

# Georgia Coastal Birding

## Species List | with Naturalist Journeys



**April 8 – 15, 2022**

**With guide Jon Atwood and 8 participants: Carol, David, Herb, Larry, Lauren, Roslyn, Sharon, and Susan**

Compiled by Jon Atwood

HO = Heard Only

LO = Leader Only

I = Introduced Species

Tour Summary: We had such a terrific time on this trip that it's hard to pick specific high points. Close looks at nesting Wood Storks - squabbling egrets in full breeding plumage - Roseate Spoonbills dressed in shocking pink - Glossy Ibis that were really glossy. Dolphins, alligators. Our list of Critters of the Day could go on and on. And, in addition to seeing lots of gorgeous and interesting birds, beautiful and different habitats, and eating scrumptious meals, one of the best parts of the trip was that we all became good friends. I think all of us hope that our paths will cross again in the days to come.

Timing of this trip proved to be a bit off for migration – at least for 2022. Most passerines had not yet arrived in numbers, wintering ducks were pretty much gone, and shorebirds were not in breeding plumage.

### **BIRDS**

#### **DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae**

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* — seen on grassy lawns near Savannah Airport

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors*—most common duck — present on ponds at Harris Neck NWR and on Little St Simon Island (LSS)

Mottled Duck *Anas fulvigula*— 2 pairs seen on LSSI

#### **PHEASANTS, PARTRIDGES, AND ALLIES: Phasianidae**

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*— LO, Harris NWR scouting

#### **PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae**

Rock Pigeon (I) *Columba livia* — Savannah vicinity

Eurasian Collared-Dove (I) *Streptopelia decaocto* — Savannah vicinity, near Hyatt

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina*— small numbers seen while driving roads at LSSI

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*— common

#### **CUCKOOS: Cuculidae**

Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*— LO, flyby while driving roads on LSSI

**NIGHTJARS: Caprimulgidae**

Chuck-will's-widow *Antristomus carolinensis* – HO, near garden on LSSI

**SWIFTS Apodidae**

Chimney Swift *Chaetura pelagica*— small numbers mixed in flocks of Tree and Barn swallows over various saltmarsh areas, also seen in downtown Savannah

**HUMMINGBIRDS Trochilidae**

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* — LSSI feeders, small numbers

**RAILS, COOTS, AND ALLIES Rallidae**

Clapper Rail *Rallus crepitans*— many heard in marshes near LSSI Lodge; a few were successfully seen by most members of the group

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*— Harris NWR and LSSI. Some in family groups with half-grown juveniles

American Coot *Fulica americana* — LSSI, group of about 20

**STILTS AND AVOCETS Recurvirostridae**

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*— approx. 20 seen at Harris Neck NWR and LSSI

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*—2 on LSSI

**OYSTERCATCHERS Haematopodidae**

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*— Gould's Inlet and beach on LSSI, about 10 birds total. Additional birds seen at distance while on Dolphin Boat cruise off of Savannah

**PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae**

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* — moderate numbers at Gould's Inlet and on LSSI. Most still in non-breeding plumage

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia*— 2 individuals on beach at LSSI

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*— small numbers at Gould's Inlet

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus*— 2 individuals on beach at LSSI, including 1 bird banded

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*— LSSI, small numbers

**SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae**

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*— LSSI, small numbers

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*—Gould's Inlet, Additional birds seen at distance while on Dolphin Boat cruise off of Savannah

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*— a couple of birds on beach at LSSI, maybe 20 seen at distance while on Dolphin Boat cruise off of Savannah

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*— 1 individual, non-breeding plumage, at Gould's Inlet

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*— small numbers (<10) at LSSI; all in non-breeding plumage

Sanderling *Calidris alba*— approx. 20 seen on beaches at Gould's Inlet and LSSI; all in non-breeding plumage

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*— small numbers (<10) on LSSI; all in non-breeding plumage

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*—dominant peep at Gould's Inlet and LSSI, probably 200 individuals

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*—about 30 birds at LSSI

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus*—approximately 50 at LSSI, smaller numbers at Gould's Inlet

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*— a couple of birds seen flying across channel at LSSI, 1 bird at Gould's Inlet

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria*— 1 at Harris Neck NWR

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*— most common mid-sized shorebird, at both Gould's Inlet and LSSI

Willet *Tringa semipalmata*— about 25 total seen, mostly at Gould's Inlet and various locations on LSSI

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*— about 10 total seen, mostly at Gould's Inlet and various locations on LSSI

