulah Gorge and Carver’s Gap on Roane Mountain. A week later they pass within a few miles of where my wife grew up in upstate New York, and then they disappear into the incredibly wild and exotic looking lands of Quebec, where most tagged birds seem to spend the summer. Will they come back next year? That’s what I wonder all summer, and you just never know. Birds disappear, sometimes for months, as they migrate and stop in West Virginia where cell towers are scarce. Sometimes these birds reemerge and within days are back in Georgia; sometimes they disappear forever, leaving researchers with more questions. When combined with the dozens of other Golden Eagles tagged in neighboring states, this regular telemetry data should be a goldmine of information, shedding light on habitat needs and threats, like lead poisoning from scavenging carcasses, and collisions with wind turbines, better informing future policies that affect our small population of Golden Eagles.



Tracks of satellite tagged Golden Eagles are shown in the above map. The yellow track (lighter) is the path of Flint, a Golden Eagle tagged this year by Georgia Department of Natural Resources at Sprewell Bluff WMA, while the magenta track (darker) is the path of Creek, and eagle tagged in Talladega National Forest in Alabama this year. Where their paths cross on the map, they were in the same place on February 23, 2016.

Hog Island Camp Experience

By Joseph Austinson

The day I received notice that I had been selected for the Hog Island scholarship was one of my happiest days ever. I've always enjoyed birding throughout Georgia and have done the usual birding activities, from the annual Backyard Bird Count to the Georgia Youth Birding Competition, but it was always a dream of mine to travel elsewhere for birding experiences. A trip to Maine was a dream come true!

My aunt and I flew north, which was my first time on a plane, and we disembarked to rent a car and head to the ferry for Hog Island. It was raining that day, a cold, sleetin rain very unlike Georgia rain. I didn't notice any birds when we arrived at the dock. Perhaps they were hiding out from the rain. After arriving at Hog Island, the students met the awesome counselors and guides. We introduced ourselves and were told that the next day we would begin our adventures by hiking. Next day, we hiked for about an hour. It was wet and cold there on the Island. I saw some nestling Northern Parulas that were just fledglings.

On Day Three, we went by boat to Egg Island. I got seasick but was encouraged by the sight of a few seals out swimming in the foamy ocean along with Black Guillemots and Common Eiders and too many gulls to count. I also saw a Razorbill, which I heard was uncommon even in Maine. We reached the island and unloaded into a rowboat. We then landed on very slippery rocks while the choppy water was giving us quite a ride. I must admit that it was a bit scary. On the island, there were trails flagged out for us to follow. We weren't supposed to leave the trails because of the eggs that were laid in the rocks all over the island by the terns. A group of students was living on the island while documenting puffin nests by marking the rocks with painted numbers indicating that puffins had a nest underneath those rocks. My group was divided, and we were escorted to blinds where we were left to scan the waters and the island to observe the many different types of terns and the more elusive and colorful Atlantic Puffin.

As I was watching an Arctic Tern sit on her nest, I saw a colorful almost football-shaped bird flying awkwardly across the water, and I knew that I was finally going to get a chance to see a bird that I had only dreamed of seeing. The puffin flew onto some rocks near the shore, and I saw some slender fish in the bird's bill before it quickly disappeared into a crack in the rocks to its nest. I was able to take a few pictures of the beautiful bird when it reappeared, and they will always be some of my favorite pictures. By the time we returned to Hog Island, I was seasick but already missing the few hours of having a surreal experience that I don't think any of us campers wanted to end. After dinner that night we all learned about how the founder of Project Puffin, Dr. Stephen Kress, had brought baby puffins from Newfoundland and had grown the population to more than 1,000 pairs throughout three Maine islands.

The following day, our wonderful camp leaders took us birding on the mainland. We followed a birding trail through the woods during the morning, and that is where I saw what we always called Edgar Allan Poe's favorite bird, the Common Raven. We then took a little road trip to a beautiful field, where we saw many Bobolinks during our picnic lunch. After a very long day of great bird watching that included close-up looks at a Barred Owl one of the group leaders called in, we stopped and had some of the best ice cream of my life.

On the final day of the trip, we decided to hike one last time through the whole island, during which time we were able to stop at several historic cabins. We all enjoyed the gorgeous views, especially knowing that it was our last day in Maine. That evening, our chefs and staff cooked a

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Hog Island Camp Experience (*continued from page 8*)

wonderful traditional lobster dinner, which we ate one last time as a large group that had almost started to feel like family. We all gathered in the meeting hall, where we shared our favorite experiences and birds of the trip with everyone else on the island. I will never forget how kind and wonderful everyone on Hog Island was, especially my two group leaders, who showed great patience and kindness for five days straight.

