

## Important Bird Areas in Georgia

Site Name: **Carters Lake**

Approx. Size (acres): Lake: 3200 acres  
Reregulation 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 that 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 neotrops 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)

- 1. Georgia Protected Species
- 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

Your name: Paul Jastram Phone: 706-334-2248  
 Address: P.O. Box 96 FAX 706-334-2213  
 City: Oakman, GA Zip: 30732 E-mail: Paul.J.Jastram@sam.usace.army.mil  
 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	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Ruffed Grouse	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Wood Thrush	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Field Sparrow	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Brown Thrasher	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Worm-eating Warbler	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Hooded Warbler	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Acadian Flycatcher	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	5	4
Northern Parula	B	> 25 breeding pairs	--	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%).

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## MAJOR LAND USE

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Land Ownership/Management: check all that apply:

State  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.

<b>M</b>	Invasive or Non-native Plants	
<b>M</b>	Introduced Animals	
<b>S</b>	Cowbird Parasitism	Cowbirds becoming common due to fragmentation
<b>M</b>	Predators	
<b>M</b>	Pollution	
<b>M</b>	Habitat Conversion	
<b>S</b>	Development	Private land adjacent to lake rapidly being developed
<b>M</b>	Disturbances	
<b>M</b>	Hydrologic Changes	
<b>S</b>	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: Lu Ann Lackey, Park Manager

Address: P.O. Box 96

City: Oakman State: GA Zip 30732

Phone: 706-334-2248

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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 International Migratory Bird Day as well as other times during the year.**