

THE ORIOLE

A Quarterly Journal of Georgia Ornithology; Official Organ of the
Georgia Ornithological Society



VOL. XXIX

MARCH, 1964

No. 1

THE ORIOLE

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CONTENTS

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF SCREVEN COUNTY, GEORGIA. <i>By Anne P. Hamilton</i>	1
GENERAL NOTES	17
FROM THE FIELD	20
NEWS AND COMMENTS	22
RECENT LITERATURE	24

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NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF SCREVEN COUNTY, GEORGIA

By Anne P. Hamilton

Little has been published about the birds of Screven County, Georgia. The writer spent her childhood there, but the notes below were made during return visits from 1937 to date. The visits usually took place in December, spring, and summer, which accounts for meager information in some months, notably January, February, and early fall. Most observations were made in the eastern part of the county between Brier and Buck Creeks.

Acknowledgment is made to Ivan R. Tomkins for several records (see notes under species concerned) as well as for the following historical and ecological comments about the area:

"For many years after the first settlements in the colony of Georgia the main route to the interior ran from Savannah to Augusta, on the higher ground not far from the Savannah River, which is the Georgia—South Carolina boundary. Midway from the coast to the Fall Line it crossed what is now Screven County, which was established in 1793.

"Various early naturalists are known to have traveled this route—William Bartram, Alexander Wilson, perhaps Thomas Nuttall, and probably others. For some years in post-Revolutionary time the artist-naturalist John Abbot lived in Screven County. He was known to Alexander Wilson, who quoted him concerning many birds; to Thomas Nuttall; and was visited by John Lyon, nurseryman and plant hunter, at his house near the old Augusta Road, in 1811.

"Screven County may be said to have two ecological boundaries, the Savannah River on the northeast and the Ogeechee River on the southwest; as well as two political boundaries, Effingham County on the southeast and Burke and Jenkins Counties on the northwest.

"The Savannah River originates in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and in its course across the Mountain and Piedmont Regions has brought down

quantities of alluvial material, creating a wide river swamp. The Ogeechee River is a "black-water" Coastal Plain river without such extensive swamps.

"Much of the higher land is agricultural, with extensive areas devoted to pine farming. There are numerous ecological habitats which can only be briefly mentioned here. In general there has been little exploration of the flora and fauna. A few major habitats are listed as a guide:

- a. River Swamps
- b. River Bluffs
- c. Branch-swamps or Branch-bays
- d. Lime-sinks or solution basins, some merely sunken land, others draining subterranean springs
- e. Pine flat-woods (poorly drained)
- f. Crop lands (including pine farms)
- g. Turkey-oak, Longleaf Pine Sand hills."

Common names of the birds follow usage in Audubon Field Notes and scientific names were taken from the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist, 5th edition, 1957. Following the names are these abbreviations which attempt to indicate status: pr (permanent resident), sr (summer resident), sv (summer visitant), wv (winter visitant), and tv (transient). Occurrence extremes are given for migratory species, a dash between dates signifying that the notes show additional occurrence dates in the county. To species which have occurred in my notes four or fewer times I have ventured to assign the status accorded them by Burleigh (1958). Detailed observations of habits have been given when they seemed to be of sufficient interest. Published records of the writer and others are shown with proper citations.

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*). One specimen was taken on the Savannah River in upper Screven County on December 19, 1930 (Murphy, 1937).

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*). Formerly uncommon; more common with increased number of farm ponds in recent years. Summer record: July 5, 1960.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*). pr. Not recorded from 1940 to 1960, though this is surely a case of an observer not being in the right place at the right time. It has been seen fairly commonly since 1960, usually at farm ponds.

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*). sr. Common. April 20 (1942)—July 6 (1960).

Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerulea*). sr. Common to abundant. March 19 (1961)—till fall.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*). sr. This species first was recorded in April 1962 and was seen regularly thereafter till late summer (Hamilton, 1963. In 1963 the earliest arrivals were two seen by Grace Boddiford (personal communication) on March 25. As to numbers, William Pfeiffer (personal communication) reported that in the spring of 1963 he saw flocks of from 50 to 100 and that "nearly every pasture had some". On June 7-9, 1963, my husband and I saw flocks of from 3 to 12 in seven different pastures in the eastern half of the county. To date there is no evidence of nesting.

Common Egret (*Casmerodius albus*). sr. Common. Winter record: December 28, 1962.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*). Only record is of one bird perched on a fallen tree-top in the Mill Pond on Buck Creek on June 17, 1958.

Wood Ibis (*Myteria americana*). sv. Grace Boddiford fairly often sees small flocks in flight. My records are as follows: two seen on June 19, 1950; 15, June 21, 1961; and six, May 27, 1962.

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*). sv. This species was not seen prior to 1959, though it may have been overlooked. Observations are as follows: two, July 31, 1959; four, August 1, 1959; seven, June 18, 1961, nine in two flocks, June 22, 1961; three, June 7, 1963; and one, June 8, 1963. Two additional records are: one bird, which was feeding alone on June 23, 1961, in a densely shaded slough near Buck Creek bridge on Highway 24, flew with difficulty through the trees on being disturbed; also, an adult and an immature were observed feeding together in shallow water in a large farm pond on June 8, 1963.

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*). pr. I have not recorded this species, though Tomkins reports (personal communication) that many were seen on the Savannah River below the mouth of Brier Creek on September 12, 1951. My father often spoke of ducks which were probably this species flying from one cypress pond to another.