I am so grateful for the once-in-a-lifetime experience that the Georgia Ornithological Society allowed me to have. Between the beautiful birds that I hope to see again one day and the friends and role models whom I met, it was the ultimate trip. Once again, thank you for the life changing opportunity that I was allowed to have.

2016 Graduate Student Grant Recipients**H. Branch Howe, Jr. Graduate Student Research Grants Awarded**

Heather Abernathy, M.S. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Effects of historic hydroclimate and isolation on current songbird abundance: building a better predictive model"

Cody Cox, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Analyzing occupancy and movements of neotropical migratory birds wintering in the Corredor Biológico Pajaro Campana, Costa Rica"

Angela Hsiung, M.S. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Factors influencing migratory propensity of altitudinal migrants within tropical agricultural landscapes in Costa Rica"

Betsy Kurimo-Beechuk, M.S. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Estimating occupancy and abundance of secretive marsh birds and evaluating the effects of metal contaminants on the health of Clapper Rails in the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, Jacksonville, Florida"

Joel Owen, M.S. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Modeling parrot nest site selection"

Bill Terrell Graduate Student Research Grants Awarded

Stephen Ferguson, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Memphis

"The presence and function of geographic variation in a female-specific call (Scrub Jays)"

Ryan Chitwood, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Causes and consequences of warm-edge range limits in a migratory songbird"

Brittany Ann Ferrari, M.S. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Examination of the population genetic structure of Canada Warblers across their geographic range"

Sam Merker, M.S. Candidate, University of Georgia

"Investigating factors limiting songbird distributions at the warm edge"

Georgia Lists

By Steve Holzman

In the March 2006 issue of the GOShawk, we published the species list totals for some Georgia birders. The number, then and now, represented the number of birds on the Georgia checklist seen by the birder over the course of his or her birding life in the state. The 2016 number is current as of early March. How will these numbers change in 2026? Only time will tell. Visit our website to view the Georgia checklist.

Name	Home	GA Life List – 2016	GA Life List – 2006
Jeff Sewell	Tucker, GA	402	376
Paul Sykes	Watkinsville, GA	400	361
Pierre Howard	Atlanta, GA	398	370
Bob Zaremba	Marietta, GA	386	362
Bill Lotz	Atlanta, GA	384	343
Patty McLean	Tucker, GA	383	
Mark McShane	Lawrenceville, GA	382	
Dan Vickers	Atlanta, GA	382	338
Mark Beebe	Marietta, GA	376	330
Jerry Amerson	Macon, GA	373	
Gene Keferl	Brunswick, GA	372	337
Krista Gridley	Athens, GA	369	
Georgann Schmalz	Dawsonville, GA	366	
Jim Hanna	Athens, GA	362	
Kathy Miller	Decatur, GA	362	
Bob Sattelmeyer	St. Simons Island, GA	359	
Mark Freeman	Watkinsville, GA	358	309
Steve Holzman	North High Shoals, GA	357	318
Darlene Moore	Farmington, CT	356	
Grant McCreary	Atlanta, GA	346	
Rachel Holzman	North High Shoals, GA	345	
Shannon Fair	Atlanta, GA	339	
Jim Throckmorton	Sandy Springs, GA	337	
Patrick Maurice	Atlanta, GA	331	
Charlie Muise	Barnesville, GA	331	
Mark Oberle	Seattle, WA	327	
Mike Weaver	Kennesaw, GA	327	
David Chaffin	Cleveland, TN	323	
Toni Bowen	Johns Creek, GA	310	
Terry Miller	Suwanee, GA	303	
Mark Welford	Statesboro, GA	299	
Chris O'Neal	Suwannee, GA	282	
Larry Carlile	Savannah, GA	282	
Liza O'Neal	Duluth, GA	234	
Michelle Hamner	Peachtree City, GA	167	

GOS Financial Highlights for 2015

By Jeannie Wright

In 2005, GOS received just over \$2 million from the estate of Bill Terrell. Another unexpected inheritance was received in 2014-2015 from the estate of Norene Boring, totaling about \$270,000. These significant funds have allowed GOS to continue to provide support for many valuable projects including bird research, conservation work, and education. Highlights for 2015 include Conservation Grants of 1) \$42,500 to Georgia Department of Natural Resources to control predators that decimate shorebird nests; 2) \$7,500 to The Nature Conservancy to improve bird habitat for migratory warblers; and 3) \$38,400 towards our obligation to The Nature Conservancy for the purchase of the Beasley tract at Broxton Rocks. For graduate student research grants, we paid out \$29,000. Two issues of *The Oriole* were published for just over \$9,000. Scholarships were provided to send three teens/young adults to Audubon and ABA camps. Additional funding was provided for the Youth Birding Competition, Camp TALON, and the Race 4 Birds Foundation.

