



THE SPOONBILL

Volume XXV, No. 12
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A MATTER OF BUSINESS

In the Outdoor Nature Club and its study groups, officers' terms and dues begin May 1 of each year. So, it is "dues time" once again.

ONC dues are now \$5.00 per person per year, and OG dues are \$2.00 per person per year. (You must be a member of ONC to be a member of OG). If you have not already paid your ONC dues this year, as a convenience to you, you may send one check for \$7.00, covering both dues (made payable to ORNITHOLOGY GROUP), to Mrs. J.M. Gillette, 5027 Longmont, Houston, Texas 77056. Mrs. Gillette will then forward your ONC dues to the ONC treasurer. Do not send OG dues to ONC.

Non-member subscribers to THE SPOONBILL should send their check for \$3.00 per subscription, made payable to ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, to Mrs. Gillette at the above address.

Members and non-member subscribers who have joined since the first of 1977, are considered paid up through April 1978.

It would be most helpful if you are prompt in remitting your dues. Do it today, right now, before you forget! For your convenience, a form is on page 13.

COMING EVENTS

- Friday
April 15 Deadline for entering the HAS Big Day Run field trip planned for Saturday April 23. If you wish to participate, contact Holly Hobart - 661-1855.
- Saturday
April 16 OG field trip to High Island. Meet at 8:00 AM at roadside park in High Island. Bring lunch and insect repellent (especially insect repellent!). Let's hope for a wave of warblers.
- April
21-22-23 T.O.S. Convention at McAllen, Texas. Headquarters - Hilton Inn. Registration is \$4.00, preregistration checks should be made out to Hilton Inn McAllen and marked TOS Convention. Address envelopes to Hilton Inn, 2721 South Tenth St., McAllen, Texas 78501. Att: Sally Derr.
- Sunday
May 1 ONC field to Armand's Bayou. The boat has been reserved for two trips: 10:00 AM and 1:30 PM, each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes. To reserve a place on the boat please contact Louise Rogers - 524-2670.
- Tuesday
May 3 Photography Group regular meeting, 7:30, Bayou Manor Auditorium, 4141 S. Braeswood.
- Saturday
May 7 OG field trip and annual picnic is being held this year at Dr. George Clayton's home at Sea Isle. Our June meeting and picnic is traditionally held in May, and it was set early in the month this time to take advantage of spring migration. Bring your own lunch, and Jane and George say to come as early as you wish. The meeting will be held before or after lunch. Directions: 61st Street to Seawall, turn right, proceed to Sea Isle; turn right at office, go to stop sign, bear right, jog left, go straight as far as you can go; your destination is the last house on the left on canal (blue and white house with white fence, 3722 Concho Key). Everybody come! We want to invite any of our subscribers to join us and get acquainted, especially those in the Galveston area
- Saturday
May 7 HAS field trip to High Island and Bolivar. Meet at 8:00 AM at Kempner Park.
- Saturday
May 14 OG field trip to West Galveston to pick up late migrants. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at Kempner Park. Bring lunch, insect repellent. Half-day trip, but some will continue birding into the afternoon.

Saturday
May 21 A census of the Henslow's field on Mykawa Road will be conducted. Those interested in participating should contact Ted. L. Eubanks Jr. at 661-8082. Information as to the time and place to meet for the census will be published in next month's SPOONBILL. Please note that this census is the first of two that will be conducted this breeding season on the colony, the second to come in August. Volunteers are needed for the second census as well.

April to
July A breeding bird survey is being conducted at the HAS Edith L. Moore Nature Sanctuary. Fred Collins will correlate information gathered and write it up for an ornithological magazine. Dee Ross says to call her at night, 465-4561, for further information. Forms and maps will be in a box by the house entrance. She says a titmouse is nesting on one side of her house (she and her husband are curators of the sanctuary and live in the Moore house), and a Carolina Wren on the other!

June 5-11 Fred Webster is again leading a summer trip to a rain forest in Mexico, Rancho Del Cielo. This is a wonderful way to spend a week birding in that country, in beautiful surroundings, with experienced naturalists to help you. The cost is \$170.00 per person, contact Fred for further details. His address is 4926 Strass Drive, Austin, Texas 78731.