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*). wv. One record: one seen on a farm pond on November 23, 1962.

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*). vv. One record: three males and five females were seen on a farm pond on December 30, 1961.

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*). pr. Common.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*). pr. Abundant.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*). sr. My only record is of five seen on June 19, 1961 (Hamilton, 1962). Tomkins reports (1962) that he saw numerous kites along the Savannah River between Haga-Slaga and Poor Robin Landings in May and June, 1954.

Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*). vv. December 27, 1940.

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*). pr. April 5, 1943. This species and the preceding one are probably present in greater numbers than my records show. Rural people talk of seeing "blue darters" and chicken hawks".

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). vv. Fairly common. November 23 (1962)—April 24 (1942). One was found dead along with 20 slaughtered crows on March 19, 1961, but the specimen was not preserved. Harassment by a mockingbird was observed on November 23, 1962; when the hawk flew from the cypress tree in a small pond in a field, the mocker desisted and almost at once a crow began darting at the hawk.

Krider's Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis kriderii*). Murphey (1937) possessed a specimen of an adult female which was taken in this county on January 2, 1909.

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). pr. Fairly common. Tomkins stated (personal communication) that at Brier Creek Landing on the Savannah River on September 11-12, 1951, "it seemed that nearly every sandbar had a family of them in the willows, perhaps migrants".

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*). tv. April 19, 1958.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). tv. Two records: One was found shot four miles south of Sylvania in June, 1957 (Johnston, 1958). Another, which had been banded by Broley as a nestling in Florida, was recovered at Hilltonia on May 7, 1941 (Burleigh, 1958).

Marsh Hawk (*Circus cyaneus*). vv. Fairly common. November 23, (1962)—December 29 (1940).

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). vv. April 20, 1942; May 10, 1959; and spring, 1962 (Boddiford, personal communication).

Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*). pr. Scarce in summer; common in winter. A specimen collected at Sylvania on January 19, 1929, proved to be the small race, *paulus* (Burleigh, 1958). Two of my spring records for sparrow hawks (one on March 16 and two on March 26, 1961) and all summer records (one each on June 17, 1958; June 24, 1961; and July 4, 1961) were obtained at the same location, the farm of Charlie Powell southeast of Sylvania. This farm is five miles from White Hill, where Tomkins (personal communication) found one or two birds several years in summer. There have been no signs of nesting or young. Since the breeding range of the large race, *sparverius*, is the northern half of the state (Burleigh, 1958), perhaps further work and collecting will determine whether these summer birds may be *paulus*, which Burleigh classes as resident in the southern half of the state and which has been known to nest on the coast (Tomkins, personal communication).

Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*). pr. Abundant.

Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*). pr. Milas and Bruno Pfeiffer state (personal communication) that turkeys are present in the Savannah River swamp. Signs of their scratching among dry leaves near the Mill Pond in Buck Creek swamp indicated their presence there also between November 10 and 20, 1962. In the spring of 1939 Milas Pfeiffer on the road to Haga-Slaga Landing saw a turkey with lowered wings feigning injury. He thought this act indicated that young birds were near, though he saw none.

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*). sr. Only records: eleven seen in May, 1956; one, June 22, 1961. The former record was made a week or two prior to May 26, 1956, when Grace Boddiford watched an adult and ten young crossing the road in a swampy area near Robinson Branch.

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*). vv. Fairly common. November 23 (1962) — March 19 (1961). No summer records.

American Woodcock (*Philohela minor*). pr. In late March or early April, 1962, Milas Pfeiffer observed an adult and four young near Cow Ford on Buck Creek. It was a cool sunny day and the young were crouched in a sandy road as though warming themselves. He picked up the young to take to his daughter, then reconsidered and released them, whereupon the adult led them away into thick underbrush. He said that he has now and then seen woodcock probrings on pond edges.

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*). tv. Two records: one on April 22, 1942; Tomkins (personal communication) saw this species on sandbars on the river just below Brier Creek on September 11-12, 1951.

Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*). tv. This species was seen by Tomkins at the same time and place as the preceding one.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*). tv. One bird was seen by Tomkins on the river below Brier Creek on September 12, 1951.

Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*). pr. Abundant.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*). sr. Common. April 24 (1942 — July 31 (1959)). On June 20, 1961, one was chased by an unidentified dark bird that was thought to be a redwing.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). pr. (presumably). Knapp Boddiford (personal communication) has occasionally seen "monkey-faced" owls.

Screech Owl (*Asio otus*). pr. Not so common as it was in my childhood.

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*). pr. Not common. One hoots fairly regularly near the Boddiford home. My records are: August 1-2, 1959; July 5, 1960; June 22, 1961.

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*). pr. Common. In April, 1959, Grace Boddiford and a group of Cub Scouts saw one in daylight at the Mill Pond on Buck Creek.

Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*). sr. Abundant. April 4 (1940) — August 2 (1959).

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*). sr. Common. April 19 (1958) — August 2 (1959). R. E. Hamilton found a fledgling on a little-used sandy road near a sawmill on June 1, 1958, and photographed it. On June 8, 1963, he and I watched an adult feigning injury by fluttering along ahead of our car. The latter observation was made in the edge of the Savannah River swamp more than a mile from any human habitation.

