



June 2021  
Vol. 48, No. 2

# GOShawk

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society  
[www.gos.org](http://www.gos.org)

## President's Message

By Larry Carlile

Dear Birders,

What a difference a year makes. This time last year I informed you that we were cancelling the fall meeting out of concern for the health of the GOS membership. As of today (June 21, 2021), *The New York Times* reports that 65% of Americans have had at least one vaccination, and 56% are fully vaccinated. Those statistics are accompanied by a continuing decline in the number of new cases reported each day. That's great news for the country, and great news for GOS and our upcoming fall meeting. We will gather on Jekyll Island over the Columbus Day weekend, October 8-11, 2021. We have a couple of great speakers lined up (see their biographies on page 4 in this issue), and, of course, some great field trips will be available so we can visit many of our favorite coastal birding haunts.

The Executive Committee and I will convene our second meeting of the year in August,



Wood Storks nesting at Harris Neck NWR. Photo by Bob Sargent.

during which time we will finalize remaining details for the fall meeting, which will be published via GABO-L, our Facebook page, and the GOS website ([gos.org](http://gos.org)). We'll also decide about the location and dates of a winter meeting in 2022. I hope you will block the fall meeting dates on your calendar and plan to attend, because not only will we have great speakers, wonderful field trips, and long overdue fellowship, we'll also elect a new slate of officers (see page 3), who will serve until 2023.

## CONTENTS

- 1 President's Message. Larry Carlile.
- 2 Welcome, New Members.
- 2 *The Oriole*. Jim Ferrari.
- 3 Officer nominations slate.
- 4 Fall Meeting Announcement.

- 5 Camp TALON 2021. Bob Sargent.
- 8 A Diversity of Cavities. Heather Levy.
- 11 Life Lists on [gos.org](http://gos.org). Steve Holzman.
- 11 Buying Duck Stamps. Steve Holzman.



## Georgia Ornithological Society

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<i>President</i>	Larry Carlile
<i>1st Vice President</i>	Steve Wagner
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	Ed Maioriello
<i>Secretary</i>	Mike Weaver
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jeannie Wright
<i>Business Manager</i>	Bob Sargent
<i>Past President</i>	Vacant
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Shannon Fair
<i>Editorial Chair</i>	Jim Ferrari
<i>Education Chair</i>	Bob Sargent
<i>Conservation Chair</i>	Nathan Farnau
<i>Earth Share of Georgia</i>	Mark Beebe
<i>Checklist/ Records</i>	Jim Flynn
<i>GOShawk Editor</i>	Bob Sargent
<i>GOShawk Asst. Editor</i>	Mim Eisenberg
<i>Historian</i>	Sue Peters-Ferree
<i>Webmaster</i>	Jim Flynn

For a list of grant, scholarship, and award committees (and their contact information) visit [gos.org/executive-committee](http://gos.org/executive-committee)

GOShawk is published quarterly  
(March, June, September, December)

Bob Sargent, Editor  
[bobsargent.ncs@gmail.com](mailto:bobsargent.ncs@gmail.com)

*Deadline for article submission is the first  
of the month prior to publication.  
Submission by e-mail is appreciated.*

## Welcome, New Members!

### Brown Thrasher (Individual/Family)

Katie Antczak  
Rebecca Murphy  
Kim Payne  
Wayne Skelton, Jr.  
Mary Weitnauer

Waycross, GA  
Savannah, GA  
Atlanta, GA  
Marietta, GA  
Atlanta, GA

### **The Oriole Welcomes Book Review Submissions**

*The Oriole*, the scientific journal of GOS, invites authors to submit general notes or research articles about Georgia bird life. But we also publish book reviews, so this is a special invitation to all you avid readers out there to write up a review of a recent publication that would be of interest to our membership. You can see examples in previous issues of *The Oriole*, which are available at the GOS website under Publications/Periodicals. Contact Jim Ferrari [jferrari@wesleyancollege.edu](mailto:jferrari@wesleyancollege.edu) if you would like to discuss your ideas about a potential manuscript.