PAST EVENTS by Ted Eubanks

OG field trip participants met at Kempner Park the morning of March 12, on a clear but windy day. A thorough scouring of Kempner yielded only Wood Thrush and Orchard Oriole in the way of migrants, and the group proceeded to the South Jetty. A strong north wind held tern and gull activity to a minimum, and the Glaucous Gull who has been frequenting the jetty area during the last few weeks was not seen. Of interest, however, were numerous Common Terns among the abundant Forster's, and an unidentified hummingbird spotted flying in off of the Gulf. It's a rather awesome feeling when you suddenly realize that the bumblebee-sized bird you're watching has just crossed the Gulf of Mexico without stopping. The field trip then advanced to the ferry landing, birding the East Galveston mudflats enroute. Numerous shorebirds were seen, among these an early Black-necked Stilt. After crossing the bay, the group proceeded to Bolivar Flats, which held, as usual, an exceptional number of shorebirds and waders. Of note at the Flats was the first arrival of many local breeding species for the spring, such as Least Tern, Wilson's Plover, etc. Although the field trip was scheduled to end at Bolivar Flats, the majority of the participants decided to continue on up Bolivar Peninsula. Species of interest seen on this added excursion were Barn Owl at Bolivar Point, American Golden Plover near Crystal Beach, Black Scoter and Oldsquaw near the High Island fishing piers, and Green Heron, Black-and-white Warbler, Northern Parula and Louisiana Waterthrush at Boy Scout Woods. A total of 103 species was recorded.

AROUND AND ABOUT

** Harold Williams, in the April PHALAROPE, the Midland Naturalist's newsletter, had a satirical essay on how pollution aids birders. On a recent visit to the Beaumont dump (the only sure place to see the fish crow in our area), your editor was struck with the realization of how true his tongue-in-cheek remarks were. Sewage ponds, dumps, mucky oil fields, etc., are all prime spots for us to find certain birds. Some birds have adapted to our fouling of this earth, but I wonder how many more have declined because they couldn't adapt? And wouldn't it be "lovely" if we could enjoy the background as well as the bird?

** Fred Collins says that visitors aboard Captain Brownee's boat, "Whooping Crane", received a special treat. David Wolfe spotted a migrating Swallow-tail Kite soaring north before the boat left the dock (March 19). Unfortunately I think I was the only other Texas Birder aboard who could fully appreciate the importance and rarity of this sighting. It was observed for about two minutes as it glided directly overhead. Its immaculate white underparts, black flight and tail feathers separate it from any other species. Its obvious hawk head distinguish it from the only remotely similar shaped Frigatebird which would be far more likely in Aransas Bay".

** Your editor had a note from Bessie Cornelius after the aforementioned trip to Beaumont, part of which I want to share with you. (We went to try to find the Bachman's Sparrow, among other birds, but the weather didn't cooperate, and we had heavy rains part of the time). ".....But I do know those birds are in that area except I could not account for their behavior Thursday. By all the rules they should have been singing from every brush pile. But I believe because the barometer was falling before the approaching storm the sparrow, as well as the other birds in the area, felt the

increased weight of the air in their hollow bones and they didn't feel like singing. Also, it is said that falling barometer causes all wildlife to stick closer to the ground. The weather man told me that the Chinese are doing a study with birds and other animals in relation to earthquakes. They believe birds detect fault lines moving before the actual tremor; that which is called infra-sound, long wave lengths, are detected by wildlife before the human ear ever hears it, if at all; that before storms erratic animal behavior is often noted. I have to have some excuse for not getting that sparrow to perform for you. I would have tried chasing the one you saw, but I have found that does little good because they just run through the grass ahead of you. So, I say it was just because the weight of the air on Thursday that kept that little bird out of our sight!"

** And quoting from a letter from Fred Webster: "The outstanding bird on the count (the recent Rancho Del Cielo Christmas Count. --Ed.) was a Golden-cheeked Warbler, male, seen by my wife, Marie, in the cloud forest. This is a farthest north winter report, so far as I know. The previous record was one at Xilitla, S.L.P., on one of Irby Davis' unofficial counts (that is, not published in Audubon Field Notes). This was also seen in cloud-forest, and by my wife, Marie, as well as the eminent botanist Marshall C. Johnston. The species is known to winter in the oak-pine highlands of southern Mexico and Guatemala. I might add that the Xilitla observation was not accepted by Warren Pulich for his GCW work because of the possibilities of confusing it with Hermit, Black-throated Green and Townsend Warblers which winter in the region, especially when the bird is fairly high overhead. Fortunately the recent observation was seen at near eye-level so the top of the head and back could be clearly determined to be black, thus ruling out the Black-throated Green".

RESUME OF PLACES TO GO IN SPRING AND SUMMER (from past SPOONBILLS)

Bolivia Peninsula, especially the Flats. There are some short grass fields on Hwy 87 on the north side of the road, near Crystal Beach, where Upland Sandpipers and American Golden Plovers are now being seen.

High Island, including Smith's Woods, Boy Scout Woods, as well as oil fields and salt cedars along shoreline.

Galveston, east and west maps show a number of places to go.