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). sr. Common to abundant. April 5 (1943) — till October. Vociferous young were heard daily from June 29 through July 6, 1960, in a chimney of my father's home.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*). sr. Common. March 28 (1963) — October 15 (1962). These extreme occurrence dates are from Grace Boddiford's records.

Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*). pr. More common now that there are more farm ponds.

Yellow-shafted Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*). pr. Abundant. On July 3, 1961, I saw a fledgling peering out of a hole 15 feet up in a dead, barkless pine.

Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*). pr. Common. On July 3, 1960, Dorothy Pfeiffer saw an adult at an oval hole in a dead tree near the river, though no other sign of nesting was noted. One spring a few years ago Milas Pfeiffer and I watched one enlarging a hole in a rotten section of the trunk of a sycamore tree. The hole had formerly been used by a pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers.

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Centurus carolinus*). pr. Abundant. Breeding records: March 14, 1949; young being fed on June 19, 1961, by a pair of adults which made numerous trips to a nest hole 50 feet up in a dead, barkless pine; three or more fledglings on June 23, 1961, were engaged in play with two adults in a chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*) tree in Grace Boddiford's yard.

Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). pr. Common. Between May 10 and 17, 1959, I counted nine individuals far enough apart to indicate probability of as many pairs. On June 7-9, 1963, seven individuals were counted a mile or more apart. Breeding records: two adults on June 10, 1962, were using a nest hole in a dead, barkless pine near the Boddiford home; on June 22, 1961, a pair of adults were noted entering and leaving a nest hole in the same tree about 40 feet above ground; on June 9, 1963, an adult was using a hole about 18 feet up in a partially debarked young living pine at the intersection of Highways 301 and 24. Grace Boddiford reports that she finds a fair number of this species dead on highways and believes they have been killed by cars. This report lends credence to Burleigh's theory (1958) of highway mortality in this species, also to Norris's (1963) statement of the frequency of the killing of Red-heads by cars.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*). wv. Common. November 23 (1962) — April 24 (1942).

Hairy Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos villosus*). pr. Fairly common.

Downy Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos pubescens*). pr. Abundant. Young birds were noted in a nest 12 feet above ground in a rotted limb of a living red maple tree May 11-17, 1959.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos borealis*). pr. Less common than formerly. Numbers of individuals on some Christmas counts were as follows: 10, 1940; 4, 1941; 3, 1943; 6, 1944. In recent years my

records show: one, June 17, 1958; one, May 10, 1959; two, August 2, 1959; one each on June 19 and 21, 1961; two June 8, 1963. Nesting evidence: About ten years ago Milas Pfeiffer, wondering at a woodpecker hole in a living pine which had been cut for the sawmill, sawed out the section containing the nest hole and gave it to me. Exuded pine gum surrounded the hole in characteristic fashion.

Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*). Murphey (1937) related that a hunter and student of birds, George N. Bailie, in September, 1907, saw an Ivory-bill fly across the river from Allendale County, South Carolina, and disappear into the swamp in Screven County.

Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*). sr. Abundant. Breeding evidence: An active nest whose contents were undetermined was found on July 15, 1960, in a chinaberry tree by the roadside at the Boddiford home.

Great-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*). sr. Common. April 5 (1943) — till late summer. An occupied nest was found on June 10, 1962, in a woodpecker hole in an upstanding dead stub of a living chinaberry tree. This tree stood on the Boddiford lawn and supported the family clothes line. The location coincides with Murphey's statement (1937) that this species commonly nests in Augusta in cavities in chinaberry trees.

Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*). wv. Common. November 23 (1962) — April 12 (1943).

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*). sr. Fairly common along creeks. May 26 (1956) — July 6 (1960).

Wood Pewee (*Contopus virens*). sr. April 14 (1940) — August 2 (1959). Breeding evidence: On July 4, 1960, I observed a fledgling hesitantly flying from limb to limb in a pecan tree, giving insistent food calls.

Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*). wv. Many flocks of ten or more on December 29-31, 1961; four birds on November 23, 1962.

Tree Swallow (*Iridoprocne bicolor*). tv. Sixteen seen on April 4, 1940; three, November 23, 1962; 20 seen by Grace Boddiford on March 27, 1963.

Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*). sr (presumably). April 14, 1940. It has surely been overlooked, though it is true that there are few suitable nesting situations in this area.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). tv. One record: April 15, 1940.

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*). sr. Abundant. April 5 (1943) — June 25 (1950). On the nights of June 12-16, 1958, I observed many martins and grackles roosting together in a branch-bay across Highway 21 from Screven County Hospital. Martins nested for several years at my father's home in gourds hanging from crossbeams at the top of a tall pole.

Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*). pr. Abundant. Breeding record: During the week of April 5-12, 1943, two nests were being built, one in a red maple near a dwelling, the other in a pine at a sawmill.

Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*). pr. Common. Both this species and the next are present; in my notes the Fish Crow has been recorded more often.

Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*). pr. Common. This species was noted near Sylvania in early May, 1933, by Howell and Burleigh (Howell, 1936).

Carolina Chickadee (*Parus carolinensis*). pr. Common. Suggested breeding sign: On March 25, 1961, a pair busily gathered post oak tassels.

Tufted Titmouse (*Parus bicolor*). pr. Abundant. Breeding signs: On April 21, 1942, a pair made many trips to gather fur from a rabbit skin which was drying on a smokehouse shelf; one spring a titmouse plucked fur from a wooden fence where cows had rubbed themselves.