The Finance Committee continues to monitor our investments, and we made some changes relative to how our assets are managed. At the end of the year we had an allocation of 5% in cash, 25% in bonds, and 70% in stocks. Because GOS is a private operating foundation, the society is required to spend 5% of its average monthly asset balance for items related to its mission and goals (\$119,500 for 2015). We cannot generate enough investment or dues revenue to meet this obligation, and must depend on growth in the portfolio to allow us to make the significant grants we award each year. In almost all the years since receiving the Terrell inheritance, we have experienced growth in our investments to cover operating deficits.

Beginning Asset Balance (1/1/15)	\$2,380,452
Plus Operational Income	126,165
Plus Boring Estate Payments	201,892
Less Operational Expenses	-152,017
Less Grant to TNC (25% of \$150,000 pledge)	-38,170
Net	\$2,518,322
Actual Ending Asset Balance	\$2,419,756



Dr. Stephen Kress receiving the donation from GOS for his Project Puffin. GOS increased the donation to an even \$2,000. Photo by Ed Maiorillo.

Go Paperless! Want to save trees and reduce printing costs by receiving the *GOShawk* electronically? Contact Shannon Fair, the GOS membership chairperson, at gosmembership@gmail.com, and let her know that you would like to receive the *GOShawk* by e-mail. Shannon will make sure that you go electronic starting with the June 2016 issue.

EarthShare of Georgia's Leadership Breakfast

By Mark Beebe

Business and nonprofit leaders of Georgia and beyond will gather on April 14, 2016, to celebrate Georgia's environmental and sustainable business practices at the 14th Annual Earth Day Leadership Breakfast. Each year, EarthShare of Georgia honors and recognizes its outstanding community partner, campaign champion, member organization, and the winning Corporate Green Day Challenge company team.

The breakfast will be held at The Stave Room at American Spirit Works from 8 am to 10 am. Mingle with green corporate leaders and learn more about protecting our environment.

In addition, EarthShare of Georgia's 21st Annual Earth Day Party will be held on April 21, 2016, from 7 pm to 10 pm on the Rooftop of the Ponce City Market. Join a diverse group of environmentalists, devoted philanthropists, business professionals and the community at large to help promote sustainable practices and policies where we work, live, and play.

To purchase tickets for the 2016 Leadership Breakfast and Annual Earth Day Party, visit www.earthsharega.org.

A Stunning Rarity in Georgia

By Rachel Holzman



An excited group of birders gather at the Varied Thrush stakeout at the Stone Mountain campground February 7, 2016. Photo by Steve Holzman.

A beautiful Varied Thrush was discovered in Georgia at the Stone Mountain Campground by JoAnn Miller and first reported on January 31, 2016. It took quite a bit of searching by many people the following weekend to re-find this bird, as it tends to stay in the shadows and keeps busy in the leaf litter. Since then, many lucky birders have been able to see this bird over the last month.



Varied Thrush photo taken by Giff Beaton on February 8, 2016.

Species List from Winter 2016 Meeting on Tybee Island, Georgia

February 12-15, 2016 Compiled by Larry Carlile
167 Species—Highlights are in bold *italics*

Birds observed during field trips to Chatham Country Wetlands Mitigation Site, Corps of Engineers Spoil Disposal Site (Jasper Co., SC), Fort Pulaski National Monument, Fort Stewart Military Installation, Harris Neck NWR, Little St. Simons Island, Richmond Hill Wastewater Treatment Facility, Savannah Hotspots, Savannah NWR (Jasper Co., SC), Savannah NWR (Solomon Tract), Skidaway Island Hotspots, and Tybee Island.