Jones State Forest, always good for a quiet ramble while looking for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

City Hall during migration.

North & South Blvds. (1300-1400 block, bounded by Parkway and West Blvd., just a few blocks west of the Museum of Fine Arts, and one block north of Blissonnet.

Cemeteries, such as Glenwood and Washington on Washington Avenue, just east of the rice mill. Glenwood is well kept, Washington is a tangle of vines, briars and shrubs under the trees. These two places are side by side, and could be a blank or teeming.

Freeport Municipal Park, during migration. On Hwy 288, just north of high school.

Dow Nature Trail (a bit torn up right now, but the woods should be good for warblers.

Maner Lake for Jacanas. The only ways are from the area around the bridge on Brazoria Road #25, or from a boat on the lake (much more sure). If you wish to make a reservation for a guide and a boat (\$12.00, and now during heron and egret nesting season an exciting bargain), contact Mr. George Rayburn's office at Brown and Root, 676-4204, and Miss Pat Kirkland will help you.

Eisenhower Park is supposed to be good for nesting warblers. Don't forget our checklist shows nine warblers that nest in the upper Texas coast area.

On your way to Freeport, pause at Juliff (app. 26 miles south of the intersection of Hwy 288 and 610 South Loop). .3 of a mile past the Juliff road sign turn right onto a gravel road (this is Miller road, but the sign is not at the intersection, but across the railroad track). A dead end road, this is good for painted and indigo buntings.

FM 521 Slough. Continuing down Hwy 288, veer right at FM 521 (9.8 miles from Miller road) and proceed approximately another 9.8, then turn left. There will be a slough on the right side of this lane, in which have been found wood ducks, white ibis, etc. After about a mile, the road curves back into 521, just about 1/2 mile north of Hwy 35. Hedgerows and tall trees line the lane, with some open spaces, and you should

find passerines here as well as the ducks. When vegetation is leafed out, the slough is hard to see in places, but this is an interesting side trip any time of the year.

The Henslow Sparrows have started singing, so we'll repeat the directions from the July, 1976 SPOONBILL. From South Loop 610, turn south on Mykawa road, and go 4 1/2 miles to Willardville Street. Turn off Mykawa and park, then cross road and railroad and follow the spur line that goes east. You may have to walk quite a way down the spur, looking and listening for the sparrows. (There are often trains parked on the sidings, paralleling Mykawa Road, and one must watch for switching there and on the spurs). Most birding recently has been confined to the area south of the spur because of clearing for new spurs north of the main spur; however, the Henslow has been found in the past in most areas of the field. Of the distinctive song of the Henslow Peterson says: "One of the poorest vocal efforts of any bird; throwing back its head, it ejects a hiccoughing *tsi-lick*". Pough says: "The song is a short explosive double noted buzz--*flee-sic*. It lasts about 2/5 of a second and probably holds the record for shortness. It is delivered from the top of a tall weed or fence post and carries well. If you go out into the field (sometimes the bird can be seen from the spur but not often), wear sturdy pants and sturdy shoes or boots (stickery vines and shrubs). When you think you hear the song, before galloping off in pursuit, stand and check the small woody shrubs around you. This bird is quite a ventriloquist, and usually he is some fifteen or twenty feet from you, when you believe him to be just a few feet away. Dickcissels are also usually present, but their song is *Dick-cis-cis-cis*. Morning seems the best time, and do watch for the trains.

Rice fields are being flooded now, and they should be of interest from now through the summer. Use your West Harris County map, and the Smither's Lake map (by the way, HL&P have been doing so much re-construction of the land around Rabb's Prairie Road that the white-tailed kites are not now being seen there with any frequency). Rice fields in Chambers county on the way to Anahuac or High Island should be checked too.

Rice mill pond on Synott road just south of Westheimer should be checked soon for the Black-bellied Whistling Ducks which nested there last year.

Oyster Creek at Hwy 59 bridge for Cliff Swallows. Four were seen April 3, a few days earlier than last year, heralding the return of these nesters.

Prairie Chicken directions were in last month's SPOONBILL, so we won't repeat here.

Bachman's Sparrows in Hardin County: From Houston, get off I-10 at Beaumont and continue on Eastex Highway (69-96) to Silsbee. Continue on 96 through Silsbee until you reach the last stoplight, which is at the intersection of 96 and 92. Continue north on 92 for exactly 7 miles. At that point, look carefully for small grocery store on the right and a deserted filling station on the left (which is hardly recognizable as such); also a crude sign on a fencepost pointing to "Camp Walutta". Turn left here and proceed west approximately 2.7 miles. At the first crossroads at this point there is a house on the left, and another Walutta sign; turn left and proceed one-tenth mile and turn right (another Walutta sign). Proceed 1.7 miles, watching along here for Red-cockaded woodpeckers flying across the road or listening for the sparrow. Turn left and park, and listen for sparrows singing in woods around you. To return, go back 1.7 miles and turn right; this road will bring you by the Smartt Fire Tower, another place to check for this sparrow, and thence into Silsbee.

