

## FROM THE FIELD

### JUNE–JULY 2006

Note: The appearance of observations in this section does not suggest verification of acceptance of a record. Records need to be documented and submitted to the Checklist and Records Committee for consideration.

It was an average breeding season with a few sightings to report. The highlight of the season was the apparent breeding attempts of the Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks at the Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area near Darien. Several observers noted that the birds were frequently seen in pairs and were acting in a territorial manner. This area is one of the most critical coastal habitats for birds, and has been known to support nesting pairs of Least Bittern, Mottled Duck, Purple Gallinule, Black-necked Stilt, and Gull-billed Tern. Away from the coast, we had several interesting sightings of possible breeding birds in the mountains and Piedmont Region. We still have a lot to learn about the distribution of breeding birds in our state.

Abbreviations used include: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, 2003, Beaton, Giff et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 14; AWEC - Arrowhead Wildlife Education Center in Floyd Co.; AWMA - Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area in McIntosh Co.; CRC - Checklist and Records Committee; CRNRA - the Cochran Shoals Unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area; ELHLAF - E.L. Huie Land Application Facility in Clayton Co.; ENWR - the Bradley Unit of the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge in Stewart Co.; JI - Jekyll Island; KMT - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Cobb Co.; LSSI - Little St. Simons Island; m.ob. - many observers; MBBP - Merry Brothers Brickyard Ponds; NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; SCSP- Sweetwater Creek State Park; v.ob. - various observers; WMA - Wildlife Management Area

### SPECIES ACCOUNTS

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** - Steve Barlow reported finding 38 birds at AWMA on 4 June. The peak count was more than 40 birds on 1 July when Paul Sykes reported seeing many birds paired off, perhaps an indication of breeding in the area (CRC records 2006-14 and 2006-22). Greg Balkcom of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources banded two of the birds on 26 July.

**SNOW GOOSE** - A bird found earlier in the year was still present in Spalding Co. on 24 July (Eric Beohm).

**GADWALL** - A female bird found at Lake Seminole by Eric Beohm on 14 June was a very good late date for the Coastal Plain Region.

**AMERICAN BLACK DUCK** - Two birds observed at AWMA on 14 June were unusual (Jim Flynn).

**MOTTLED DUCK** - Several reports were received of birds observed at AWMA throughout the season, indicating that the local population is still doing well at this



site.

NORTHERN SHOVELER - Patrick Brisse and Hugh Garrett spotted two birds at ELHLAF on 22 July.

NORTHERN PINTAIL - A female bird was seen sporadically at ELHLAF during June (Eric Beohm).

LESSER SCAUP - Tim Miller had an unusual report of a summer bird in Effingham Co. on 17 July.

HOODED MERGANSER - Eric Beohm reported finding a bird in Clayton Co. on 3 June, and two birds in Spalding Co. 25 July.

RUDDY DUCK - Eric Beohm had a great sighting of two birds with young on Lake Seminole on 14 June, for an extremely rare breeding record of this species in the state.

COMMON LOON - Marion Dobbs reported a very late record of a bird at Garden Lakes near Rome. She and Gladys Edmondson observed a bird on 2 June.

PIED-BILLED GREBE - Carol Lambert found an adult bird with six juveniles at ELHLAF on 22 June. This was a rare record of breeding in that region of the state.

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL - Two birds were a very good find by Nathan Diaz on a fishing trip offshore on 19 June.

CORY'S SHEARWATER - Russ Wigh had a single bird on an offshore trip to the R2 Navy tower on 20 July.

AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER - Russ Wigh reported finding four birds on the 19 June boat trip.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - The flock of birds at Andrew's Island continues to grow in numbers, as Joshua Spence reported finding more than 100 birds at the location on 16 June.

ANHINGA - Mike Ivie reported finding three birds in a Spalding Co. swamp on 23 June, and he and Eric Beohm observed two adults with chicks in the same area on 1 July. Michael Beohm found a female bird in Big Lazar WMA on 7 July, and Eric Beohm found another bird in Rockdale Co. on 19 July, for a good sighting in the Piedmont Region. Ty Ivey and Paul Hoinowski had a good count of 23 birds in the Macon area on 22 July.

AMERICAN BITTERN - There are very few summer reports of this species, so a bird at AWMA on 7 June was a very good find (Gene Keferl).

LEAST BITTERN - Jim Flynn reported a high count of 15 birds at AWMA on 10 June.

TRICOLORED HERON - A bird seen at Lake Horton on 28 July was an unusual find (Eric Beohm).

REDDISH EGRET - Ken Blankenship had a good count of three birds at JI on 9 July.

CATTLE EGRET - Michael and Eric Beohm had a very high count of approximately 800 birds in Upson Co. on 30 July.

WHITE IBIS - Mike Ivie observed 20 birds in a Spalding Co. swamp on 23 June, for an unusual sighting for that region of the state. Eric Beohm reported a high



count of 33 birds from Lake Horton on 27 July.

GLOSSY IBIS - Eric Beohm had a good report of four birds found near Lake Seminole on 14 June, and Michael and Eric Beohm found three birds at the ENWR on 29 July.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL - The highest count for the season was seven birds at the JI Causeway on 1 June (Lydia Thompson). Bob Sargent had a good inland sighting of a bird in Warner Robins on 26 June.

WOOD STORK - Mike Ivie saw an early dispersing bird in Spalding Co. on 23 June, for a rare report from that location. Todd Womack had a good count of 89 birds near Douglas on 20 July.

OSPREY - Carol Lambert reported a nest with two chicks at ELHLAF on 4 July.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - The peak count was near Glennville, where Gene Wilkinson reported finding 10 birds on 26 July.

