

In 1809 the ornithologist Alexander Wilson met Abbot while visiting in Savannah. On several collecting trips, Abbot shared his knowledge of Georgia birds with Wilson, supplying detailed information on such things as nesting habits and migratory patterns. Abbot also showed undescribed species to Wilson, who in turn introduced them to the scientific world in his multi-volume publication, *American Ornithology* (1808-14). After Wilson returned to Philadelphia, Abbot continued to supply specimens and comments on different birds. Following Wilson's death in 1813, Abbot sent data to George Ord, the Philadelphia naturalist who completed the last two volumes of *American Ornithology*. Abbot's information on the black-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) and anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) included in *American Ornithology* prompted John James Audubon to quote Abbot's comments in his own publication.

European scientists also depended upon Abbot's specimens, watercolours, and written comments for their knowledge of Georgia species. For example, Johann Christian Fabricius of Denmark, Jacob Hübner of Augsburg, and Thomas Martyn of London published descriptions based on Abbot's insect specimens. Carl Illiger, the director of the Zoological Museum of Berlin University from 1810 to 1813, used Abbot's bird specimens to describe previously unclassified species as did the English ornithologist John Latham. Between 1814 and 1836 Abbot prepared watercolours and collected insects and birds for Heinrich Escher-Zollikofer, a Swiss merchant interested in natural history, and through his recommendation, the French ornithologist Frederic de Lafresnaye began to purchase bird specimens from Abbot in 1827.

Hoping to obtain 'a limited number of insect specimens' from John Abbot, William Swainson contacted Abbot's London agent John Francillon in July 1813.²⁸ Francillon offered him two boxes with approximately 1,800 of Abbot's specimens received that spring, but Swainson declined the purchase. Instead, three years later, he asked that Francillon request Abbot to prepare a collection composed of the male and female of each species with more rare insects than common ones. He proposed that a group of his 'Entomological friends in London' would inspect it to see whether a sufficient number of rare species was included. Francillon declined, explaining that he could not risk the specimens being returned to Abbot should Swainson or his friends 'disapprove of them'. He added, 'When I have (for many Years past) received Boxes from Mr. Abbot I always took them and have never been disappointed with His good Conduct, and whenever any were broke or damaged in the Journey from Liverpool to London the loss was mine but it