CLEARING HOUSE, March, 1977

How to read the C-H: Name of bird: (how many), date, location, observers.
Abbreviations used: Texas City Dike - Dike; Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge - Anahuac; Ft. Bend County - Ft. Bend; W. Harris County - W. Harris. Kempner Pk.-Kempner.

(More reports of sightings are needed from Jefferson County, especially Beaumont-Port Arthur area. As C-H editor I would greatly appreciate getting your observations there. --T. Paul Jones)

Loon, Common: (52)6,D&JD; (40)17,JH; (6)19,(5)26,JB; (20)20,TEⅅ (25)23,BF - all at Dike. (1)5,JB; (1)30,JM - Bolivar.

Loon, Red-throated: (1)6,Dike,D&JD (see notes).

Grebe, Eared: (300)17,JH; (500)23,BF; (8)26,JB - all at Dike.

Pelican, White: (6)5, (30+)19,Bolivar,JB; (100)17,Bolivar,JH; (4)20, (17)24,Freeport Marsh,SC; (4)28,Anahuac,R.

Cormorant, Double-crested: (30)4,Ft. Bend,C; (5)5,(6)13,Ft. Bend,J&KM,GC; (17)5,(15)19,Bolivar,JB; (n/c)6,13,W.Harris,FC; (n/c)28,Anahuac,R.

Cormorant, Olivaceous: (20)22,Anahuac,BF; (1)26,Bayou Vista,JB.

Heron, Green: (1)12,OG; (1)19,JB; (1)26,WC; (4)28,R - all at High Island; (2)23,Freeport Park, (10)27,yard,T&S; (1)27,South Blvd.,P&MJ.

