



## Georgia Important Bird Area Coordinator's Report

*March 2010*

### **General:**

The weather continues to include far too much wind for very successful banding. In March we got in 2 partial days at each station. We hope that spring will mean a relief.

The IBA collection of the GOS journal the Oriole is coming along. I've collected every issue from September 1981 through 2008, plus about half the issues dating back March, 1976. We also have all the indices from 1940 through December 1995. Thanks to duplicates, I've been able to furnish GOS with 3 issues they no longer had in the archives. Thanks to John Swiderski, Bob Sargent, Mim Eisenberg, Darlene Moore, Jerry and Marie Amerson, as well as a couple others who have promised to get us copies.

In the coming months Tracey Muise and I will construct an index for the Oriole for the years 2000-current.

As a bird bander with a salvage permit, I am occasionally the recipient of birds killed by window strikes, cats or cars. These often begin to pile up in my freezer. In the past I have found legal and valuable uses for these birds. I'm happy to say that my entire "collection" is soon going to be cleaned out, and used at Berry College. It appears that they will have use of further collections, as well. While we hate to see these birds die, it is always fascinating to see what they look like in the hand, and I'm happy that the skins will be used to further education about birds.

### **Monitoring:**

I helped Tall Timbers Research Station staff trap LOSH at a 4,800 acre preserve in Thomas County February 27-March 1. It is wonderful to see LOSH in expansive old growth longleaf pine savannah. It is also much more of a challenge to capture them in this natural habitat.

On March 6 Wayne Shaffner began weekly monitoring of Bachman's Sparrows at Swamp of Toa. He has been a tremendously motivated volunteer, collecting literally dozens of road, topographic and vegetation-cover maps to guide our monitoring efforts.

In May I will help with a survey of Wilson's Plover and American Oystercatcher along the entire GA coast.

I will help Nathan Klaus with radio telemetry of Loggerhead Shrikes (LOSH) this breeding season. I'll try to apply transmitters between April 16 and 20. We can use some help watching for them. Nathan can also use help for a similar project with American Kestrels.

This summer I will assist Nathan Klaus in conducting bird surveys on the cane plots where we conducted vegetation surveys last year. This is the final phase of an apparently successful habitat experiment he and Tim Keyes began nearly a decade ago. The plots are on IBAs: Oconee NF, Rum Creek WMA, Joe Kurz WMA, and Piedmont NWR.

### **Habitat Management:**

I helped with a prescribed fire at the Fall Line Sandhills Natural Area on March 24. While there we saw Wild Turkey, an *Ammodramus* sparrow and other species of birds that live in habitats that rely on fire. I also helped with a 800 acre fire at Oconee NF on March 31.

I have a plan for eradicating privet from certain discrete locations within our Joe Kurz WMA study site. Our volunteer day on April 2 will be the first phase in this.

Joe Kurz now has 2 Barn Owl boxes installed. No observations of owl use, yet, but we will continue to monitor. I've also erected one at a study site on private land in southern Lamar County. Boxes are being built by volunteers, while materials are a mix of donations and DNR funds. I will erect several more in the coming months as boxes become available. We can use donations of boxes for Barn Owls, American Kestrels, Eastern Bluebirds and Great-crested Flycatchers.

### **Fundraising & Donations:**

Please encourage friends and family to use [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and [www.goodshop.com](http://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:**

On April 14 I will speak to a combination of science classes and environmental club at Gordon College.

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**

“Conserve Wildlife” license plates are the source of more than half of Georgia DNR’s non-game funding. There is a political move afoot to take a large amount of that money and simply put it in the state’s general fund. It has passed the House and is in the Senate Rules Committee. The IBA program opposes this idea and will begin a letter-writing campaign against it. Please contact your senator NOW to speak out against what was called HB 1055. I don’t know the Senate name, yet.

### **Volunteer Conservation Days**

April 2: privet pull at Joe Kurz WMA in Meriwether County. Beginning at 2pm. Volunteers can come early to watch bird banding.

April 10: trail clearing around Ansley Hodges Impoundment at Altamaha WMA in McIntosh County. Beginning at 9am. Volunteers are welcome to join me at the Butler Island refuge tower to watch sunrise.

## **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 Wilson  
Brad Winn