Orchard Oriole. Photo by Dan Vickers.

## Go Paperless!

Want to save trees and reduce costs by receiving the *GOShawk* electronically? Contact Shannon Fair at [gosmembership@gmail.com](mailto:gosmembership@gmail.com) and tell her that you would like to receive it by e-mail.

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

Until we meet on Jekyll Island, stay safe, brush up on those coastal birds, and enjoy the rest of your summer!

In conservation,  
Larry Carlile  
President, GOS

---

**Nomination Committee Report**

We are pleased to report the following slate of nominees for the 2021–2023 GOS officers term:

Ed Maioriello, currently the GOS 2nd president, has offered to serve as president.

Steve Wagner, currently the 1st vice president, has offered to serve another term.

Adam Betuel, conservation director for Georgia Audubon, has offered to serve as 2nd vice president.

Mike Weaver, currently the secretary, has offered to serve another term.

Jeannie Wright has offered to continue her long and invaluable tenure as our treasurer.

Bob Sargent, currently the acting business manager, has offered to replace long-time and now retired GOS business manager Ashley Harrington in that role.

I thank my committee members, Bill Lotz and Bob Sargent, for their help in compiling this slate, which will be voted on during banquet night at our meeting on Jekyll Island in October.

Respectfully submitted by Dan Vickers, committee chair.



The class of Camp TALON 2021 birding with Chuck and Kimberly Hayes at Harris Neck NWR. Photo by Bob Sargent.



**Mark Your Calendars Now!**  
**GOS FALL MEETING: October 8-11, 2021**

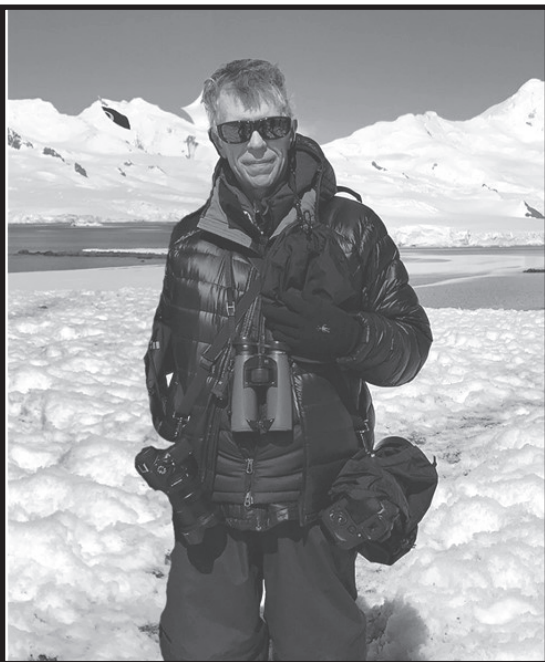
Don't miss GOS's first meeting in almost two years, which will be held at our long-time roost on Jekyll Island. In addition to the usual four days of fabulous birding led by some of Georgia's very best, we will have two captivating and remarkably accomplished speakers on the agenda.

Meeting Hotel Details: Villas by the Sea Resort, 1175 N. Beachview Drive, Jekyll Island, GA. Call 912-635-2521, 800-841-6262, or visit [www.villasbythesearesort.com](http://www.villasbythesearesort.com). The cut-off date for the GOS room rate is September 8, 2021, and "GOS Conference" is the group code. For more information visit [www.gos.org](http://www.gos.org)

On Friday night Adam Betuel will present "Conservation in the Built Environment." Adam has a B.S. in zoology from Ohio State University and studied the White-throated Sparrow while a graduate student at Indiana State University. He has conducted avian field research across the eastern U.S. and South America. In 2015, Adam became the first conservation director for Georgia Audubon. In this role, he manages multiple programs focused on making Georgia more bird-friendly. He primarily works on reducing threats to birds, such as collisions with buildings, habitat restoration, educating people on the value of native plants, growing community science programs, and leading birdwatching travel. He loves connecting people to nature through the lens of birds.