- Egret, Reddish: (5)12,OG; (5)13,E; (3)19,30,JM,GC&BM - all at Bolivar; (8)12,BH; (2)23,BF; (2)30,DM - all in Galveston; (3)28,Anahuac,R.
- Night Heron, Yellow-crowned: (1)4,Ft. Bend,C; (1)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM; (1)20,Kempner,Tⅅ (1)28,High I.,R.
- Bittern, American: (1)5,Bolivar, (1)19,Anahuac,JB; (3)12,(1)17,Galveston,B&JH; (1)13,Maner Lake,TC; (1)19,25,Freeport,L&MB; (2)28,Anahuac,R.
- Ibis, White: (40)4,Ft. Bend,C; (6)13,Ft. Bend,J&KM; (7)13,Hoskins Mound,SC; (25)20,Sportsman Road,TE&DD.
- Spoonbill, Roseate: (1)5,Galveston, (2)19,Anahuac,JB; (1)12,Galveston,OG; (1)12,19,Freeport,L&MB; (13)17,(3)20,(5-6)24,25,26,Freeport Marsh,SC; (3)19,Bolivar, JM&GC; (n/c)28,Anahuac,R; (3)30,Anahuac, JM.
- Goose, Canada: (30)4,Ft.Bend,C; (10+)5,JM&GC, (n/c)6,FC, (75)17,T&JE - W.Harris.
- Goose, White-fronted: (90)4,Ft.Bend,C; (500)5,TE&DD, (50)6,T&JE, (n/c)6,FC - all in W. Harris; (50)5,(50)19,JB, (50)19, (100+)30,JM,GC&BM - all at Anahuac; (n/c)28,R.
- Goose, Snow: (360+)5,JM&GC, (10,000)5,TE&DD, (n/c)6,FC, (2000)20,T&JE - W.Harris; (50+)5, (50+)19,JB, (2000)22,BF - Anahuac; (400)24,Ft.Bend,BF.
- Whistling Duck, Black-bellied: (1)26,Almeda,P&MJ.
- Mallard: (4)4,C, (2)5,JM&GC, (7)13,J&KM - all in Ft. Bend; (6)5,JM&GC, (50)5,TE&DD, (n/c)6,FC, (25)16,T&JE - all in W.Harris; (1)19,JB, (15)19,JM,GC&BM - Anahuac.
- Gadwall: (20)4,Ft. Bend,C; (20)5,Ft. Bend,JM&GC; (n/c)6,W.Harris,FC; (n/c)28,Anahuac, R; (4)30,Galveston,DM.
- Pintail: (20)5,Galveston,JB; (n/c)6,W.Harris,FC.
- Teal, Green-winged: (30)4,Ft.Bend,C; (1)5,(30)19,(50+)26,Bayou Vista,JB; (n/c)6,W. Harris,FC; (13)13,Ft. Bend,J&KM; (2)30,Galveston,DM.
- Teal, Blue-winged: (45)4,Ft.Bend,C; (35)5,(50+)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (20)5,(35)19,(20)26,Bayou Vista,JB; (n/c)6,W.Harris,FC; (n/c)28,Anahuac,R; (50)30,Galveston,DM.
- Teal, Cinnamon: (3)4,C, (9)5,TE&DD, (1)5,JM&GC - all in Ft.Bend; (1)6,Galveston,AD; (1)5,JM&GC, (n/c)6,FC, (4)20,P&MJ - all in W.Harris.
- Wigeon, American: (80)4,Ft.Bend,C; (30)5,(300)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (n/c)6,W.Harris,FC; (2)19,Anahuac,JB.
- Shoveler, Northern: (100)4,Ft.Bend,C; (35)5,(150)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (15)5,(10)19,(10)26,Galveston,JB; (n/c)6,W.Harris,FC; (n/c)28,Anahuac,R; (2)30,Galveston.
- Duck, Ring-necked: (30)4,C, (20)5,(40)13,J&KM,GC - all in Ft. Bend.
- Scaup, Greater: (1)5,Ft.Bend,JM&GC (see notes); (2)6,Bolivar,D&JD (see notes).
- Scaup, Lesser: (4)4,Ft.Bend,C; (3)5,Bolivar, (30+)19,(80+)26,Bayou Vista,JB; (20)13,Ft. Bend,J&KM; (n/c)28,Anahuac,R.
- Goldeneye, Common: (2)6,Dike,D&JD.
- Bufflehead: (18)23,Dike,BF.
- Oldsquaw: (1)6,Bolivar,D&JD (see notes); (1)12,High I.,OG (no field notes); (1)19,High I.,JB (see notes); (1)23,HL&P Cooling Ponds,D&JD (see notes).
- Scoter, Surf: (1)13,High I.,E (previously reported); (37)16,High I.,PJ (see notes).
- Scoter, Common: (2)12,High I.,OG (no field notes); (1)13,High I.,E (previously reported); (21)16,PJ (see notes).
- Merganser, Hooded: (1)4,C. - (See Special Report)
- Merganser, Red-breasted: (20)12,OG, (1)19,JM,GC&BM, (12)20,TE&DD, (1)28,R - all at Bolivar Flats; (28)12,BH, (3)19,(4)26,JB, (40)23,BF - all in Galveston; (4)17,Dike,JH.
- Kite, White-tailed: (1)5,Ft.Bend,TEⅅ (1)13,Hoskins Mound,SC; (1)19,Dickinson,JM,GC.
- Kite, Swallow-tailed: (2)13,Bolivar,BC,BO (see notes).
- KITE MISSISSIPPI: (1)13,Baytown,D&JD (see notes)
- Hawk, Sharp-shinned: (1)5,Ft.Bend,JM,GC.
- Hawk, Red-tailed: (6)4,Ft.Bend,C; (1)5,Anahuac,JB; (2)5,(3)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (n/c)6,13,W.Harris,FC; (1)30,Galveston,DM.
- Hawk, Swainson's: (1)31,Willcrest Rd.,HH (see notes).
- Hawk, Rough-legged: (1)20,Willcrest Rd.,HH (previously reported).
- Hawk, Ferruginous: (1)5,Warren Ranch,TE&DD (previously reported); (1)13,Warren Ranch, FC (previously reported)
- Eagle, Bald: (1)4,Ft.Bend,C; (1)5,Ft.Bend, (5)5,Warren Ranch,TEⅅ (1)6,Warren Ranch FC.
- Osprey: (1)12,Galveston,BH; (1)16,Galveston,BF.
- Merlin: (1)13,Caplen,BC,BO (see notes)
- Kestrel, American: (4)4,Ft.Bend,C; (2)5, (3)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (6)5,(3)19,Bolivar, JD; (1)28,Anahuac,R; (8)30,Galveston,DM.
- Prairie Chicken, Greater (Attwater): (6)6,D&JD, (10)17,JH, (5)19,JM&GC, (6)20,JB, (7)23,BF - all at Spaceland Airport.
- Crane, Sandhill: (133)6,W.Galveston,AD; (100+)12,W.Galveston,L&MB.
- Rail, Virginia: (1)22,Anahuac,BF; (6)28,Anahuac,R.
- Sora: (3)4,Ft.Bend,C; (1)12,(2)17,Galveston,B&JH; (1)28,Anahuac,R.
- Rail, Yellow: (3)22,Anahuac,BF; (8)28,Anahuac,R.
- Gallinule,Purple: (1)30,Galveston,DM (no field notes).
- Plover, Semipalmated: (3)12,Galveston,BH; (2)16,PJ, (2)17,JH, (10)20,TE&DD, (1)22BF, (1)28,R - all at Bolivar Flats; (4)26,Bayou Vista,JB.

