

Important Bird Areas in Georgia

Site Name: Carters Lake

Approx. Size (acres): Lake- 3200 acres

Regulation Pool-1000 acres

Project Land-5000 acres

Nearest City/Town: Chatsworth, Ellijay, Calhoun County: Gilmer/Murray

Latitude: 38 33 00 Longitude: 84 40 14 Approx. Elevation (range: low-high)650-1500 msi

General description of the site (habitat, location, prominent features, etc):

Carters Lake offers a diversity of habitats which contributes to a large number of bird species. Carters Lake impounds about 3200 acres of water on the Coosawatte River and the Reregulation Pool impounds 1000 acres. There are approximately 5000 acres of project land surrounding the lake. These habitats range from early successional, pine stands, mixed hardwoods, upland hardwoods, cove hardwoods, beaver ponds, rivers, streams and lakes. Management activities include supplemental plantings, conversion of 25 acres of tall fescue to native warm season grasses, a 5 acre waterfowl impoundment, nesting boxes, feeders, and various techniques to improve habitats.

Why is this site important for Georgia birds?

Twenty-one point counts have been taken on the project each year since 1996. Approximately 45 species are recorded each year with over half being neotropical migrants. A total of 65 species have been recorded during the survey. Carters Lake serves as an important breeding area for neotropicals as well as resident birds.

A breeding pair of bald eagles has been on the lake since 1995. Each year they have fledged at least one young. The pair remains on the lake year-round and has nested in the same nest each year.

The lake and especially the reregulation pool serve as a resting area with some available food for waterfowl, shorebirds, loons, grebes, and sandhill cranes.

A variety of birds winter on the project including brown creeper, golden-crowned kinglet, red-breasted nuthatch, American woodcock and winter wren.

IBA Criteria (mark all that apply from)

- X 1. Georgia Protected Species
- X 2. Conservation Priority Species
- 3. Rare, Unique or Representative Habitat
 - 4a...500+ waterfowl (winter)/1000+(staging)
 - 4b. 100+ terns/500+ gulls
 - 4c. 500+ shorebirds
 - 4d. 25+ breeding pairs waders/100+ individuals, staging, feeding
 - 4e. Exceptional concentration of migratory land birds
 - 4f. Single-species concentration very high
- 5. Long-term research and/or monitoring

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 Affiliation (Audubon, GOS, TNC, etc.): _____

ORNITHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Species	Season	Average Numbers	Maximum Numbers	Years	Sources
Bald Eagle	B	1 pair		6	3
Yellow-throated Warbler	B	>25 breeding pairs		5	4
Summer Tanager	B	"		5	4
Ruffed Grouse	B	"		5	4
Wood Thrush	B	"		5	4
Field Sparrow	B	"		5	4
Brown Thrasher	B	"		5	4
Worm-eating warbler	B	"		5	4
Hooded Warbler	B	"		5	4
Acadian Flycatcher	B	"		5	4
Northern Parula	B	"		5	4

Season: B=breeding; W=winter; SM=spring migration; FM=fall migration
 Sources: 1=published reports; 2=surveys (CBC; BBS; etc.); 3=personal observations; 4=other

Other Sources (specify): Point Count Surveys

HABITAT

Major habitat types: indicate by % of total area, or with P for Primary (>50%) and S for Secondary (<50%).

5% Conifer forest (white pine/hemlock/other) 50% Deciduous forest(oak./hickory/maple/other)
___ Traprock Ridge ___ Riparian of Floodplain Forest
___ Shrub ___ Field
5% Grassland
___ Non-tidal Freshwater Marsh 1% Swamp
___ Salt Marsh 30% Pond/Lake
2% River/Stream ___ Marine
___ Estuary 7% Other (specify)Southern Pine

MAJOR LAND USE

P ___ Nature and Wildlife Conservation S ___ Hunting/Fishing
S ___ Other Recreation or Tourism ___ Agriculture/Livestock
S ___ Forestry S ___ Water Supply/Treatment
S ___ Utility/Right-of-way ___ Suburban/Residential
___ Research ___ Undeveloped
___ Other (specify)_____

Land Ownership/Management: check all that apply:

___ State X Federal ___ Municipal ___ Private-individual ___ Private-company

CONSERVATION AND OTHER

Primary Conservation Issues: Please use Serious (S), Minor (M), and Potential (P) threats to the site.

M ___ Invasive or Non-native Plants

M ___ Introduced Animals

S ___ Cowbird Parasitism

Cowbirds becoming common because of fragmentation

M ___ Predators

M ___ Pollution

M ___ Habitat Conversion

S ___ Development

Private land adjacent to lake is rapidly becoming developed

M ___ Disturbances

M ___ Hydrologic Changes

S ___ Other (specify) ;Fragmentation From development of roads, etc._

Other Resources: Please describe any significant flora and non-avian fauna, social, cultural, economic, or historic issues associated with site:

Describe primary conservation issues, their seriousness, and any steps taken to address them:
Cowbirds becoming common of fragmentation _____

Local Groups with an interest in this site:

Name/Group _____
Address _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

Land Owner/Manager Contacts:

Name: <u>Lu Ann Lackey, Park Manager</u>	Name: _____
Address: <u>P.O. Box 96</u>	Address: _____
City: <u>Oakman</u> State: <u>GA</u> Zip <u>30732</u>	City: _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone: <u>706/ 334-2248</u>	Phone: _____

Remarks:

Carters Lake is becoming an important area for bird watchers to view birds. The Hidden Pond Songbird Trail was developed some 15 years ago. The trail traverses several habitat types including upland hardwood, stream, grass, and beaver pond. Two viewing platforms were built on the beaver pond and a bridge crosses part of the pond. A checklist was developed this year and is available at the trail or in the Visitor Center. Usually one can see between 40 and 60 species on the trail, the reregulation pool adjacent to it and the powerhouse field 2 miles away. There are numerous other trails on the project. A guided walk is provided on IBMD as well as other times during the year.