

Wings Over Georgia

A Newsletter about Birds and Butterflies for the Members of
The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

Volume 1

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Issue 3

Happy New Year! Hope that 2008 will be a wonderful year for each of you - a year full of dreams fulfilled. Hope you and your families will be healthy and happy.

Sometimes winter can be very dreary. Birds add color and movement to your winter garden, and they provide life in a "dead" landscape. To insure that you have birds in your garden this winter, be sure to keep birdbaths clean and ice-free and feeding stations full of food.

Don't forget the Great Backyard Bird Count on February 15-18. It's easy to participate. All you have to do to count is spend at least 15 minutes a day watching and counting birds. You may submit your data on-line. For information, go to www.audubon.org/gbbc/index.shtml.

Happy Birding!

Suzanne

Suzanne Wheeler

GCG Birds and Butterflies Chairman

2007 - 2009

wheeler@hartcom.net

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Here are the most frequently reported birds from 2007, according to the Great Backyard Bird Count-----

Northern cardinal

American goldfinch

Dark-eyed junco

House finch

Mourning dove

Tufted titmouse

Blue jay

Downy woodpecker

American crow

House sparrow

How do these results compare with what you see in your yard?

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The Audubon website reports that the northern cardinal was the most frequently spotted bird in last year's Great Backyard Bird Count.

What should I do with my old carcass?

No, I'm not talking about your tired old body. What I have reference to here is the old carcass of your chicken or turkey. In this day of dropping by the store and buying food that is already prepared, many of us buy, from time to time, rotisserie chickens and bring them home for a quick meal.

In the latest edition of *Bird Watchers Digest*, (January/February '08), Edward Kanze writes that he got the idea of putting out chicken carcasses for the birds from his friend. The friend mentioned that he had attracted some black-backed woodpeckers to his Adirondack Mountain home by putting out chicken and turkey carcasses.

Mr. Kanze made a simple platform feeder, cooked a chicken, removed most of the meat from the bones, and put the giblets and remains outside on the feeder. It wasn't long before the birds started to come. Feeders on the carcass included jays, chickadees, hairy and downy woodpeckers, red-breasted nuthatches, and a barred owl. The carcass also attracted an ermine and a bob cat.

Of course, Mr. Kanze lives in up-state New York. In our Georgia yards we may attract entirely different customers. The next time I buy a rotisserie chicken, I'm going to put the carcass out and take my seat by the window. I'll let you know what happens. If any of you try it, let me know, and I'll put the results in the next issue of **Wings Over Georgia**.



Gray jays enjoying Mr. Kanze's old carcass

THESE BIRDS ARE ALL MIXED UP!!!!

Below are the names of some birds commonly found in Georgia.

Can you unscramble the letters and correctly identify the birds?

Answers are on the last page - no peeking!

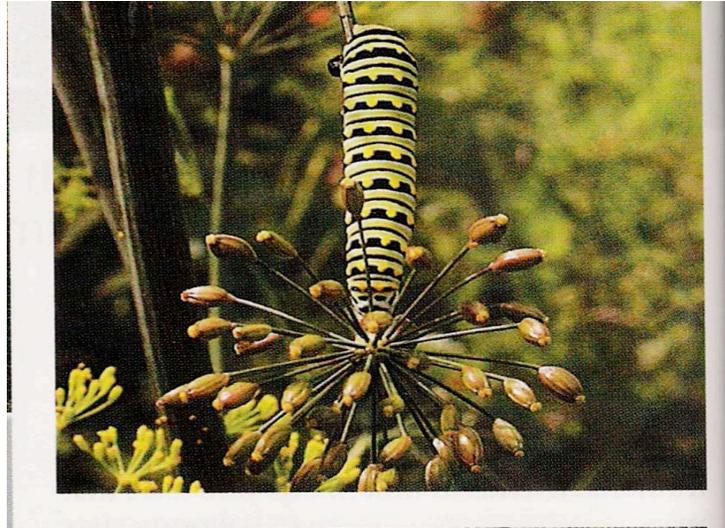
1. Thorrenn birdckoming
2. Owbrn herratsh
3. Leridelk
4. Caranni brino
5. Seohu nchif
6. Fnhciglod

