

FROM THE FIELD

DECEMBER 2011-FEBRUARY 2012

Note: The appearance of observations in this section does not suggest verification or acceptance of a record. Observations of Review Species need to be documented and a rare bird report submitted to the Georgia Checklist and Records Committee (GCRC) for consideration.

The winter period was warmer than average, with the daily maximum temperature exceeding 26.7 °C across the southern half of the state during 25-27 January, and Savannah recording an all-time maximum February temperature of 30 °C on the 24th. In spite of a record number of tornadoes for the season, precipitation across the state was below average, with only 9.7 cm recorded in Augusta over the entire period. As a result, the southern part of the state moved back into exceptional drought conditions, and the earliest emergence of a lone star tick was recorded on 11 February. The mild winter meant that many Sandhill Cranes did not push south into the state until a cold snap in early January, and large northbound movements were recorded at the end of January. An exceptional number of wintering Northern Waterthrushes were documented, including the first winter record for the Piedmont. The avian highlights of the period were the second state record of Green-tailed Towhee, and the first since 1953, found on the Lake Oconee CBC, and the fifth state record of Black-headed Gull in Savannah. A Snow Bunting discovered on Tybee Island just before the GOS winter meeting was a crowd-pleaser. Offshore, a new high count of Manx Shearwaters was recorded, along with good counts of Razorbills, Red Phalaropes and Bonaparte's Gulls. Amazing counts of shorebirds were tallied on the MWSS, including new state high counts of Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Dunlin and Short-billed Dowitcher.

Abbreviations: ACOGB - Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds, 2003, Beaton, G. et al., GOS Occ. Publ. No. 14; AIC - Andrews Island Causeway and spoil site, Glynn Co.; AP - American Proteins settling ponds, Forsyth Co.; AWMA - Altamaha Waterfowl Management Area, McIntosh Co.; BCL - Bartow Co. Loop, a cluster of sod farms, plus cattle ponds on Brandon Farm Road and Taff Road, west of Cartersville, Bartow Co.; BUENWR - Bradley Unit of the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, Stewart Co.; CBC - Christmas Bird Count; CCWA¹ - Clayton Co. Water Authority, Clayton Co.; CINS - Cumberland Island National Seashore, Camden Co.; CLRL - Carter's Lake Re-regulation

Lake area, Murray Co.; COP - Centennial Olympic Park, Fulton Co.; CRNRA - Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area; CSU - Cochran Shoals Unit of the CRNRA, Cobb Co.; GI - Gould's Inlet, St. Simons Island, Glynn Co.; HP - Henderson Park, DeKalb Co.; JI - Jekyll Island, Glynn Co.; JIBS - Jekyll Island Banding Station, Glynn Co.; KMT - Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Cobb Co.; LCI - Little Cumberland Island, Camden Co.; LSSI - Little St. Simons Island, Glynn Co.; LTI - Little Tybee Island, Chatham Co.; LWFG - Lake Walter F. George, Clay Co.; MBBP - Merry Brothers Brickyard Ponds, Richmond Co.; m. ob. - multiple observers; MSS - Marshallville Super Sod Farm, Macon Co.; MWSS (Mid-winter Shorebird Survey of the Georgia coast); *NAB* - *North American Birds* (journal of the American Birding Association); NWR - National Wildlife Refuge; OM - Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center, Muscogee Co.; PCR - Pine Chapel Road, Gordon Co.; ph. - photographed; PSNP - Phinizy Swamp Nature Park, Richmond Co.; Region - when capitalized, refers to Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; SBG - State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Clarke Co.; SCI - St. Catherines Island, Liberty Co.; SF - sod farm; SP - State Park; SSI - St. Simons Island, Glynn Co.; TI - Tybee Island, Chatham Co.; WMA - Wildlife Management Area; WPD - West Point Dam, Harris Co. and Troup Co.