- Plover, Piping: (1)12,BH, (10)16,BF - Galveston; (4)16,PJ, (25)20,TE&DD, (30)22,BF, (2)28,R, (2)30, JM - Bolivar Flats.
- Plover, Snowy: (2)22,BF, (2)28,R, (1)30, JM - Bolivar Flats.
- Plover, Wilson's: (1)12,BH, (2)16,BF - Galveston; (25)12,OG, (1)17,JH, (3)19,JB, (5)19, JM, GC&BM, (25)20,TE&DD, (20)22,BF, (30+)30, JM - Bolivar Flats; (2)26, Bayou Vista, JB.
- Plover, Golden American: (n/c)6,W.Galveston,AD; (n/c)6,13,W.Harris,FC; (50)12,OG, (15)13,BC,BO, (60)19, JM, GC&BM, (100)20,TE&DD, (6)22,BF, (75)28,R - Bolivar; (50)13,E.Chambers,E; (70)16,Galveston,BF; (15)30,Chambers, JM.
- Turnstone, Ruddy: (3)19, (2)26,Galveston,JB; (6)28,Bolivar Flats,R; (2)30,Bolivar Flats, JM.
- Woodcock, American: (1-2)Feb 1-16,White Oak Bayou,EC (see notes).
- Snipe, Common: (8)4,Ft.Bend,C; (8)5, (6)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (n/c)6,13,W.Harris,FC; (1)19,Bolivar,JB; (2)19,Dow Nature Trail,AA,SW; (5)28,Bolivar Flats,R.
- Curlew, Long-billed: (4)5, (6)19,Galveston,JB; (2)13,W.Harris,FC; (10)14,W.Harris,JH; (10)19,Anahuac, JM, GC&BM; (12)30,Bolivar, JM; (12)30,Galveston, DM.
- Whimbrel: (2)30,Bolivar Flats, JM; (6)30,Galveston, DM.
- Sandpiper, Upland: (1)13,E.Chambers,E; (8)17,Dike, JH; (100)20,Bolivar,TEⅅ (1)22, Bolivar, (2)24,W.Galveston,BF; (20)28,Bolivar,R; (15)30,Galveston, DM.
- Sandpiper, Spotted: (3)4,Ft.Bend,C; (1)5,Ft.Bend, JM&GC; (1)30,Galveston, DM.
- Sandpiper, Solitary: (1)4,Ft.Bend,C; (2)18,Shy Pond, Lake Jackson, SC; (2)28,Bolivar,R
- Yellowlegs, Greater: (8)5, (4)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (n/c)6,13,W.Harris,FC; (n/c)28, Anahuac,R.
- Yellowlegs, Lesser: (3)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM; (200)16,Galveston,BF; (n/c)28,Anahuac,R.
- Knot, Red: (25)12,OG, (6)19,B&JH, (n/c)28,R.
- Sandpiper, Pectoral: (26)24,Sportsman Road,BF.
- REEVE: (1)24,Sportsman Road,BF (see notes).
- Sandpiper, Least: (15)4,Ft.Bend,C; (85)5,Ft.Bend, JM,GC.
- Dunlin: (n/c)28,Bolivar Flats,R; (25+)30,Bolivar Flats, JM.
- Dowitcher, Short-billed: (20)30,Bolivar Flats, JM.
- Dowitcher, Long-billed: (20)30,Bolivar Flats, JM.
- Sandpiper, Semipalmated: (3)16,Galveston,BF; (40+)30,Bolivar Flats, JM.
- Sandpiper, Western: (8)5,Ft.Bend, JM,GC.
- Sandpiper, Buff-breasted: (1)16,Dike,BF; (3)29,W.Harris,PJ.
- Godwit, Marbled: (18)6,D&JD, (50)12, (30)17,B&JH, (40)20,TE&DD - W.Galveston; (1)26, WC, (n/c)28,R, (21)30, JM - Bolivar Flats.