### **GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae**

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla*— common

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*— at docks in Savannah, small numbers of immature birds

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*— 1 seen near Savannah Wharf

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* — LO -1 3<sup>rd</sup>-year bird seen briefly at Gould's Inlet

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*— LO, beach at LSSI

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri*— common

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*— common; 100's of individuals seen at Gould's Inlet and on beach at LSSI

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*— 1 individual seen on beach at LSSI

Least Tern *Sternula antillarum* — 1 individual seen over ocean from beach at LSSI

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger*— common, Gould's Inlet and LSSI

### **STORKS: Ciconiidae**

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana*— common, great looks at LSSI, also at Harris Neck NWR

### **ANHINGAS: Anhingidae**

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*— good looks at Harris Neck NWR, also from numerous blinds at LSSI

### **CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae—**

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*— about 25 individuals at Gould's Inlet

### **PELICANS: Pelecanidae**

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*— regularly seen at LSSI, including both feeding groups and birds soaring overhead

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis*—flock of about 30 at Gould's Inlet, also seen repeatedly from beach at LSSI

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* about 10 1<sup>st</sup> year birds flying over ocean from beach at LSSI

### **HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae**

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*— Harris Neck NWR; surprisingly, the most uncommon heron on the trip

Great Egret *Ardea alba*— along with the approximately equally-common Snowy Egret, seen regularly at both foraging and nesting sites on LSSI

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*— along with the approximately equally-common Common Egret, seen regularly at both foraging and nesting sites on LSSI  
Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea*— small numbers (ca. 20 individuals) seen on LSSI, Harris Neck NWR, Savannah wharf. About half of these were white first-year birds  
Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor*— probably about as common as Snowy Egrets, but seen more typically as individuals rather than small groups  
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*— small numbers (<10) at LSSI  
Green Heron *Butorides virescens*— individuals, probably about 10 total, seen at LSSI and Harris Neck NWR  
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*— 2, 1 ad and 1 immature, on LSSI

#### **IBIS AND SPOONBILLS: Threskiornithidae**

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus*— seen regularly, usually in small numbers (<10). A single flock at Harris Neck NWR, flying overhead, was pretty spectacular. A carcass found on LSSI apparently was killed and eaten by a Great Horned Owl (feather nearby)  
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*— regularly seen at Harris Neck NWR and at various ponds on LSSI  
Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja*— common, and spectacular, on LSSI; 2 individuals at Harris Neck NWR

#### **NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae**

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus*— abundant – probably more than Turkey Vultures, but both were constantly present  
Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* -- abundant – probably fewer than Black Vultures, but both were constantly present

#### **OSPREY: Pandionidae**

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* – several seen near hotel on St Simons Island

#### **HAWKS, KITES AND EAGLES: Accipitridae**

Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus* – a couple of sightings (same bird?) on LSSI  
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* – several seen at various locations on LSSI  
Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus* – LO, seen flying across interstate between Savannah and St Marys  
Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* – not common, only 2 or 3 individuals seen on entire trip

#### **KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae**

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* – 1 at Harris Neck NWR

#### **WOODPECKERS: Picidae**

Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* – 2 staked out birds at LSSI, where species is rare  
Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus* – regularly seen in all forested habitats  
Downy Woodpecker *Dryobates pubescens* – small numbers in forested areas on LSSI and St Simons Island  
Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus* – heard more than seen, but several individuals seen flying through different forested areas on LSSI

#### **FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae**

Merlin *Falco columbarius* – single individual seen on beach at LSSI, probably chasing shorebirds

**TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae**

Eastern Wood-Pewee *Contopus virens* – Harris Neck NWR; single bird (seen and heard)

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus* – regularly heard in all wooded areas, and occasionally seen high in canopy

**VIREOS: Vireonidae**

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* – common in all wooded areas, distinctive song a common background sound

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* – HO, LSSI

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* – HO, LO, forested area near Savannah NWR

**CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae**

Blue Jay *Cyanocitta cristata* – more common in residential areas than true forest

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos* – less common, or at least less commonly identified, than Fish Crows

Fish Crow *Corvus ossifragus* – seen daily

**TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae**

Carolina Chickadee *Poecile carolinensis* – small numbers seen in areas on St Simon Island, as well as on LSSI

Tufted Titmouse *Baeolophus bicolor* -- small numbers seen in areas on St Simon Island, as well as on LSSI

**SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: HIRUNDINIDAE**

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* – large flocks (several hundred) over saltmarsh on a couple of days

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* – mixed in with Tree Swallows over saltmarsh on a couple of days; LSSI