Note: Species that appear in a **bold-faced font** represent those that were considered “review” species by the GCRC during the year of the sighting. This list changes from year to year. The current review list may be viewed at the following link: <http://www.gos.org/checklists/reportables.html> GCRC activity, including the status of reports listed as “pending” as of press time, may be viewed at the following link: <http://www.gos.org/checklists/gcrc-activity.html>

¹We hereby replace the abbreviation “ELHLAF” with “CCWA” based on the following information from Carol Lambert. When birders first starting reporting from the CCWA, the only birding area was the Huie Ponds. The designation ELHLAF referred to the E.L. Huie Land Application Facility, which for many years encompassed the Huie Ponds, the Wetlands Center and the Blalock and Shamrock Reservoirs. However, there no longer is any Land Application Facility (LAF) in operation. The Treatment Wetlands, although constructed on the former LAF land, have now taken over that function.

CORRIGENDA

1) In "From the Field," Vol. 70-71(1-4), p. 58, a Blue-winged Warbler was reported on 5 April on Jekyll Island. This is quite an early date for this species to be present on the coast, and the observer conservatively retracts the record due to limited experience with the species at the time.

2) In "From the Field," Vol. 70-71(1-4), p. 95, a high count of 3 Reddish Egrets was reported from Jekyll Island on 9 July (the date was actually 3 July). The birds were seen on the mud flats behind the visitor's center. Though the foraging behavior was quite animated, Reddish Egrets are very rarely reported away from beaches in Georgia. Therefore, the observer conservatively retracts the record due to limited experience with the species at the time; these birds may have been bright breeding adult Little Blue Herons.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK - A new state high of 150 was recorded from the species' stronghold at AWMA on 1 January (m. ob.). The only other report was of 5 at MBBP on 7 January (Lois Stacey).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - The high count was 3 at Banks Lake, Lanier Co., on 5 January (Karen Seward, Marvin Smith). Single birds were reported from Mashburn Road, Gordon Co., on 5-27 January (Josh Spence), Bear Creek Reservoir, Jackson Co., on 6-29 January (Theresa Hartz, Georgann Schmalz), WPD on 8 January (John Cole, Sam Pate), OM on 15 and 23 January (Andrew Theus, Walt Chambers) and Apalachee Road, Morgan Co., on 24 January (Mirko Basen, James Neves). A tame bird was found at Cooper Creek Park, Columbus, on 10 February (Walt Chambers) where it seems to have taken up residence.

SNOW GOOSE - The only reports of multiple birds were 2 at GI on 5 December (Nathan Farnau) and 2 at Mashburn Road, Gordon Co., on 28 December (Josh Spence). Long-staying birds were noted in Albany, Dougherty Co., from 10 December - 8 February (m. ob.) and the continuing blue phase bird in Walton Co. and Morgan Co. throughout. Otherwise, singles were noted from PCR on 28 December (Josh Spence), OM on 14-15 January (Kyle Fritz, Andrew Theus), Panola Mountain SP, Rockdale Co. on 28 January (m. ob.), Waycross, Ware Co., on 17 February (Sheila Willis) and Glennville, Tattnall Co., on 20 February (Gene Wilkinson).

ROSS'S GOOSE - One was seen on Braswell Church Road, Walton Co., on 22-24 January (ph., Jim Hanna, m. ob., GCRC 2012-22). Two were at Mashburn Road, Gordon Co., on 29 January (ph., Joel McNeal, GCRC 2012-04) and joined by a third bird on 4-5 February (m. ob.).



Ross's Goose, Walton Co., 24 January, by Mark McShane

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK - The high count for the period was of 11 on Oxbow Lake, Clarke Co., on 3 January (Richard Hall, Mitchell Jarrett, James Neves).

CINNAMON TEAL - The male found in November was seen sporadically at the Treatment Wetlands, CCWA, through December and January, and was last reported on 10 February (Carol Lambert, m. ob., GCRC 2012-17).

Cinnamon Teal, Clayton Co., 21 December, by Carol Lambert



CANVASBACK - The best count for the period was of 28 at MBBP on 7 January (Lois Stacey, Anne Waters).

GREATER SCAUP - Inland, 3 were at WPD on 1 December (Walt Chambers) and 3 were at Lake Lanier on 9 January (Jim Flynn). Singles were reported from Brantley Co. on 11 December (Gene Keferl), the Macon and Dalton CBCs on 17 December, the Carter's Lake CBC on 29 December, and Murray Co. on 5 January (Josh Spence).