MISSISSIPPI KITE - The peak count was more than 60 birds at Oxbow Meadows near Columbus on 10 June (Walt Chambers).

BALD EAGLE - Tom Striker reported two adult birds on Lake Blue Ridge on 28 June.

AMERICAN KESTREL - Jeff Sewell and Carol Lambert had an unusual sighting of two birds in Rabun Co. on 2 July.

PEREGRINE FALCON - At least two pairs of birds successfully raised young in downtown Atlanta (fide Terry Moore).

VIRGINIA RAIL - Carol McClelland had a very good sighting of breeding birds on Skidaway Island in Chatham Co., when she observed an adult bird with a chick on 24 July.

SORA - A single bird was still present at Harris Neck WMA in McIntosh Co. on 10 June (Bob and Deb Zaremba).

COMMON MOORHEN - Carol Lambert reported a peak count of 25 birds, comprised of nine adult birds and 16 young birds, at ELHLAF on 15 July. A single bird seen in Spalding Co. on 1 July was unusual for the area (Eric Beohm).

AMERICAN COOT - Two birds were seen at Lake Horton on 1 July (Eric Beohm).

LIMPKIN - A very exciting report of one or possibly two birds at Reed Bingham State Park from 9 June throughout the season was a good find (Chet Powell; CRC record 2006-21). Another bird was found at AWMA on 23 June (Steve Davis, Hugh Willoughby). Incredibly, a third bird was found and photographed at Lake Blalock on 6 July in the same location where one was seen two years ago, and remained there until 11 July (Carol Lambert). Finally, Wayne Schaffner reported finding an amazing count of four birds at Chickasawhatchee WMA on 2 July, and three birds at the same location on 22 July, one of which was photographed.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER - Eric Beohm had an interesting sighting of a bird at Lake Horton on 1 July.

UPLAND SANDPIPER - The earliest report was from Ken Blankenship, who found three birds at the Macon Co. sod farms on 24 July. The peak count came one week later, when Eric and Michael Beohm counted 24 birds at the same location.



WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - Several birds lingered at ELHLAF, where Eric Beohm observed two birds on 9 June and three birds on 13 June.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - Jack Carusos and John Paget found a late migrating bird in Hall Co. on 3 June, which remained in the same location through 5 June (Darlene Moore).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER - Ken Blankenship reported the first returning birds from Bartow Co. on 23 July.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER - Eric and Michael Beohm found a very early migrating bird at Lake Seminole on 29 July.

LAUGHING GULL - A bird observed at Lake Walter F. George on 29 July was a very good inland sighting (Michael and Eric Beohm).

BLACK TERN - Two birds were early migrants in Bryan Co. on 14 June (Gene Keferl). Ken Blankenship had a good count of 13 birds at Lake Walter F. George on 26 July, and 23 birds in Bartow Co. on 28 July.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE - Patrick Brisse and Hugh Garrett had a rare sighting of a bird at ELHLAF on 22 July.

LEAST FLYCATCHER - At least one bird was still present in the Suches area on 3 July (Pierre Howard).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - Michael Beuerlein observed a bird along I-75 north of Macon on 5 June. Another rare sighting was a bird along I-285 on 24 July (Dot Freeman).

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE - A sighting of two birds in Gwinnett Co. on 18 June was very unusual, as this species has disappeared from that area over the past 10 years (Patrick Brisse). Terry and Peggy Moore also found two birds in Stockbridge on 19 June, for another unusual sighting.

WARBLING VIREO - Jack Carusos found a bird along Ivy Log Gap road on 8 June. This species is suspected of breeding occasionally in the state, so this could possibly indicate breeding activity in this area.

COMMON RAVEN - Dan Vickers found three birds in Blairsville and two birds at Brasstown Bald on 8 July.

CLIFF SWALLOW - This species continues to expand its range throughout the state. Marion Dobbs had a very good report of 500 nests in the Rome area on 21 June.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - This species is known to breed occasionally in the northeast mountains, so a bird observed on 4 June (David Trently) and another seen on 7 June (Larry Albright), both in Rabun Co., may have been local breeders.

WINTER WREN - Mark Davis and Sterling Blanchard found two birds singing on territories at Brasstown Bald on 25 June.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER - Joshua Spence reported finding up to 16 singing male birds on territories at Coosawattee NWR in Murray Co. in June.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - A very rare sighting of a bird at Fort Stewart established a new early date for the Coastal Plain. Dee Mincey observed a bird drinking from a mud puddle on 28 June (fide Larry Carlile).





BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER - The earliest report away from the mountains was from KMT on 30 July (fide Giff Beaton).

CERULEAN WARBLER - The earliest migrant was reported from KMT on 20 July (fide Giff Beaton).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER - The earliest migrant reported was from KMT on 15 July (fide Giff Beaton).

AMERICAN REDSTART - The earliest migrant reported was from KMT on 20 July (fide Deb Zaremba).

SWAINSON'S WARBLER - This species was seen throughout the period at the State Botanical Garden in Athens (fide Ed Marioriello).

OVENBIRD - Patrick Brisse had a good count of four birds still in Gwinnett Co. on 18 June.

HOODED WARBLER - The earliest migrant reported was from KMT on 28 July (fide Deb Zaremba).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - Eric Beohm had a good count of 10 birds in Spalding County on 1 July.

DICKCISSEL - Ken Blankenship counted five birds in Bartow Co. on 23 July.

PINE SISKIN - Tom Striker reported finding one bird on 1 June and four birds on 11 June, all at his feeder in Blue Ridge.

Bob Zaremba, 2702 Lillie Lake Drive, Marietta, GA 30064