White-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*). pr. Fairly common.

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*). Three birds seen on December 26, 1941.

Brown-headed Nuthatch (*Sitta pusilla*). pr. Abundant. On April 20, 1942, I observed one wet from a bath.

Brown Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*). wv. Uncommon. December 10 (1941) — March 24 (1939). Its absence from my records since 1944 is likely an oversight.

House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*). wv. Uncommon. November 23 (1962) — April 22 (1942). One was present in shrubbery in the Boddiford yard on November 23-25, 1962. Once a squeaking noise from me brought it out of a mass of honeysuckle vine (*Lonicera sp.*) to a crab-apple tree, where it bobbed and eyed me curiously.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). wv. Uncommon. December 10 (1940) — March 24 (1939).

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*). wv. Uncommon. December 25 (1937) — March 14 (1949).

Carolina Wren (*Thryomanes ludovicianus*). pr. Abundant. A pair nested in the tool shed at a sawmill in spring, 1960, entering through the "cat hole" cut in the door of the one-time cottage.

Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). pr. Abundant. Nest records are as follows: one being built in a thorny mock-orange shrub April 10, 1943; one with young in a dogwood June 10, 1962; one with young in a water oak on June 28, 1960; one with young in a deciduous holly July 3, 1960; three nests containing young on July 6, 1961, in a water oak, a deciduous holly, and a pecan tree respectively.

Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*). sr, occasional wv. April 21, 1942; May 27, 1956; November 24, 1962. While it may have been sometimes omitted inadvertently from field cards, still I am sure that it is not common here.

Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*). pr. Abundant. On June 10, 1962, two naked young rested in a nest four feet up in a trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*) growing on a trellis.

Robin (*Turdus migratorius*). wv. Abundant. November 23 (1962) — April 20 (1958). Usually does not arrive in any numbers before December. In most years large flocks may be seen in tree-tops in Moon Change Bay and other gum swamps in February and March.

Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*). sr. Common. April 15 (1940) — till fall. Here it is found more often around ponds and branch-bays than around human habitation.

Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata*). wv. Fairly common. November 22 (1962) — April 21 (1942). It prefers the red berries of deciduous holly.

Common Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*). pr. Common. For several years a pair nested in a depression, possibly a fire scar, four feet above ground in the trunk of a large longleaf pine.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*). sr. Common. March 16 (1961) — August 2 (1959).

Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*). wv. Common. November 22 (1962) — December 29 (1940).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*). wv. Common. November 22 (1962) — April 24 (1942). This species does not commonly show

its ruby crown; in late December, 1938, five or six of these diminutive birds in a branch-swamp twittered together excitedly, alarmed by some danger unknown to me, and all revealed their bright crowns.

Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*). wv. Uncommon. November 23 (1962) — December 28 (1962).

Cedar Waxwing (*Bombcilla cedrorum*). wv. Common. December 10 (1940) — April 20 (1958).

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*). pr. Abundant. In late summer in the 1930's as my father and I drove to Augusta in the early morning, I counted shrikes and mockingbirds on telephone wires and fence posts along the highway. Totals for the 66 miles were 64 shrikes and 66 mockingbirds. Each nesting season their bulky nests are seen in thick clumps of thorny mock-orange shrubs at my father's home.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). pr. Abundant. It nests regularly in woodpecker holes in partly rotted sycamore trees at two dwellings. On March 23, 1961, I saw a Red-bellied Woodpecker drilling a hole in a sycamore while a starling occupied another hole in the same tree.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). sr. Common in chosen habitat. March 19 (1961) — July 6 (1960).

Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*). sr. Fairly Common. April 4 (1940) — August 2 (1959).

Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*). wv. Fairly common prior to 1949; scarce since then. December 10 (1940) — April 24 (1942).

Black-and-White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). tv. Common. April 5 (1940) — April 20 (1958). Also December 26, 1941.

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*). sr. Abundant. April 4 (1940) — July 5 (1961). In late May, 1956, six singing males were heard along three miles of road where cypress ponds and branch-swamps were numerous. For several summers one sang undisturbed by noisy swimmers at Brannen's Bridges on Brier Creek.

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnithlypis swainsonii*). sr, probably. Abbot collected a specimen in Brier Creek swamp, though it is not known whether the location was in Screven or Burke County (Allen, 1951). Denton (1952) considers it very abundant in the Savannah River swamps just below Augusta. Across the river from Screven County in South Carolina Norris (1963) rates it as "fairly common in suitable streamside and bottomland areas in and near the river swamp". Its presence in

summer in Screven County is strongly suggested not only by the references above but also by songs which I heard on July 3, 1960, at Haga-Slaga Landing on the Savannah River, and again on July 6, 1961, and on other dates in a branch-bay along Highway 24 near Buck Creek bridge. On the former date my notes describe the song as "five notes heard repeatedly"; on the latter date, as "a song like the waterthrush, but with three slurred notes and two lower ones".

Parula Warbler (*Parula americana*). sr. Abundant. March 18 (1939) — August 2 (1959). Of two nests located by Grace Boddiford, one was found May 26, 1956, and young birds were being fed in it on June 3; the other contained young birds on June 7, 1963. Both nests were in Spanish moss (*Tillandsia*), both were about eight feet above ground, and both were near buildings at the edge of creek or river swamps. The 1956 nest was in a slender young tree, possibly ironwood (*Carpinus sp.*), about 20 feet from a seldom-used dance hall at Blue Springs in the Savannah River swamp. The 1963 nest was in a young sycamore tree about 15 feet in front of Buck Creek Church.