SCAUP RAFTS- The largest rafts reported from the coast were 40,000 from TI on 25 December (James Neves), with 30,000 still there on 14 January (Bill Blakeslee, Paul Sykes), and 13,400 from JI on 5 December (Nathan Farnau).

SURF SCOTER - The high count for this period was 60 from CINS on 17 December (Krista Gridley).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - The high count for this period was 32 from TI on 25 December (James Neves).

BLACK SCOTER - An estimated 8200 were off JI on 5 December (Nathan Farnau).

BUFFLEHEAD - A good inland count of 114 was made at CCWA on 1 January (m. ob.)

COMMON GOLDENEYE - Three were at Fort Yargo SP, Barrow Co., on 10

December (Rachel Cass) and 3 were at DeKalb Reservoir, Gwinnett Co., on 30 December (Jeff Sewell). Singles were reported from Skidaway Island, Chatham Co., on 26 December - 14 January (m. ob.), Lake Acworth, Cobb Co., on 8 January (m. ob.), CCWA on 18-27 January (Carol Lambert), and WPD on 28 January (Mark McShane, Max Medley).

COMMON MERGANSER - One was found on private property in Bartow Co. on 16 December (Josh Spence, GCRC 2012-01).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - A good count of 1000 was made from Sapelo Island on 1 January (Lois Stacey).

NORTHERN BOBWHITE - A sad reflection of the species' continuing statewide decline, the statewide CBC total was just 10, a new low and well below the average from the previous 5 years of 65.

RED-THROATED LOON - Inland, individuals were seen at Lake Seminole on 4 January (Ken Blankenship, Rebecca Byrd) and Lake Lanier from 7 January - 12 February (Mark McShane).

COMMON LOON - An impressive 750 were 12 miles (estimated) offshore of Sapelo and Blackbeard Islands on 25 January, representing a new high count for Georgia offshore waters (Tim Keyes).

HORNED GREBE - A good count of 136 was reported from Morrah's Boat Ramp, Elbert Co., on 12 February (Jim Flynn).

RED-NECKED GREBE - One was seen from the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, Towns Co., on 11 December (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), and one was at Lake Seminole, Decatur Co., on 4 January (Ken Blankenship, Rebecca Byrd).

EARED GREBE - One was found in Dalton Co. on 15 December (Josh Spence), and 2 were on the Plant Scherer Ash Pond, Monroe Co., on 6 January (Ken Blankenship, Rebecca Byrd).

MANX SHEARWATER - An excellent year for this rare winter visitor. A new state high count of 89 was recorded on the GOS pelagic trip in Chatham Co. offshore waters on 15 January (ph., m. ob., pending, GCRC 2012-25A, B), including a single flock of 76 birds.



**Manx Shearwaters,
Chatham Co., 15
January, by Dan Vickers**

WOOD STORK -
Inland reports of 10

were observed in Bulloch Co. on 1 December (Cameron Cox), 5 at BUENWR

on 3 December (Ted Theus), 1 at Reed Bingham SP, Worth Co., on 4 December (Faith Jones), 2 at Evans Co. Public Fishing Area on 9 December (Sandy Beasley, Brenda Brannen), and 4 in Grady Co. on 29 February (Cyrus Moqtaderi, Jennifer Wilcox).

NORTHERN GANNET - An estimated 1000 birds were seen offshore between Doboy and Sapelo Sound on 6 January (Tim Keyes).

GREAT CORMORANT - The wintering bird, present for its fourth winter at LWFG, was seen sporadically throughout the period (m. ob., GCRC 2011-40).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - This species continues to be reported in increasing numbers (and with increasing frequency) in the state. The highest count from the coast was an impressive 191 recorded on the SCI CBC on 17 December. Outside of the Coastal Plain, 51 were seen at WPD on 1 December, with 3 remaining until 23 December (Walt Chambers), 21 were on Lake Carroll, Carroll Co., on 19 December (Stanley Tate), 7 were at Lake Juliette, Monroe Co., on 24 January (Jeff Durden), 15 were at Lake Lanier, Hall Co., on 10 February (Lori Davilla) and 19 flew over Lake Kedron, Fayette Co., on 19 February (David Cree).