Adam Betuel. Photo provided by Adam.



Tom Stephenson. Photo provided by Tom.

On Saturday night Tom Stephenson will present "How to Study and Learn Bird Songs (and Memorize Anything!)." Tom has been birding since he was a kid under the tutelage of Dr. Arthur Allen of Cornell University. His articles and photographs are in museums and many publications, including *Birding*, *Birdwatcher's Digest*, *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, *Handbook of the Mammals of the World*, *Birds of Madagascar*, and *Guide to the Birds of SE Brazil*. Tom has donated numerous recordings of Eastern Himalayan rarities and other Asian species to Cornell's Macaulay Library of natural sounds. For several years he was on Zeiss's digiscoping team for the World Series of Birding, and in 2011 his and Scott Whittle's team won the World Series Cape Island Cup. In 2014 Tom and Scott set the U.S. record for a Photo Big Day, taking pictures of 208 species in one 24-hour period. His latest book, *The Warbler Guide*, is published by Princeton University Press and recently won the National Outdoor Book Award. The Warbler Guide App won the 2015 Design Award for the AAUP Book, Jacket and Journal Show. His app,

BirdGenie, helps bird enthusiasts identify more than 150 common vocalizations in the eastern and western U.S. by recording them on their smart phones. BirdGenie won the prestigious PROSE award from the American Association of Publishers.

## Camp TALON Returns

*By Bob Sargent*

Like so many other events in 2020, Camp TALON (Teen Adventures Learning Ornithology and Nature) was canceled due to COVID-19 concerns. As recently as March of this year I was beginning to believe that the 2021 edition likely would also be sacrificed for the same reasons, but then the State of Georgia and various camp governing bodies eased restrictions such that Julie Duncan, my long-time camp organizing partner, and I realized that this year's camp prospects suddenly had hope. The 11th edition of the camp, which ended on 10 June, included 14 teenaged students and two volunteer interns (Teodelina Martelli and Luca Antinozzi). Most of the students came from communities in Georgia, but California, Florida, and Michigan were also represented. This camp strives to teach teenagers about ornithology, coastal ecology, wildlife research and management, citizen science, and conservation-related careers.

The campers were picked up by bus in Macon and taken to Jekyll Island's 4H Center, which was home to this year's camp instead of our usual lodging at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island. Each day involved field trips to two to three birding destinations where the students met and learned from ornithologists, wildlife biologists, ecologists, and other professional staff, many of whom volunteered their time to help. The itinerary included hot spots on St. Simons Island, Cumberland Island National Seashore, Jekyll Island, Little



White-eyed Vireo mist-netted on LSSI. Photo by Bob Sargent.

St. Simons Island, Cannon's Point Preserve, Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge, Altamaha WMA, Sapelo Island, and Ft. Stewart. Our thanks go to the many dedicated teachers who made this camp possible: Bob Sattelmeyer (retired UGA professor); Stephanie Knox (Cannon's Point Preserve Manager); DNR Game Warden Colte Shaske (transported the campers to Cumberland); NPS's Doug Hoffman and the turtle techs; Stacia Hendricks, Scott Coleman, and the other staff of Little St. Simons Island (LSSI); Utah State grad student Kim Savides who put just mist-netted Painted Buntings, vireos, and blackbirds into the hands of the campers on LSSI; the USFWS' Kimberly and Chuck Hayes for giving the campers an "in your face" look at a wading bird rookery; DNR's Fletcher Smith and Tim Keyes for inspiring the campers to pursue ornithology careers; Malcolm Hodges for another memorable day on Sapelo Island (yes, the kids saw chachalacas) and DNR's Blaine Tyler for making it logistically happen; and Ft. Stewart's (and GOS President) Larry Carlile for giving the campers a look at a Red-cockaded Woodpecker nestling in a cavity and the sight of Swallow-tailed Kites soaring over our heads while we were standing on a bridge in a swamp. Our thanks also go to the camp's sponsors: Georgia DNR, GOS, The Environmental Resources Network, and Georgia Audubon, and especially to the staff at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center for managing the registration (and bill paying) process. The campers found 114 bird species in six days, learned how to identify bird songs and use eBird, and brought home a flock of winged memories and a variety of birding paraphernalia, including new binoculars for three of the biggest winners on bird knowledge and bird song challenge night. Information about next year's camp will be posted at [www.georgiawildlife.com/camptalon](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/camptalon) in January 2022.