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*). tv. April 20, 1942.

Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*). tv. April 7, 1943.

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*). tv. April 21, 1942.

Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*). wv. Abundant. November 22 (1962) — April 24 (1942).

Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*). sr. March 18 (1939) — June 3 (1956). Burleigh (1958) marks Screven County on his breeding distribution map for this species; my records show no nests, but do show dates of occurrence which indicate the likelihood of its nesting. These are May 17 (1959), May 26 (1956), May 27 (1962), and June 3 (1956). On the May 27 date it was singing at Buck Creek Church, where pines and mixed hardwoods bear an abundance of Spanish moss (*Tillandsia*) toward which Burleigh (1958) states it shows partiality. One winter record: December 26, 1941.

Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*). pr. Common.

Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*). sr. Fairly common. March 19 (1961) — June 22 (1961).

Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*). wv. Fairly common. November 23 (1962) — April 17 (1940).

Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*). tv. April 4, 1940; April 19, 1958.

Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*). sr (probably). May 12, 1959; June 19, 1961. On both dates it was heard singing.

Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*). sr. The following records of singing birds suggest possibility of breeding: May 28, 1956; May 17, 1959; July 6, 1961; June 8, 1963.

Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*). sr. Common. March 14 (1949) — July 5 (1960). Also December 28, 1944.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*). sr. May 12, 1959; June 8, 1963.

Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*). sr. Fairly common. April 19 (1959) — July 3 (1960).

American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*). tv. April 21, 1942; October 14, 1951. On the latter date a female (or immature male?) flew repeatedly from a photinia shrub to the clapboard wall of a dwelling to catch insects in the crevices.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). pr. Common. Its bulky nests contain many chicken feathers.

Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*). tv. April 26, 1942.

Common Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*). pr. Common.

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*). pr. Abundant. At dusk on December 30, 1961, Grace Boddiford and I watched blackbirds flying continuously for fifteen minutes and estimated their number to be 100,000. About 500 diverged from the main flock and flew near enough for us to identify some as male redwings. William Pfeiffer (personal communication) states that there is a large roost in the northeastern section of the county.

Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*). sr. Common. April 4 (1940) — July 6 (1961). Of three nests located on June 10, 1962, one holding young was at the end of a lower limb of a huge post oak and two were in pecan trees. On July 1, 1960, a male was observed near a fledgling in a pecan tree. On July 4, 1960, a pair carried food to a chinaberry tree, though neither nest nor young were seen.

Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*). tv. Dot Pfeiffer saw a male in spring a few years ago. On December 20, 1962, she watched a similar bird that appeared to be getting food from caterpillar webs in a pecan tree.

Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*). wv. December 12, 1940; December 28, 1944.

Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). pr. Common. (See Purple Martin note.)

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*). sr. Common. April 8 (1940) — June 29 (1958).

Cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*). pr. Abundant. A nest which was being built June 8, 1958, in a privet shrub beneath a window contained three eggs on June 16 and was destroyed in an unknown manner a few days later; on May 11, 1959, a female was brooding on a nest eight feet high in a ligustrum shrub and fifteen inches from the clapboard wall of a house; on May 12, 1959, a male fed young in a nest four feet high in a longleaf pine sapling in the woods.

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*). sr. More common in last decade. April 19 (1958) — August 2 (1959). For two or more years it has nested in small loquat and dogwood trees in the Boddiford yard (Boddiford, 1963).

Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*). sr. Uncommon. April 19 (1958) — July 5 (1960).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*). sr. Apparently becoming more common. April 21 (1942) — June 28 (1958). Breeding signs: Four males were singing on territory in June, 1958 (Hamilton, 1963); singing males were observed at the homes of Grace Boddiford and Milas Pfeiffer the week of May 10-17, 1959; a male was singing on June 8, 1963, in a hedge-row near Bay Branch on Highway 21 west of Sylvania.

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*). wv. Uncommon. November 23 (1962) — March 14 (1962). On the March date Mrs. Sidney Morgan saw 20 or more eating leaf buds at her home on Highway 21 south of Sylvania.

American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*). wv. Common. November 22 (1962) — April 24 (1942).

Rufous-sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*). pr. Common. It prefers woods and swamps rather than lawns and yards here.

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*). wv. Fairly common. November 24 (1962) — March 14 (1961).

Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*). wv. Fairly common. November 23 (1962) — March 14 (1949).

Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*). sr. Fairly common. March 23 (1961) — June 29 (1958). Howell took a specimen of this sparrow at Sylvania in early May, 1933 (Howell, 1936).

Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis*). wv. Common. November 22 (1962) — April 12 (1943).

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*). pr (presumably). Common. November 22 (1962) — April 24 (1942). Though I have no summer record of this species, a nest was found at Meldrim in Chatham County, about 40 miles south (Tomkins, 1957), and a young bird was found at Millen, Jenkins County, 20 miles west (Denton, 1950).

Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*). pr. Common in winter; less common in summer.

White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). wv. Common. November 22 (1962) — April 24 (1942).

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*). wv. Scarce some winters; absent other winters. November 23 (1962) — December 30 (1961). Fifteen individuals were counted on the 1940 Christmas count; usually only three or four are found in a day.

Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*). wv. December 10 and 27, 1940; December 26, 1941. Probably overlooked.