BROWN PELICAN - Two were found inland on the Lake Blackshear CBC, Sumter Co., on 14 December (Jerry Amerson), and single birds were recorded on the same lake in Lee Co. on 3 February (Tod Lanier, Wayne Schaffner), and in Crisp Co. on 28 February (Deck Stapleton).

AMERICAN BITTERN - Inland, birds were reported from PSNP on 10 December (m. ob.) and BUENWR on 15 December (Mason and Mitchell Jarrett). On the coast, one was recorded from Chatham Co. on 15 December (Georgann Schmalz), one was on Youman's Pond, Liberty Co., on 16 December (Gene Keferl), and 1-2 birds were recorded multiple times at Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., and at AWMA (m. ob.).

GREAT EGRET - Reflecting the increasing number wintering in the Atlanta area, 18 were counted at CCWA on 1 January (Carol Lambert, m. ob.).

REDDISH EGRET - One was at GI on 15 December (Krista Gridley), and one was on LSSI during the MWSS on 12 January (m. ob.).

CATTLE EGRET - Rare in the winter, one was at Glennville WTF, Tattnall Co., on 21 January (Ken Blankenship, Rebecca Byrd, Gene Wilkinson), one was in Battery Park, Chatham Co., on 14 January (Tom Purucker), and 15 were at the Cobb owl fields, Sumter Co., on 7 February (Roy Brown).

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON - One seen at the Rollins Ranch, Bartow Co., on 12 December was a rare winter record for the Ridge and Valley (Josh Spence).

WHITE IBIS - Nine were at PSNP on 29 January, an unusually high winter count for the area (Lois Stacey).

ROSEATE SPOONBILL - Only reported from JI, where several reports of up to 3 birds were received (m. ob.).

TURKEY VULTURE - A large flock of at least 800 birds was seen from Culloden, Monroe Co., on 7 December (Nathan Klaus).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE - One seen near Brunswick, Glynn Co., on 26 February (Bill Laws) constitutes a new early arrival date for the state.

BALD EAGLE - A new statewide CBC high count of 111 birds was recorded.

RED-TAILED HAWK - Single Krider's-type hawks were reported from Paradise Public Fishing Area, Berrien Co., on 12 February (Wayne Schaffner) and northwest Atlanta on 25 February (Liz Horsey).

GOLDEN EAGLE - One was seen migrating north near Red Top Mountain SP, Bartow Co., on 14 February (Joel McNeal).

PEREGRINE FALCON - Away from the coast, one flew over MBBP on 10 December (ph., Willie Malpass, Lois Stacey), and one was seen in Stewart Co. on 7 January (Kyle Fritz). The resident pair in Buckhead, Fulton Co., was seen throughout the period (Carl Crowley).

SANDHILL CRANE - Several reports were received of large flocks moving south in early December, including 1000 at Lake Allatoona, Cherokee Co., on 2 December (Johnnie Greene), with another large southbound push in early January in response to a cold snap. The mild winter resulted in a large northbound movement of cranes in the last week of January, including 1500 over Floyd Co. (Marion Dobbs).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER - A total of 8913 recorded on the MWSS on 12 January represents a new state high count. A statewide CBC total of 5602 more than doubled the previous high count, and included a single-site count of 3908 on SCI on 17 December.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER - A new state high count of 17,000 was recorded on the MWSS on 12 January, including an amazing 8631 on CINS.

KILLDEER - A pair hatched 4 young on 2 December in Effingham Co. (Tim Miller). An excellent total of 730 were recorded on the Carter's Lake CBC on 29 December.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER - A total of 659 were tallied on the MWSS on 12 January. A bird observed on TI on 2 dates in late February (Diana Churchill, Roy Brown) was banded as a chick in Maryland in 2003, and was previously seen on Cedar Key, Florida, in November 2011 (Tim Keyes).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER - Inland reports were received from the CRNRA (m.

ob.), AP on 10 December and 7 January (Jim Flynn), Dyar Pasture, Greene Co., on 8 January (Jim Hanna), and the Georgia Power Dam, Dougherty Co., on 8 February (Tod Lanier, Wayne Schaffner).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW - Ten were seen on the MWSS on 12 January, and 5 were seen on LSSI on 17 February (m. ob.).