Canada Goose	Black-bellied Plover	Brown Creeper
Wood Duck	Wilson's Plover	House Wren
Gadwall	Semipalmated Plover	Winter Wren
American Wigeon	Piping Plover	Sedge Wren
Mallard	Killdeer	Marsh Wren
Mottled Duck	Greater Yellowlegs	Carolina Wren
Blue-winged Teal	Willet	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Cinnamon Teal (or hybrid)	Lesser Yellowlegs	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Northern Shoveler	Whimbrel	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Northern Pintail	Ruddy Turnstone	Eastern Bluebird
Green-winged Teal	Red Knot	Hermit Thrush
Redhead	Stilt Sandpiper	American Robin
Ring-necked Duck	Sanderling	Gray Catbird
Greater Scaup	Dunlin	Brown Thrasher
Lesser Scaup	Least Sandpiper	Northern Mockingbird
Surf Scoter	Western Sandpiper	European Starling
Black Scoter	Short-billed Dowitcher	American Pipit
Bufflehead	Long-billed Dowitcher	Cedar Waxwing
Hooded Merganser	Wilson's Snipe	Black-and-white Warbler
Red-breasted Merganser	Bonaparte's Gull	Orange-crowned Warbler
Ruddy Duck	Laughing Gull	Common Yellowthroat
Red-throated Loon	Ring-billed Gull	Palm Warbler
Common Loon	Herring Gull	Pine Warbler
Pied-billed Grebe	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Horned Grebe	Great Black-backed Gull	Yellow-throated Warbler
Wood Stork	Caspian Tern	Eastern Towhee
Northern Gannet	Forster's Tern	Bachman's Sparrow
Double-crested Cormorant	Royal Tern	Chipping Sparrow
Anhinga	Black Skimmer	Field Sparrow
American White Pelican	Rock Pigeon	Vesper Sparrow
Brown Pelican	Eurasian Collared-Dove	Savannah Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Mourning Dove	Saltmarsh Sparrow
Great Egret	Common Ground-Dove	Seaside Sparrow
Snowy Egret	Great Horned Owl	Song Sparrow
Little Blue Heron	Barred Owl	Swamp Sparrow
Tricolored Heron	Belted Kingfisher	White-throated Sparrow
Cattle Egret	Red-headed Woodpecker	White-crowned Sparrow
Green Heron	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Northern Cardinal
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Red-winged Blackbird
White Ibis	Downy Woodpecker	Eastern Meadowlark
Glossy Ibis	Red-cockaded Woodpecker	Rusty Blackbird
Roseate Spoonbill	Northern Flicker	Common Grackle
Black Vulture	Pileated Woodpecker	Boat-tailed Grackle
Turkey Vulture	American Kestrel	Brown-headed Cowbird
Osprey	Merlin	Baltimore Oriole
Bald Eagle	Eastern Phoebe	House Finch
Northern Harrier	Western Kingbird	Pine Siskin
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Loggerhead Shrike	American Goldfinch
Cooper's Hawk	White-eyed Vireo	House Sparrow
Red-shouldered Hawk	Blue-headed Vireo	
Red-tailed Hawk	Blue Jay	
Clapper Rail	American Crow	
King Rail	Fish Crow	
Virginia Rail	Purple Martin	
Sora	Tree Swallow	
Common Gallinule	Carolina Chickadee	
American Coot	Tufted Titmouse	
American Avocet	White-breasted Nuthatch	
American Oystercatcher	Brown-headed Nuthatch	

Announcing Atlanta Bird Fest 2016

April 15-May 15
Presented by Atlanta Audubon Society



#ATLAUDUBON

April 15-May 15, 2016

www.atlantaaudubon.org/atlanta-bird-fest

**Exclusive field trips,
workshops, and more.**

- Birds & Wine in the North Georgia Mountains with VIP Southern Tours
- Birding the private trails of Serenbe
- Early Georgia naturalist art exhibit at Atlanta History Center
- Nature Photography Workshop
- Wild & Scenic Film Festival
- Closing Celebration keynote speaker Deborah Cramer, author of *The Narrow Edge*

Registration opens for Atlanta Audubon members on March 1 and for non-members on March 7.



Atlanta Audubon Society protects Georgia's birds and their habitats through education, conservation, and advocacy.

Win Top Birder and Top Fundraiser Prizes: Choose from a trip for two to the Hike Inn in north Georgia; a pair of Opticron Alpha ED 8x42 binoculars; a \$100 Gift Certificate from PRBY Apparel; a Half-Day Winery Tour in north Georgia; and more!

Just Added: Raffle Tickets now available for admission for two to observe the banding of this spring's downtown Atlanta Peregrine Falcon young + dinner at Dentons LLP atop the SunTrust Plaza Building. Tickets are \$5 each.

More info, including the full schedule of events, may be found at
www.atlantaaudubon.org/atlanta-bird-fest

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Please complete this form and mail with your payment to Georgia Ornithological Society Membership, P.O. Box 11926, Atlanta, GA 30355. You can now join online at: <http://www.gos.org/join-us>

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Annual membership rates for individuals and families

<input type="checkbox"/>	Bachman's Sparrow (Individual Membership)	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Quail Covey (Family Membership)	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/>	Red-cockaded Woodpecker (Patron)	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fledgling (Students only)	\$15

Life Membership Rates for individuals

<input type="checkbox"/>	Northern Goshawk	\$450
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Yes, I would like to make an additional contribution of \$_____ in support of GOS and its programs.