**KINGLETS: Regulidae**

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* – LSSI, about 5 individuals

**GNATCATCHERS: Polioptilidae**

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea* – good numbers, 15-20 individuals total, seen at Harris Neck NWR and on LSSI

**WRENS: Troglodytidae**

Sedge Wren *Cistothorus platensis* – HO, 1 singing bird identified by LSSI lodge naturalist

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris* - fairly common in saltmarsh on LSSI, although not particularly responsive to playbacks or spishing

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus* – common, seen (or heard) everywhere we birded in woody vegetation

**STARLINGS: Sturnidae**

European Starling (I) *Sturnus vulgaris* – Savannah vicinity

### **MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: MIMIDAE**

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* – seen in a number of places on LSSI, although several of us were surprised that they weren't more common

Brown Thrasher *Toxostoma rufum* – about 6 seen in residential areas during trip

Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos* – fairly common in both natural and residential areas

### **THRUSHES: Turdidae**

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis*

American Robin *Turdus migratorius* – residential areas, parks in Savannah

### **OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae**

House Sparrow (l) *Passer domesticus* – Savannah vicinity

### **FINCHES: Fringillidae**

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* – at feeders on LSSI

### **NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae**

Seaside Sparrow *Ammospiza maritimus* – at LSSI, using playback from boat; probably very common, but we had hard times getting good looks

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* 2 individuals seen in scrubby area while walking between truck and blind

Swamp Sparrow *Melospiza georgiana* -- 1 individual seen in scrubby area while walking between truck and blind

Eastern Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* – scrubby areas on LSSI

### **NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae**

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* – several individuals seen in large trees near LSSI Lodge; according to naturalists, these are newly arrived

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* – common in all marsh areas

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* – abundant at LSSI feeders

Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula* – less common than Boat-billed Grackles

Boat-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus major* — abundant in all wetland/marsh areas

### **NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae**

Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla* – watched a single individual catch a small fish directly below a viewing blind on LSSI

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* – a couple of individuals seen on LSSI

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* – several individuals heard on LSSI; surprising that there weren't more

Hooded Warbler *Setophaga citrina* – 1 male seen briefly in a small group of migrant warblers on LSSI

Northern Parula *Setophaga americana* – by far the most abundant warbler, probably dozens heard/seen almost every day; some of these are local breeders, others probably heading further north

Palm Warbler *Setophaga palmarum* LO, 3 individuals seen in scrubby areawhile walking between truck and blind

Pine Warbler *Setophaga pinus* – LO; just 1 or 2 heard/seen on LSSI

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronate* – common, more so near airport hotel at Savannah than elsewhere

Yellow-throated Warbler *Setophaga dominica* – common at Harris Neck NWR and LSSI  
Prairie Warbler *Setophaga discolor* - 1 male in a small group of migrant warblers on LSSI

### **CARDINALS, GROSBILLS, AND ALLIES: Cardinalidae**

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* – 1 male seen on LSSI

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis* - common

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* – 3 birds (2 males, 1 female) at millet feeders on LSSI

### **eBird checklists:**

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106556809> (Savannah NWR Visitor's Center, 8 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106666194> (Harris Neck NWR, Woody Pond, 9 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106678772> (Lighthouse, Saint Simons Island, 10 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106694073> (Gould's Inlet, Saint Simons Island, 10 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106698102> (Jekyll Island State Park, Jekyll Island, 10 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106735306> (Dolphin tour, Brunswick, 10 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106775630> (Lighthouse, Saint Simons Island, 11 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106818494> (Little St Simons Island, 12 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106864687> (Little St Simons Island, Norms Pond, 12 April 2022)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S106871337> (Little St Simons Island, Goose Pond, 12 April 2022)

### **MAMMALS**

Nine-banded Armadillo *Dasypus novemcinctus* – about 3 seen during trip, mostly on LSSI

Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus*

Eastern Gray Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*

Eastern Fox Squirrel *Sciurus niger*

Common Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* – good looks at about 15 individuals from Dolphin Cruise boat

Wild Boar *Sus scrofa* – LO; 3 seen from interstate while driving between Savannah and St Marys

### **REPTILES**

American alligator *Alligator mississippiensis*

Northern red-bellied cooter *Pseudemys rubriventris* – LO

Box turtle *Terrapene carolina* -- LO

Green anole *Anolis carolinensis*

Water snake *Nerodia fasciata*

Eastern diamondback rattlesnake *Crotalus adamanteus*

Black racer *Coluber constrictor*