MARbled GODWIT - A total of 306 were seen on the MWSS on 12 January, including 205 on Little Egg Island Bar.

LEAST SANDPIPER - A total of 2500 were tallied at AIC on the MWSS on 12 January.

PURPLE SANDPIPER - The high count for the period was 20 on TI on 26 February (Frances and Roy Brown, Melissa Martin).

DUNLIN - Inland, 6 were still at MBBP on 10 December, with 2 remaining until 28 February (m. ob.), and one was at the Evans Co. Public Fishing Area on 9 December (Sandy Beasley, Brenda Brannen). A new state high count of 45,436 was recorded on MWSS on 12 January, including single-site counts of 11,715 on SCI and 11,460 on CINS.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER - A new state high count of 3573 was recorded on the MWSS on 12 January, including 2000 from AIC (Gene Keferl).

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER - One was at Cherokee Recreation Area, Lincoln Co., on 4 December (Jim Flynn, Earl Horn), and 11 were at BUENWR on 12 December (Eric Soehren, John Trent).

RED PHALAROPE - A total of 11 were seen on a Doboy to Sapelo Sound pelagic trip on 6 January (Tim Keyes). An excellent total of 107 were recorded on the GOS pelagic to Chatham Co. offshore waters on 15 January (m. ob.). A total of 16 were seen in Georgia waters on 2 February (Gene Keferl), and 12 were seen from shore on the SCI CBC on 17 December.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE - A dead first winter specimen was found on Hooper Reservoir, Henry Co., on 1 December (Jeff Sewell, pending, GCRC 2012-35).

BONAPARTE'S GULL - A total of 495, including one flock of 235, was seen on the GOS pelagic trip in Chatham Co. offshore waters on 15 January (m. ob.).

BLACK-HEADED GULL - An adult bird was located at the Frank W. Spencer Boat Ramp, Chatham Co., on 12 February (Maureen Leong-Kee, Nicholas Martens, GCRC 2012-05), where it stayed to the end of the period. This was the fifth state record.



Black-headed Gull, Chatham Co., 25 February, by Roy Brown

RING-BILLED GULL - An impressive inland count of 8500 was recorded from Lake Lanier on 9 January (Nathan Farnau).

FORSTER'S TERN - Five seen at Sweetwater Creek SP on 4 February were a noteworthy record for the Piedmont (Heather Davis, Evan Pitman).

SANDWICH TERN - One was seen on SCI on 14 December, the only one reported in the period (Charlie Muise).

BLACK SKIMMER - A large flock of 2200 was noted at GI on 5 December (Nathan Farnau).

POMARINE JAEGER - One was seen offshore of Brunswick on 15 December (Tim Keyes).

PARASITIC JAEGER - Single birds were positively identified in offshore waters on 6 January (Tim Keyes) and 24 February (Bill Lotz).

RAZORBILL - One was seen offshore of Brunswick on 4 January (Tim Keyes). An impressive 43 were seen on the GOS winter meeting pelagic trip in Chatham Co. offshore waters on 15 January (ph., m. ob.), but eclipsed by 72 seen 19.3 km offshore of Sapelo and Blackbeard Island on 25 January (Tim Keyes).

Razorbills, Chatham Co., 15 January, by Dan Vickers

WHITE-WINGED DOVE - One was found on the CINS CBC on 17 December, and another frequented a Savannah backyard from 16 January until at least 26 February (Steve Wagner, m. ob.).

COMMON GROUND-DOVE - One was found by observers chasing the Green-tailed Towhee on Churchwell Road, Greene Co., on 20 December, and up to 2 birds were reported there until at least 2 January (m. ob.).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL - Single birds were banded in Lamar Co. on 2 and 4 December (ph., Charlie Muise, Krista Gridley, Patty McLean, GCRC 2012-20 and 21).

EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL - One was seen on the SCI CBC on 17 December.