**Camp TALON 2021 Photos**

*All photos by Bob Sargent*



Anhinga at Woody Pond, Harris Neck NWR.

TALON campers on the observation tower, Butler Island, Altamaha WMA.



Black-necked Stilt at Goose Pond, LSSI.



**Camp TALON 2021 Photos**

*All photos by Bob Sargent*

Birding with Bob Sattelmeyer at Gould's Inlet on the first night of camp. Julie Duncan is on the left.



Birding with Malcolm Hodges from the hunting trailer on Sapelo Island.

Birding with Larry Carlile at Ft. Stewart on the last day of camp.



## A Diversity of Cavities Promotes a Diversity of Cavity-nesters

By Heather Levy

Ancient pine trees stand steadfast over a forest floor teeming with a diversity of forbs and flowers. Within the trees, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers bark at one another as the sun rises, while fox squirrels lazily bound between the large trunks. Below ground, gopher tortoises begin to shuffle, awaiting the sun's rays. The dawn chorus is full of breeding birds broadcasting in the late spring and summer months – Bachman's Sparrows singing "here kitty kitty," Eastern Towhees shouting "drink your tea," and Tufted Titmice requesting "peter peter peter."

This was the scene I was greeted with each morning while conducting research for my master's work. During my time as a technician for Tall Timbers Research Station, I had the privilege of visiting the Wade Tract in Thomasville, considered the most pristine old-growth longleaf pine forest remaining. It was one of the most beautiful natural areas I had ever experienced, so when the opportunity to study cavity-nesting birds in these forests was presented, I wholeheartedly jumped in. Advised by Jim Cox at Tall Timbers and Bob Cooper at the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia, our two-year project aimed to assess the diversity of cavity-nesting species and nest site resources in old-growth longleaf pine forests.

The association between longleaf pine forests and Red-cockaded Woodpeckers is well known. Red-cockaded Woodpeckers are considered keystone species in fire-maintained pine forests because of their ability to excavate in the dominant substrate of the ecosystem – living trees. They evolved in old-growth pine forests, requiring an open canopy and under-story, and large living trees infected with a fungus that softens the wood. More than 27 other species use their cavities for roosting and nesting, including other excavating woodpecker species, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects. Though they are one of the most heavily studied woodpecker species, little is known about how their cavities affect the dynamics of the cavity-nesting bird community.



An incubating Red-headed Woodpecker nesting in a Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavity. Photo by Heather Levy.



## A Diversity of Cavities *(continued from page 8)*

Longleaf pine forests currently occupy less than 3% of their native range. A long history of intensive logging, land conversion, and fire suppression resulted in near extinction of the longleaf pine ecosystem at the turn of the century, and Red-cockaded Woodpeckers followed in this decline. Much of their remaining habitat is old-field, containing mixed-species pines and a disturbed ground cover, and is much younger than what it would have been historically.

The Red Hills region of southwest Georgia and northwest Florida contains relatively contiguous, privately-owned tracts of high-quality old-growth longleaf pine forests. Here, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers have persisted, resulting in high densities of natural cavities. Because of our access to private properties and our interest in the role of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and cavity diversity, we studied how cavity-nesting bird richness and densities varied in old-growth and old-field pine forests.