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*). wv. Common. November 22 (1962) — March 24 (1939).

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704 Greenwood Drive
Dalton, Georgia
March 26, 1964

GENERAL NOTES

WINTERING BALTIMORE ORIOLE IN ATLANTA.—The Baltimore oriole (*Icterus galbula*) has been recorded only a few times in winter in Georgia. An immature bird of this species (not collected, but generally believed by observers to be a male) spent four weeks in Decatur this year. It was first seen on January 23 at feeding trays maintained by Mrs. W. E. Freeborn, whose home is on a typical tree-lined suburban street and whose formal garden is small but perfectly maintained. The bird came to the feeders three or four times a day until February 19, 1964, after which it was not seen. During that time, many members of the Atlanta Bird Club saw the oriole.

This bird had a choice of foods, but ignored seed mixtures in favor of a cooked mixture of corn meal and suet, which it ate regularly. The oriole also scratched on the ground close to, and in the manner of, towhees.

There were at least two other observations reported of birds matching the oriole description — within a mile of the Freeborn home and in the same time period. —Louis C. Fink, 688 North Parkwood Road, Decatur, Georgia, March 29, 1964.

BLACK MARK ON BILLS OF YOUNG COMMON EGRETS.—Two Common Egrets (*Casmerodius albus*) arrived at the Parrotts' lake four miles south of Dalton, Whitfield County, on July 13, 1963. In identifying them, Mrs. Parrott was puzzled by a black mark at the end of the upper mandible of one of the birds. A search of the literature by Mourine King revealed a reference to black on the yellow bill in only one book. Richard H. Pough in *Audubon Water Bird Guide* states: "The yellow bill, only slightly blackish at the tip, (more extensively black in young birds), and the blackish legs are outstanding field characters". One of the two was evidently a young bird. MRS. JANE PARROTT, *Parrotts' Motel*, and MRS. MOURINE KING, *Route 4, Dalton, Georgia*. July 16, 1963.

A SPECIMEN OF FLORIDA CORMORANT FROM TYBEE ISLAND.—On November 9, 1963, I found a small cormorant on the beach. For some unknown reason, the bird allowed me to approach and pick it up. It was a subadult female, not fat and generally in good feather, except that the outer rectrices were badly worn, and the four inner ones had not yet attained full growth. The specimen was identified by Mrs. Roxie Laybourne, Fish and Wildlife Service, as *Phalacrocorax auritus floridanus*.

In "Georgia Birds" Burleigh (1958) listed three specimens from Georgia but gave little detail. The weight and measurements of this specimen are given in detail because the various bird books at hand are very vague in description, usually saying that this subspecies is smaller than the nominate form, but giving nothing definite.

This bird weighed two pounds (917 gms.) and measured: length in the flesh 690 mm.; flattened wing 285; tarsus 60; tail 116; and chord of culmen 54. IVAN R. TOMKINS, 1231 East 50th St., Savannah, Georgia, March 25, 1964.

MID-MARCH BRINGS GOOD BIRD-WATCHING AND BIRD-FINDING FOR ATLANTA.—While the Spring migration is always an exciting affair, there was more than the usual interest this year in Atlanta. The period of March 8 through March 22, 1964, brought weather conditions which gave Atlantans a better-than-usual chance to see birds which are not too common. The records were all by sight and in all cases there was confirmation by a second or third observer.

Saturday, March 14, was cold and rainy and the field trip of the Atlanta Bird Club disbanded early. Heavy rains that day made small lakes out of mud-flats, and the placid South River over-ran its banks and flooded the bridge at Smith's Pasture. On Sunday the 15th, it was cold and cloudy, but the bird-watchers were able to get out.

Saturday, March 21, was another cold and overcast day. On Sunday, the sun came out from a 30-degree chill in early morning, the thermometer climbed rapidly to 60 degrees.

What humans call bad weather obviously bring birds, a statement which is not very novel. It began with the palm warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*), seen by John Skene on March 21. Mrs. Mary Brandt Murphy also saw the palm warbler at Jackson on March 8.

On March 14, herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*) and ring-billed gulls (*Larus delawarensis*) were identified at East Lake and The Atlanta Water Works reservoir on Howell Mill Road.

John Skene noted a northern water-thrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) at Chastain Park on March 19, an early record. The purple martins (*Progne subis*) were back in force at East Lake on March 15, when at least 50 appeared. One tree swallow (*Iridoprocne bicolor*) was with the martins, and a week later there were six tree swallows. The rough-winged swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*) reached Chastain Park on the

22nd, when two birds were seen in the process of making a nest in a mud-bank. On March 21, chimney swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) reached East Lake at an early date, and were seen by a number of observers the next day.

It was the water fowl which created the most excitement. East Lake, on March 15 produced one baldpate or American widgeon (*Mareca americana*), and the same species appeared at Constitution Lake and East Lake on the 21st. There were ring-necked ducks (*Aythya collaris*), lesser scaup (*Aythya affinis*) and blue-winged teal (*Anas discors*) at East Lake on the 15th. Hooded mergansers (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) were at Robinson's farm on the Chattahoochee River on the 21st (two birds) and on the 22nd, three birds were seen by half a dozen observers. The *American golden-eye* (*Glaucionetta clangula*) was at East Lake on the morning of the 22nd, but disappeared as the temperature rose. On the 21st, a female shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*) was at East Lake. On the same day, Constitution Lake and Robinson's both produced green-winged teal (*Anas carolinensis*); the Howell Mill reservoir a bufflehead (*Glaucionetta albeola*) and an old-squaw (*Clangula hyemalis*). Three locations had the horned grebe (*Colymbus auritus*) on March 21, including Piedmont Park inside the city, but like most of the water-fowl, the horned grebes left with bad weather and only coots and pied-billed grebes remained.