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD - A banded bird (presumably a returning



individual) was seen at a private residence on JI from mid-October 2011, and was last seen on 21 January (*fide* RBA, GCRC 2011-23).

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD - One was banded on SSI on 15 November and remained until at least 25 February (m. ob.).



Black-chinned Hummingbird, Glynn Co., 25 February, by Roy Brown

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER - An excellent total of 45 was recorded on the Piedmont-Rum Creek CBC on 19 December.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER - November's bird was re-found at AWMA on 7 December (Steve Wagner). It was last seen alive on 18 December (Patty McLean) and was unfortunately found dead the next day (Bob Churi).

HORNED LARK - A flock of 22 was seen in Glennville, Tattnall Co., on 17 January, an excellent count for the Lower Coastal Plain (Gene Wilkinson).

PURPLE MARTIN - First reported from Albany on 28 January (Larry Gridley). The first birds to arrive at the nesting gourds in Sandy Creek Park, Clarke Co., appeared on 19 February, beating the previous county early date by 2 weeks (*fide* Richard Hall).

TREE SWALLOW - The first report for the Piedmont was a bird at the Newman Wetlands Center, CCWA, on 27 January (Tom Laubenthal). Six counted at PCR on 12 February set a new early date for the species in the Ridge and Valley (Ken Blankenship, Nathan Farnau, Joel McNeal).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW - Three were at CSU on 3 January (David Hedeem, Meg Walker), and one was on Shamrock Reservoir, CCWA, on 28 January (m. ob.). The earliest reported probable migrant was a bird at Lake Chapman, Clarke Co., on 25 February (m. ob.).

BARN SWALLOW - One was at PSNP on 2 and 10 December (m. ob.).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - Aside from one bird in Dawson Forest on 2 January (Thomas Nall), all other reports came from the Blue Ridge, with the highest single-site count of 5 from Glade Road, Rabun Co., on 31 January (Rebecca Byrd).

MARSH WREN - Outside of the Coastal Plain, the only report was 2 birds from the CCWA on 1 January (Bill Lotz).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER - Just a handful of records came from the upper Piedmont this winter with a maximum of 2 recorded at the CRNRA on 14 December (Jeff Sewell).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD - A new statewide CBC total of 3528 was recorded.

AMERICAN PIPIT - A good total of 215 was recorded in Glennville, Tattnell Co., on 17 February (Pete Moore, Gene Wilkinson).

CEDAR WAXWING - Large flocks of an estimated 1500 birds were seen on the UGA Campus, Clarke Co., on 7 February (Mirko Basen) and the Augusta Golf Course on 28 February (John Fitzpatrick).

SNOW BUNTING - To the delight of the attendees of the GOS winter meeting, one was found on TI North Beach on 11 January and remained until at least 29 January (ph., Diana Churchill, m. ob., pending, GCRC 2012-24).



Snow Bunting, Chatham Co., 13 January, by Richard Hall

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH - Three were seen together at the Glennville WTF, Tattnell Co., on 23 December (Pete Moore, Gene Wilkinson) with 2 there on 21 January (m. ob.). One was at Flat Creek Public Fishing Area, Houston Co., on 15 January (Jim Flynn). One observed at Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve, DeKalb Co., on 15-18 February was the first winter record of this species in the Piedmont

(ph., Nathan Farnau, Jeff Madsen).

TENNESSEE WARBLER - One was found freshly dead in Peachtree Place, Atlanta, on 2 December (Stephen Barlow).

NASHVILLE WARBLER - One was visiting an oriole feeder on Talahi Island, Chatman Co., on 12 February until at least 19 February (ph., *fide* Diana Churchill).

WILSON'S WARBLER - One continued at Ocmulgee National Monument, Bibb Co., on 1 December (James Fleullan). Another was seen in Chehaw Park, Lee Co., on 15 January (ph., Don Freeman).

YELLOW-BREADED CHAT - One was seen in Liberty Co. on 2 December (Nicole Janke).

GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE - The second state record was found on Churchwell Road, Greene Co., during the Lake Oconee CBC on 20 December (Rachel Cass, Steve Holzman, Joel McNeal, GCRC 2011-42A,B) and was last reported on 6 January.

