



Georgia Important Bird Area Coordinator's Report

October, 2009

General:

Thanks so much to Emily Toriani for manning the IBA booth during the Colonial Coast Bird and Nature Festival! Emily was very busy with the Atlanta Audubon table, and while the overall donation and other numbers were disappointing, she helped the IBA program a lot by handing out brochures, answering questions and setting up the IBA poster board.

I learned a lot and made some good contacts at the annual meeting of the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council in Tifton on October 1. Presentations were made concerning air quality, fire education, research and other important topics. It was good to see the active and effective cooperation between so many state and federal agencies, NGOs and universities.

Monitoring:

It is time to plan for **Christmas Bird Count** (CBC) season. I've started to help GOS collect dates, and I've started "talking them up" including a post to GABO. I plan to help with several CBCs this year, and encourage as many participants as possible. GOS has a list of CBCs and dates at <http://www.gos.org/cbc/cbc.html> I hope every one of you will help with at least one count. Congratulations to Paul Sykes who had a long story and photos published in the

There will be another **Rusty Blackbird Blitz** January 30 – February 15. Pierre Howard will do much of Georgia's organizing. Please contact him to help. h_pierre@BELLSOUTH.NET

As of 9pm on October 31, 1237 Georgia lists were entered on **eBird** during October.

Habitat Management:

Grass seed collections at Sprewell Bluff (13 participants) and Panola Mountain State Park went very well. Some of the seeds from Sprewell Bluff were collected and cached by Melanie Harrison-Dunn of UGA's Griffin Agriculture campus.

Fundraising & Donations:

Oconee Rivers Audubon (ORAS) has made a decision on their 2009 grant of \$300. The recipients were.... Who will.... More information can be found at:

<http://www.oconeeriversaudubon.org/grant.html>

Ogeechee Audubon also send us a small donation.

The donation box at CCBNF and the raffle for bird prints each earned us very modest donations. We raffled 2 prints and have 4 more for use another day. We only sold 7 bags of shade-grown coffee.

To make a tax-deductible donation to the IBA program, send a check to my address, made out to "AAS" with "IBA" in the subject line.

Please encourage friends and family to use www.goodsearch.com and www.goodshop.com. When you sign up, choose Audubon Society – Atlanta. For each use they will make a donation to the IBA program. I could not sign up as "Georgia IBA" because the name had to match the 501(c)(3) number.

Programs:

- My help with Atlanta Audubon's Master Birder classes began on a good note with the Anatomy and Physiology class on the 29th. I will lead two more evening classes, plus one field day in November.
- Due to serious budget cuts resulting in staff lay-offs, Callaway Gardens cancelled my banding demonstration less than 3 weeks out.
- I have tentative plans to speak again to Southern Wings in March.
- I will run a 2-day sparrow workshop. This will consist of an evening in the classroom on December 5th and a day in the field on December 12th.
- I will teach the "bird watching" component of the Master Naturalist class at Chattahoochee Nature Center on February 4.

I am interested in speaking with any group that is interested in birds. Feel free to send me contacts, or give my information to groups that may want me to present to them. I have several programs including bird banding, dragonflies, citizen science, burrowing owls, and sparrow id. I do not charge a fee, but happily accept donations to the IBA program, and also request permission to put out a donation box.

Conservation Issues

There is a proposal to dam the Etowah River to create a reservoir within Dawson Forest. It is slated to be on land owned by the city of Atlanta. The proposed reservoir is being pushed by a private developer and would engulf 2,000 of the 10,000 acres of the Atlanta tract.

<http://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta/public-132757.html>

<http://wallsmith.wordpress.com/2009/08/26/2000-acre-reservoir-planned-for-dawson-forest-wma/>

<http://www.lakelanie.com/200908241048/news/dawson-forest-reservoir-lake-lanier/>

<http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/archive/22776/>

<http://www.gpb.org/news/2009/08/21/reservoir-proposed-for-dawson-forest>

Volunteer Conservation Days

On October 24 13 people collected approximately 10 pounds of native grass and forb seeds at Sprewell Bluff State Park in Upson County. We were joined by

Also on October 24, 6 individuals collected grass seed along some roads and rights-of-way around Fall Line Sandhills Natural Area. This seed was handed to Walter Bland, who will grow the seeds into plugs for later planting in the Natural Area.

October 31, Grass seed collection at Panola Mountain State Park, starting at pm (after bird banding).

Phil Delestrez will lead a group of volunteer seed collectors at Pickett's Mill Battlefield Park near Atlanta. On Saturday, November 7, meeting at 10:00 am.

IBA COMMITTEE:

Giff Beaton
Ken Blankenship
Mike Chapman
Bob Cooper
Jim Flynn
Jim Gilreath
Noel Holcomb
Myra Hundley
Chuck Hunter
Nathan Klaus
Vanessa Lane
Priscilla Marshall
Charlie Muise
Debbie Sue Mumford
Bob Sargent
Georgann Schmalz
Lois Stacey
Steve Wagner
Jim Wentworth
Jim Wilson
Brad Winn