- Avocet, American: (5,000)16,PJ, (1,000)17,19,B&JH, (1,500)20,TE&DD, (1,000)22,BF, (1,000)26,WC, (4,000)30, JM.
- Stilt, Black-necked: (1)2, (3)5,Rice Mill Pond, JM; (1)12,Galveston,OG; (4)17,Galveston, JH; (6)19, (1)25,Freeport,L&MB; (2)19,Anahuac, JB; (20)20,Bolivar Flats, TEⅅ (6)24,Sportsman Road,BF; (2)25,Freeport Marsh, SC; (13)26,Gilchrist, WC; (8)28,Anahuac,R; (13)30,Anahuac, JM.
- Phalarope, Wilson's: (1)20,Sportsman Road,TE&DD (see notes); (1)25,Freeport,L&MB (see notes).
- Gull, Glaucous: (1)6,D&JD; (1)16,BF, (1)19,JB - E. Galveston; (1)20,Bolivar Flats, TE&DD (previously reported).
- Gull, Bonaparte's: (25)12,OG, (5)16,PJ, (25)29,TE&DD, (1)22,BF, (15)26,WC - Bolivar Flats.
- Tern, Gull-billed: (3)16,Galveston, (1)22,Bolivar Flats,BF; (2)26,Bolivar Flats,WC.
- Tern, Common: (7)19,Galveston, JB; (2)19,Freeport Marsh,L&MB; (1)19, (10)30,Gilchrist, (15)30,Bolivar Flats, JM; (20)20,Dike,TEⅅ (n/c)28,Bolivar,R.
- Tern, Least: (5)12,OG, (15)20,TE&DD, (20)22,BF, (30)26,WC - Bolivar Flats.
- Tern, Sandwich: (2)19, (15+)30,Gilchrist, JM.
- Dove, White-winged: (2)10, (1)12,Lake Jackson, SC; (2)all month, yard, Lake Jackson, SW; (numerous nesting pairs)17,JH, (10)19, JM, GC&BM, (1)29,R, - Galveston.
- DOVE, RING-TURTLE: (1-8, 3 nesting pair)all month, Bellaire,P&MJ (previously reported).
- Dove, Ground: (2)5,yard,Lake Jackson,L&MB.
- Ani, Groove-billed: (3)14,25,Brazoswood High School, SW.
- Owl, Burrowing: (1)6,13,W.Harris,FC (see notes).
- Chuck-will's-widow: (1)28,yard,Bellaire, DM.
- Whip-poor-will: (1)28,White Oak Bayou,GC.
- Swift, Chimney: (10)16,Houston,BF; (2)21,Houston,GC; (2)23,White Oak Bayou,WC; (3)27, Lake Jackson,T&SC; (2)28,Anahuac,R.
- Hummingbird, Ruby-throated: (1)12,Galveston,OG; (1)19,JB, (1)JM,GC&BM, (1)20,TE&DD - High I.; (4)26,Kempner Park, JB; (1)25,Bryan Mound, SC; (2)28,Anahuac,R.
- HUMMINGBIRD, BLACK-CHINNED: (1)10, (departed, yard, Margaret Anderson (previously reported); (1)20,High I.,TE&DD (see notes); (1)25, (departed) yard, GH (previously reported); (1)all month, yard, T&JE (previously reported).
- Hummingbird, Rufous: (1)17,Lake Jackson, SC; (1)20, (departed), yard, GH.
- Kingfisher, Belted: (3)4,Ft.Bend,C; (4)5,Ft.Bend, JM&GC; (n/c)13,W.Harris,FC; (2)28, Anahuac,R.
- Flicker, Common (Yellow-shafted): (6)4,Ft.Bend,C; (10)5, (18)13,Ft.Bend,J&KM,GC; (n/c)6,13,W.Harris,FC; (2)1-30,yard, DM.
- Flicker, Common (Red-shafted): (1)4,Ft.Bend,C.