**Green-tailed Towhee, Greene Co., 1 January,
by Linda Liu**



CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - An excellent

inland find, one was seen in an Oconee Co. backyard on 24 December (ph., John Whigham).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW - Rare in winter in the Piedmont, one at the Athens-Clarke Co. Landfill on 19 December was a good find (Richard Hall, James Neves). In the Coastal Plain, a high count of 4 was reported from Quitman Farm, Brooks Co., on 8 January (Deborah Grimes).

HENSLOW'S SPARROW - Only recorded in the Lower Coastal Plain, the highest count for the period was 10 at the Wade Tract of Tall Timbers Research Station, Thomas Co., on 19 January (Elliot Schunke).

LE CONTE'S SPARROW - This was an above-average season for this scarce wintering species. In the northern part of the state, one was banded at Joe Kurz WMA, Meriwether Co., on 9 December (Charlie Muise), and 4 were found on the Floyd Co. CBC on 30 December (Sterling Blanchard, Chuck Saleeby). In the Coastal Plain, the high count was 5 from MSS on 6 January (Ken Blankenship, Rebecca Byrd). Up to 4 were recorded from BUENWR and Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., throughout the period (m. ob.), 2 were at Quitman Farm, Brooks Co., on 28 December (Deborah Grimes) and one was at the Solomon Tract of Savannah NWR, Chatham Co., on 16 January (David Hedeem, Meg Walker).

SALTMARSH SPARROWS - Over 10-11 January, 9 Nelson's, 10 Saltmarsh, and 83 Seaside Sparrows were trapped on the JI Causeway (Tim Keyes, Charlie Muise).

FOX SPARROW - A new statewide CBC high total of 203 was reported, including 55 on the Chattahoochee National Forest CBC on 18 December. An excellent single-site count of 52 came from Beaverdam WMA, Laurens and Wilkinson Co., on 14 January (Cliff Gibbons). LINCOLN'S SPARROW - Single birds were found on the Floyd Co. CBC on 30 December, in Bulloch Co. on 24 January (Brenda Brannen), and in Piedmont Park, Fulton Co., on 27 February (ph., Patrick Addy, m. ob.).

DARK-EYED JUNCO X WHITE-THROATED SPARROW - A hybrid was photographed in Cherokee Co. on 4 February (Vicki DeLoach).

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK - A rare sighting in winter, a female was observed in COP on 1 February (Nathan Farnau).

INDIGO BUNTING - An unseasonal bird was reported from the Johnson Ferry Unit of CRNRA on 7 January (Bruce Dralle).

PAINTED BUNTING - Single birds were recorded from backyard feeders in Chatham Co. on 15 December - 12 January (Sandy Beasley), Dougherty Co. on 11 February (Larry Gridley), and McIntosh Co. on 18 February (John and Nancy Crosby), and 2 were in Glenville, Tattnall Co., throughout the period (Gene Wilkinson).

DICKCISSEL - One was near MSS on 1 January (ph., Nathan Farnau, Joel McNeal) and one was at Harris Neck NWR, McIntosh Co., on 14-16 January (Joel McNeal, m. ob.).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD - A female was seen in a huge blackbird flock in Lee Co. on 5 February (Jim Flynn).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - The highest count reported was 400 during the Piedmont-Rum Creek CBC on 19 December.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD - Reported from Gordon, Bartow, Walton, Greene, Henry, Muscogee and Laurens Co., the highest count was of 25 on the BCL on 12 February (Ken Blankenship, Nathan Farnau, Joel McNeal).

COMMON GRACKLE - A huge flock of an estimated 32,000 birds was seen at CCWA on 1 January (Patrick Brisse, Hugh Garrett).

PURPLE FINCH - Many fewer reports, and much lower numbers, were recorded this winter than in the previous winter. The southernmost report was that of a single bird in Bulloch Co. on 12 December (Brenda Brannen).

PINE SISKIN – Similar to Purple Finch sightings, this species was also reported in much lower numbers than the previous winter, with records from as far south as Turner Co. on 12 February (Cindy Barnard).

Richard Hall, *Odum School of Ecology, 140 E. Green Street, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602*

rjhall@uga.edu