We found that cavity-nesting bird species' richness and densities were significantly higher in old-growth pine forests than in old-field forests. Many species had strong ties to Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavities. Seventy

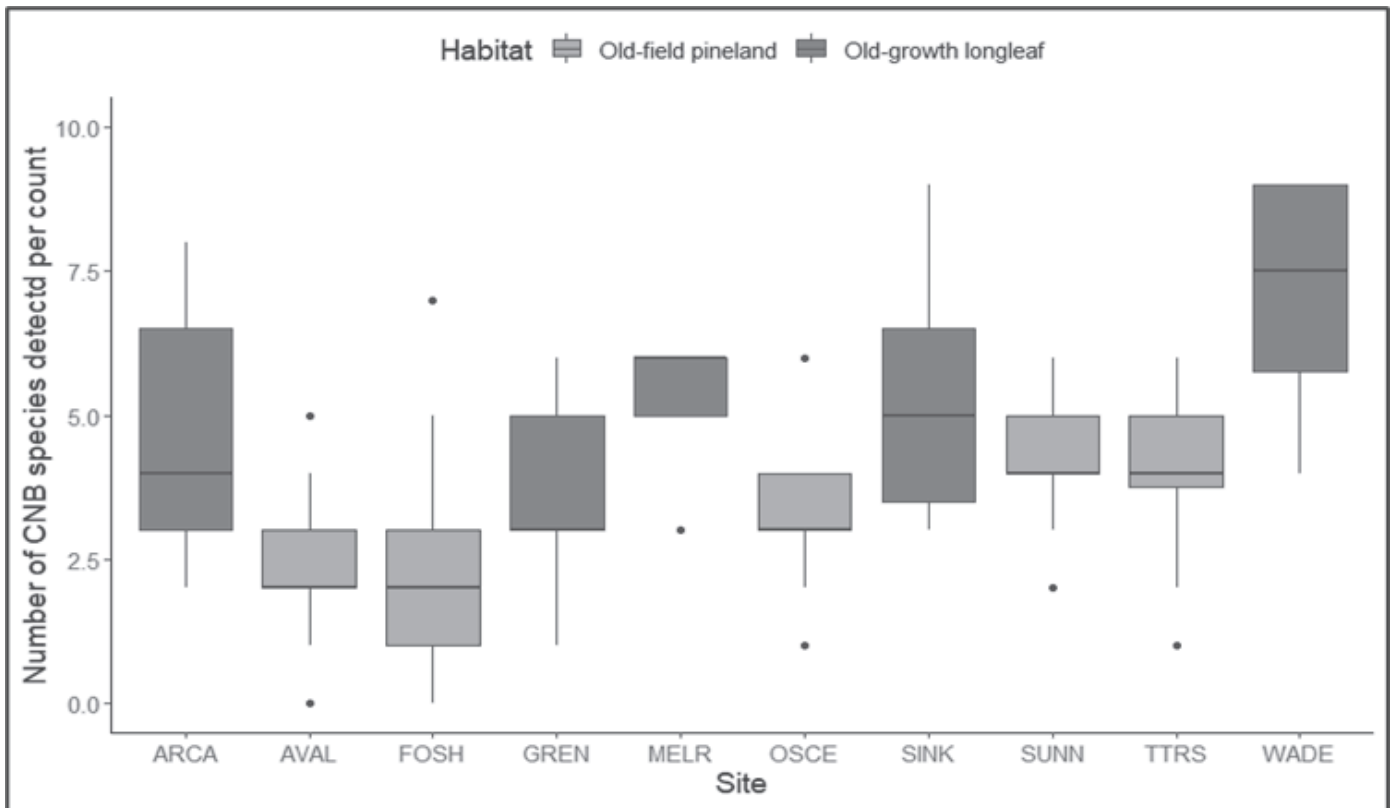
percent of cavity-nesting bird species we studied nested in Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavities, which comprised more than half of all nests located. Some secondary cavity nesters, such as Wood Ducks and Tufted Titmice, used Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavities exclusively, but even several primary cavity nesters like Red-headed Woodpeckers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and Northern Flickers also used these cavities frequently. Many woodpecker species also selected for large, mature pine snags, which typically provide greater protection against ground-dwelling nest predators. But not all species preferred large snags and Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavities. Short, well-decayed snags were essential for species like the Brown-headed Nuthatch, a weak primary excavator, and the Eastern Bluebird, a secondary cavity-nester.