At Constitution Lake on the 21st and 22nd, a solitary sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*) was present for all to study through a telescope.

The observers who made these notes, in varied companies, included Mike and Peg Einhorn, John Skene, Jack Holland, Bill Clark, Bill Craig, and Joe and Mary Brandt Murphy.

Typical of the birds was a small flock of pectoral sandpipers (*Erolia melanotos*) which enjoyed the flooded fields of Smith's pasture on March 15 and thereafter disappeared.

One of the features of the winter in Atlanta was been the abundance of pine siskins (*Spinus pinus*). Seen on twelve out of twenty Christmas counts in Atlanta, the siskin was abundant this Christmas. Mr. and Mrs. Elbridge Freeborn were still feeding 50 siskins on March 21, and many observers saw the species in various parts of town.

Finally, there have been enough reports of Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) to make you realize that the big gray bird does indeed pass over Atlanta. At least three people called me to describe flights of varying sizes, and Mrs. Murphy heard the distinct call. —LOUIS C. FINK, 688 North Parkwood Road, Decatur, Georgia, March 29, 1964.

FROM THE FIELD

Ivan Tomkins of Savannah, Georgia has been seeing a Glaucous Gull since Jan. 19, 1964 (letter on March 25) as well as 2 or 3 Great Black-backed Gulls. He has also observed a sub-adult Baltimore Oriole several times during the latter days in March.

A skin of an immature Bald Eagle has recently been presented to the University of Georgia. The bird was found in Telfair County, Georgia during the latter part of February or early March.

William Dopson reports that coots and Common Gallinules were common in numbers at Little Ocmulgee State Park near McRae during the last week in March. He noted two Little Blue Herons on March 21.

John Ziegler of College Park noted two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers on February 8. Louis Fink has been watching an immature Baltimore Oriole in Decatur recently.

George Dorsey, by way of "The Bird Watcher", says that the Rome, Georgia group found 89 species and approximately 1,029,600 individuals on this winters' Christmas Census. Alta Stevens reports that Evening Grosbeaks have again appeared on the Berry School campus.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cater, Jr. saw four Least Sandpipers, ten Common Snipe, and several Killdeer in Dooly County on November 25, 1963. In Bibb County on Nov. 24 they saw one Red-breasted Merganser and in Houston County the following day they saw two females of this species. Two were also seen at Sandy Run Lake and two at Lake Joy. Hedvig Cater saw the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Taylor County on November 11, 1963 and Alma Cooke observed two Horned Grebes at Lake Blackshear, Crisp County on November 17, 1963.

Hedvig Cater says that: "On March 2, 1964 two Pine Siskins alighted on the electric wire above our feeder, remaining long enough for me to observe them carefully at close range." Tom and Hedvig Cater and Alma Cooke saw two Dowitchers in winter plumage in Houston County on March 8, 1964. Purple Martins returned to gourds near Bonaire in Houston County on February 19, 1964. Dr. Tom Hall saw three Pine Siskins in Macon on February 29, 1964 and a Western Kingbird in Jones County on March 8, 1964.

Fr. Martin of the Monastery of the Holy Ghost, Conyers, Georgia, noted an Alder Flycatcher on September 21, 22, 23, and 24, 1963 on the monastery grounds. The bird was heard calling on several days. He

noted three Shovellers on October 28, 1963, a single Pine Siskin on January 28, 1964 and an Evening Grosbeak on November 16, 1963. In addition Fr. Martin says: "I got a very satisfactory look at a Philadelphia Vireo on September 30, 1963."

L. A. Wells sent a copy of the Christmas count made by the Chattahoochee Valley Natural History Club and others near Columbus, Georgia. The group located 87 species and over 9,000 individuals. Some of the significant finds were: Pine Siskin 125, Bufflehead 60, Yellow-breasted Chat 2, and Brewer's Blackbird 50.

Mary and Milton Hopkins watched and listened to two flocks of Sandhill Cranes passing over Osierfield, Georgia on March 7. One flock by actual count numbered 89 and the other 150 by estimate and partial count. The species was heard but not seen one week later over Fitzgerald. We counted 25 Coots and 27 Common Gallinules at Magnolia Springs State Park near Millen, Jenkins County on March 22.

NEWS AND COMMENTS

The spring meeting of G.O.S. will be held at Dillard, Georgia on May 1, 2, 3. Meeting headquarters will be at the Dillard House and the Saturday dinner speaker will be Arthur Stupka, author of the recently published, "Notes On The Birds Of The Great Smokey Mountains National Park".

An interesting article entitled "To Count a Valley Bird" by L. A. Wells appeared in the January 26, 1964 edition of the Sunday-Ledger-Enquirer Magazine, Columbus, Georgia.

David Johnston will be birding and studying on Wake Island for a period during the month of April.

TWO GIFTS

A Thought for All Members

Within recent weeks, the Georgia Ornithological Society has received two gifts — which are appreciated because of their intrinsic value and because of the thoughtfulness which prompted them.

