

Snowbird on the Ashbank

The musical score for "Snowbird on the Ashbank" is presented in six staves. It is in G Major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The piece follows an AABB structure. The first staff (A) starts with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with a repeat sign. Chords G and F are indicated above the staff. The second staff (A) continues the melody with chords G and C. The third staff (A) features a first ending bracket over measures 1-2, with a second ending bracket over measures 3-4. Chords D, G, and G are indicated. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' below. The fourth staff (A) continues the melody with chords F and G. The fifth staff (B) has chords F and G, and ends with a first ending bracket over measures 1-2, with a second ending bracket over measures 3-4. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' below. The sixth staff (B) shows a second ending bracket over measures 1-2, with chords D and G indicated.

"Snowbird on the Ashbank", also known as "Snowbird" or "Georgia Snowbird" is an American reel in cut time in G Major/Mixolydian. The parts are played AABB.

A 'snowbird' is another name for a junco. The title ("Snowbird" or "Snowbird on the Ashbank") must have been evocative for it has been applied to several, often unrelated tunes in the upland South, Piedmont and Midwest. To give an idea of its distribution, the name "Snowbird on the Ashbank" appears in a list of traditional Ozarks Mountains fiddle tunes compiled by musicologist/folklorist Vance Randolph, published in 1954 and it was listed as one of the standard tunes in a square dance fiddler's repertoire by A.B. Moore in his **History of Alabama** (1934).

Some versions of "Snowbird on the Ashbank" are reminiscent of "Paddy on the Turnpike" with its overall modal tonality. Some versions of this tune are crooked with measures of 5/4 or 6/4 or 3/2. I have evened this out to present a more straightforward reel structure.

It was printed in Brody's **Fiddler's Fakebook** (1983) and Phillips' **Traditional American Fiddle Tunes, vol. 1** (1994).

It was recorded by Uncle John Patterson, Fuzzy Mountain String Band on **Summer Oaks and Porch** (1973) and Oscar and Eugene Wright on **Old Time Fiddle and Guitar Music from West Virginia** (1978).