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RECOVERING BIRD BANDS: THE JOY OF DISCOVERY – One afternoon in early May 2005, I walked across my yard to see what kind of carcass my old dog had pulled from the waters of Lake Sinclair, Putnam County, Georgia. Actually, what I found was more of a chewed partial-skeleton than a carcass, but a few remaining feathers let me know that it was the remains of a large bird. Being a student of natural history (more specifically a mammalian paleontologist), I was obligated to pick up the remains and attempt a species identification.

As a novice-to-intermediate birder, I have had the pleasure of using my Peterson's field guide to identify species from Alaska to Trinidad. However, Peterson's (or any other field guide that I am aware of) does not show you a picture of what a particular species looks like following decomposition and scavenging by the family dog. From the bones that remained, I convinced myself that the carcass was the remains of a "hawk." As I scoured the area to make sure I had retrieved all of the fragments, I noticed a metal bird band attached to a scrap of bone. This was the first bird band that I had ever found and I began to feel the "thrill of discovery." I picked up the band and looked for names and numbers. My thoughts jumped from "what species is this" to "where and when was it banded" to "who is studying this species and what are they hoping to learn?"

The following day I showed the band to Dr. Bob Chandler, the

ornithologist at Georgia College and State University. I think he was as excited as I about the find. He suggested that I report the find on the U.S. Geological Survey website. The site was easy to navigate and took only a few minutes to complete.

A few weeks later I received a letter from the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. I honestly had no idea what the letter contained as I opened it. Much to my surprise it was a Certificate of Appreciation for turning in the bird band information. Upon reading the certificate, I really got excited. “My” bird was an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) (which actually is my favorite). It had been banded by GOS member Dr. Joe Meyers near Hollywood, Alabama, in June 1988. “My” bird hatched 17 years earlier approximately 402 km (250 miles) away from its final resting place.

I display my certificate proudly in my office. As a research scientist, I am generally focused only on my own projects. It is exciting to know that I have participated in a long running study of such a magnificent species. If you have found a bird band and have yet to report it, I encourage you to do so. You may be surprised to find out whose research you are contributing to and where “your” bird has been.

Alfred J. Mead, *Associate Professor of Geology, Georgia College & State University, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061*

A BULLOCK’S ORIOLE AND A RECORD NUMBER OF BALTIMORE ORIOLES IN WINTER 2005-2006, IN BULLOCH COUNTY, GA – On the afternoon of 27 December 2005, while conducting my annual winter survey of Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) in different pecan orchards in Bulloch County, Georgia, I observed an immature male Bullock’s Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*). I was able to photograph the bird from about 8 m (25 ft), and the photograph confirmed my visual identification, via 10 x 40 binoculars, of the Bullock’s Oriole (Figure 1). The presence of a black bib on the orange throat, the black lores, the black spot on the culmen, the overall orange body coloring, and the deep, dark teeth in the upper wingbar substantiate the identification of the bird as an immature male. Apparently, this report represents the second photographed Bullock’s