The first is a collection of pamphlets, monographs and folders on bird study collected by the late Fred Hebard. There are several hundred pieces, collected by Mr. Hebard over a life-time of study in Georgia and many other States. The literature covers a span of almost one hundred years.

Mrs. Hebard forwarded the collection to Lucien Harris, Jr., G.O.S. member residing in Avondale Estates. From there it was transmitted to the G.O.S. library which is maintained at the University of Georgia with the kind cooperation of W. Porter Kellam, Librarian. This is believed to be the first sizable gift to the G.O.S. library established by Herb Kale and Mr. Kellam. It is hoped that students at the University may be able to catalogue all of the material in the Hebard collection, so that its contents will be made known to all.

The second gift consisted of 105 back copies of *The Oriole*, including several which have been out of print for years. (These were supplied to purchasers of full sets who have been awaiting the missing numbers.)

Earle Greene of Los Angeles contributed *The Orioles*, which are on file with the Business Manager. Readers are reminded that almost all back numbers are available. —Louis C. Fink

Agreement Between the Georgia Ornithological Society and the University of Georgia
Libraries in the Maintenance of an Ornithological Library

The Georgia Ornithological Society and the University of Georgia Libraries are mutually desirous of expanding the ornithological collection in the Libraries and agree upon the following methods of developing and containing such collection.

1. The ornithological collection will be housed and serviced by the University of Georgia Libraries.
2. In order to provide proper administration it is agreed that the ownership of the ornithological collection shall be vested in the University of Georgia Libraries.
3. It is agreed that the collection be placed in the ornithological section of the Libraries and that each bound volume supplied by the Georgia Ornithological Society will be indicated by a special bookplate.
4. It is agreed that the collection shall be available to the Faculty and Students of the University of Georgia and to the members of the Georgia Ornithological Society under the rules and restrictions common to libraries and suited to the peculiar requirements of this case. It is further agreed that certain rare or costly works may be withheld from circulation at the option of the Library Administration.
5. It is agreed that items will be loaned to non-resident members of the University and the Society through interlibrary loan service, and, in such cases, the Library will mail and pay the transportation costs one way, the return charges to be borne by the borrower.
6. It is agreed that books and periodicals properly belonging in this collection shall be accessioned and cataloged upon their receipt and that periodicals will be bound in volumes at proper intervals.
7. It is agreed that the Georgia Ornithological Society will solicit the donation of journals and books but that the Library Administration will determine which items are to be incorporated in the collection.
8. It is agreed that the University Libraries will receive and store the Society's stock of back copies of the Oriole, cost of packing and transportation to be borne by the Georgia Ornithological Society. The University Libraries shall mail copies of this reserve stock upon order of the Secretary of the Georgia Ornithological Society.

Signed: Georgia Ornithological Society
James H. Jenkins, President
The University of Georgia Libraries
W. P. Kellam, Director

October 29, 1963

RECENT LITERATURE

CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY IMPRESSIONS by Alexander Sprunt, Jr., 1964, The Devin-Adair Company, 23 East 26 th St., New York, 192pp \$10.00.

As the author says this book is an informal collection, in text and drawings, of his impressions of the Carolina Low Country. The volume contains sixteen chapters ranging in subject matter from "The Barrier Beaches" to "Arthur T. Wayne". Mr. Sprunt's descriptions and narrative make a reader wish to see the country of which he talks of so vividly.

The text is illustrated in line drawings by John Henry Dick. These 77 drawings picture flowers, trees, snakes, homes, and a wide variety of other scenes although by far the largest number are concerned with bird life. His use of shadows and reflections in two cypress swamp line drawings are especially good. This medium of illustration is also used well in pictures containing live oaks and Spanish moss.

The author indicates that "Geographically the low country includes the coastal plain from North Carolina to Georgia and extends some seventy-five miles inland."

This volume can easily be read in an evening's sitting and while the greatest emphasis is on bird life anyone interested in nature in general will thoroughly enjoy the book. Milton Hopkins, Jr.

BIRDS OF THE AEC SAVANNAH RIVER PLANT AREA by Robert A. Norris, 1963, Published by The Charleston Museum, Charleston, S. C., 78 pp.

This contribution to South Carolina ornithology is number XIV edited by E. Milby Burton, Director of the Charleston Museum. It contains a summary of the findings of three years (1955-58) intensive study of the area. Dr. Norris' study for the most part dealt with ornithological aspects of the general ecological survey of the region which was being conducted prior to the area's being closed to the public. The book contains a short description of the area, a map, and several photographs. The annotated list, which comprises the greater portion of the work, is more than a listing of species. It contains much breeding density information, a seasonal status symbol for each species, some interspecific relations of several species, and a wide variety of other life history information. Many records are available for this study because of daily trips to a television tower from late August to mid-November, 1957. The tower was located a few miles north of the region in Aiken County in 1957. A limited number of copies of this publication are available from the Charleston Museum. —Milton Hopkins, Jr.

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FOOTNOTES—Avoid footnotes by incorporating such material in the text.

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REFERENCES—When there are fewer than 3 references insert them in parentheses where needed in the text by author, journal, volume, pagination, and year of publication. Three or more references are grouped alphabetically by authors last names under "literature cited".

TABLES—Prepare tables in keeping with size of *THE ORIOLE*. A good table should be understandable without reference to the text.

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