Our results suggest these forests are high-quality habitats for cavity-nesting birds because of the diversity of nesting substrates. We recommend conserving old-growth patches within a landscape and retaining snags of varying decay classes. Conditions that support Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, and thus their cavities, may be especially important in areas with timber salvaging. Cavity resources in old-growth settings that are frequently burned likely promote greater diversity of cavity-nesters and reflect the historic landscape of the Southeast.



We used a cavity camera attached to a telescoping pole to look inside cavities and determine what birds were nesting inside Red-cockaded Woodpecker cavities. Photo provided by Heather Levy.

## A Diversity of Cavities *(continued from page 9)*



Number of cavity-nesting bird (CNB) species detected during point count surveys across 10 properties in the Red Hills region. Old-field sites are in pink, and old-growth sites are in blue.



Red Knots photographed by Ron Goldfarb on St. George Island, FL, May 2, 2021.

## Life Lists on the GOS Website

By Steve Holzman

Everyone enjoys birds in their own way. Listing is only one aspect, and not even an essential one. Each "life bird" is a memory and a story in and of itself. A list can be a key to unlock those memories. After I typed this, I went to my life list to pull out an example and found: "Eastern Screech-Owl, February 13, 1988, near Mystic, GA." Reading those words transports me to a dirt road, in the dark, when I was radio-tracking coyotes, and a lump in the middle of the road, now illuminated by my headlights, transformed into my first Eastern Screech-Owl sighting.

If you've maintained a life list of ABA-area birds or Georgia birds and would like to share that list through the GOS website, we'd like to help. You can send your list to me (steveholzman2@gmail.com). I'll format it for the web and post it at <https://www.gos.org/Lifelists>

We've decided that one way to limit how much work this might turn out to be is to set a threshold. That threshold is 300 birds for Georgia and 600 for the ABA area. Updates will be limited to once per year.

I can't digitize your written notes, but if you have the species, location, and date in any sort of file format, send it to me. I prefer a spreadsheet but will work with you on any format you have. Don't worry about those "unaccepted" species. It's your list, and this effort is not about the numbers; it's about the memories.

---

## Interested in Buying Duck Stamps?

By Steve Holzman

In 2006, GOS began selling the Federal Duck Stamp in keychain holders. We did this to promote the stamp and its goal of providing money for the purchase and lease of land for the National Wildlife Refuge System. We still have some past years' stamps available for purchase. If your collection has some missing years, check us out on eBay at [www.ebay.com/sch/gosduckstamps/m.html?\\_nkw=&\\_armrs=1&\\_ipg=&\\_from=](http://www.ebay.com/sch/gosduckstamps/m.html?_nkw=&_armrs=1&_ipg=&_from=)

Although GOS is no longer selling stamps in holders, you can get them at the American Birding Association's website (aba.org), or, if you are just interested in the stamps, you can find them at most post offices. If you are uncomfortable with using eBay, contact me at [steve\\_holzman@yahoo.com](mailto:steve_holzman@yahoo.com). I'll be glad to help you.





# GOShaw



Nonprofit  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Athens, Georgia  
Permit No. 11

Newsletter of the Georgia Ornithological Society  
PO Box 7642  
Macon, GA 31209



Printed on Recycled Paper

## Annual Rates for GOS Membership

Brown Thrasher (Individual/Family Membership)	\$35
Red-cockaded Woodpecker (Patron)	\$50
Fledgling (Students only)	\$20

Please visit <http://www.gos.org/join-us>



Camp TALON class of 2021 on the way to Little St. Simons Island. Photo by Bob Sargent.