HERE COME THE NURSERY CATALOGS

Looking at all of the seed catalogs has not been as much fun this year as it usually is. I keep remembering that we are under a water ban and are in the middle of a severe drought. Watering new plants and keeping seed beds moist until the seeds germinate and the little plants have a chance to survive will be no easy task. However, I do have my water barrels. They are the way I am able to keep my lemon trees alive in my greenhouse. (I'm just bragging when I report that I have loads of tiny lemons on the two trees.) Sorry that I got off track.

Anyway, when you are looking for things to plant in those catalogs, remember to plant many nectar plants for the butterflies. You should also plant some host

plants for the butterfly caterpillars. May I suggest that you plant fennel, parsley, and dill. Don't be alarmed when you see caterpillars on the plants - you'll soon have beautiful butterflies. Don't forget to plant milkweed to attract monarch butterflies. The adults will lay eggs on the milkweed, the caterpillars will eat the milkweed leaves, and the adults will enjoy the nectar of the flowers.



Swallowtail caterpillar feeding on dill

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About one-third of a female cardinal's diet consists of common garden pests such as aphids, grasshoppers, scale insects, snails, and slugs. She also feeds on fruits and seeds.

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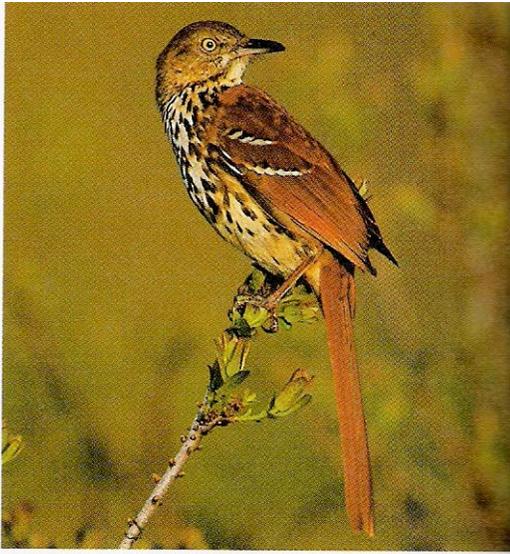
Cooper's hawks and sharp-shinned hawks are songbird specialists that can be attracted to the bird activity at your feeders. Their tactic is a quick surprise attack, scattering the feeder visitors and perhaps catching a slow, sick, or unwary individual. As unpleasant as it may seem, it is perfectly natural and is an important aspect of nature's balance.

Solution to the puzzle of the mixed up birds

1. Northern mockingbird



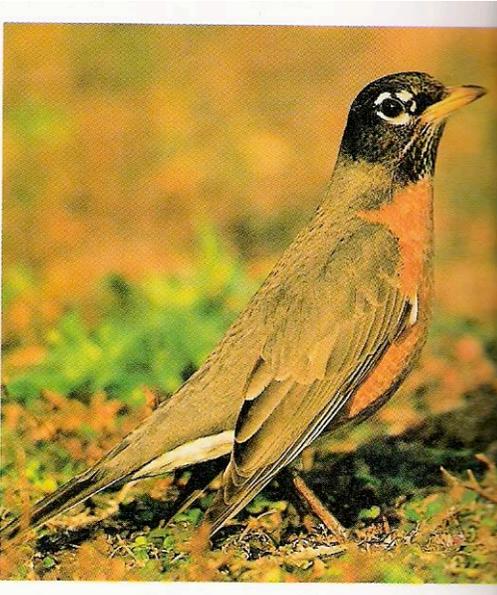
2. Brown thrasher



3. Killdeer



4. American robin



5. House finch



6. Goldfinch