- Woodpecker, Red-headed: (1)19, W. Harris, GH; (2)19, Dow Nature Trail, AA, L&MB, SW; (1)20, White Oak Bayou, WC.
- Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: (4)4, Ft. Bend, C; (6)5, (4)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (1)7, yard, MJ; (1)28, Anahuac, R.
- Kingbird, Eastern: (1)20, High I., TEⅅ (1)24, Sportsman Road, BF; (2)26, Bolivar, WC; (4)28, Anahuac, R.
- Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed: (1)12, 17, Galveston, B&JH; (1)18, Houston, (1)19, Dickinson, (1)19, Anahuac, (4)30, Chambers Co., JM; (1)19, W. Harris, GH; (1)19, (1)26, Dike, JB; (2)20, W. Galveston, TEⅅ (1)22, High I., BF; (1)24, 27, Freeport Park, T&SC; (1)26, Anahuac, WC; (4)28, High I., R; (10)30, Ft. Bend, T&JE; (2)30, 31, Freeport, L&MB.
- Flycatcher, Great-crested: (1)18, White Oak Bayou, WC; (2)28, High I., R; (1)29, yard, JM.
- Phoebe, Eastern: (5)4, Ft. Bend, C; (12)5, (3)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (1)12, Galveston, BH; (2)19, High I., JB; (1)19, W. Harris, GH; (1)30, Galveston, DM.
- Flycatcher, Acadian: (1)28, Freeport Park, L&MB.
- Flycatcher, Vermilion: (1)4, Ft. Bend, C; (1)5, Ft. Bend, JM, GC, TEⅅ (1)11, Shy Pond, Lake Jackson, SC.
- Swallow, Tree: (20)5, Sugarland, (25)20, Bolivar, TEⅅ (10)16, Houston, BF; (4)16, High I., PJ; (10)17, Texas City, JH; (15)19, Spaceland, (20+)30, High I., JM; (4)20, Freeport Marsh, SC; (20)26, Bolivar, WC; (n/c)28, Anahuac, R.
- Swallow, Bank: (2)20, Dow Nature Trail, L&MB.
- Swallow, Rough-winged: (1)5, Ft. Bend, JM, GC; (5)25, Freeport, L&MB.
- Swallow, Barn: (2)16, Houston, BF; (5)19, Bolivar, (2)30, High I., JM; (25)20, Dike, TEⅅ (1)25, Freeport, L&MB; (3)25, (7)26, Freeport Park, T&SC; (2)26, Bolivar, WC; (4)27, Kempner Park, HH; (1)28, Anahuac, R; (25)30, Ft. Bend, T&JE.
- Martin, Purple: (5)Feb. 5, Maner Lake, W&GC; (5)5-31, yard, DM; (n/c)13, W. Harris, FC; (10)19, High I., JM; (n/c)28, Anahuac, R.
- Crow, Fish: (2)16, Magnolia Cemetery, Beaumont, PJ; (25+)31, Beaumont Dump, MJ, et al.
- Nuthatch, Brown-headed: (1)6, yard, JM.
- Creeper, Brown: (2)4, Ft. Bend, C; (1)5, Ft. Bend, JM&GC; (1)9, Lake Jackson, SC; (1)28, High I., R.
- Wren, House: (1-2)all month, White Oak Bayou, WC; (1)5, 11, yard, DM.
- Wren, Winter: (1-2)1-23, White Oak Bayou, WC.
- Marsh Wren, Short-billed: (4)19, Spaceland Airport, (1)30, Anahuac, JM; (1)22, Anahuac, BF; (1)28, Anahuac, R.
- Catbird, Gray: (1)13, High I., E; (1)16, W. Harris, T&JE; (1)19, High I., JB; (1)19, Dow Nature Trail, AA, L&MB, SW; (1)19, Kempner Park, JM&GC.
- Mockingbird: (1 nesting)16, yard, DM (see notes).
- Thrasher, Brown: (12)4, Ft. Bend, C; (2)5, 11, yard, DM; (30)5, (300+)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (n/c)6, 13, W. Harris, FC; (2)16, High I., PJ; (1)19, W. Harris, GH; (3)28, Anahuac, R.
- THRASHER, CURVE-BILLED: (1)16, W. Galveston, BF (previously reported).
- Robin, American: (25)4, Ft. Bend, C; (200+)5, (150+)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (n/c)6, 13, W. Harris, FC; (1)20, Galveston Co. Park, JB; (1)20, yard, P&MJ; (n/c)28, High I., R.
- Thrush, Wood: (1)12, Kempner Park, OG; (1)23, White Oak Bayou, WC; (1)23-26, Freeport Park, BF; (1)25, 27, Freeport Park, L&MB; (2)26, Kempner Park, JB.
- Thrush, Hermit: (6)4, Ft. Bend, C; (5)5, Ft. Bend Co., JM, GC; (1)11, yard, DM; (2)13, yard, P&MJ; (4)16, White Park, PJ; (2)28, High I., R.
- Thrush, Swainson's: (1)24, Galveston, BF (see notes)
- Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: (1)6, 8, 15, (5)23, 28, (10)25, (2)31, White Oak Bayou, WC; (30)12, High I., OG; (20)13, High I., E; (25)20, High I., TEⅅ (7)25, (3)26, (1)27, Freeport Park, T&SC; (n/c)28, High I., R.
- Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: (10)4, Ft. Bend, C; (1)5, (3)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (1)27, Freeport Park, T&SC; (4)28, High I., R.
- Pipit, Water: (30)4, C, (12)5, (20)13, J&KM, GC - Ft. Be...
- Pipit, Sprague's: (4)Feb. 13, Dike, WC, et al (see notes); (2)13, Ft. Bend, JM (see notes) (2)23, Dike, BF (no field notes).
- Waxwing, Cedar: (20+)all month, Lake Jackson, T&SC; (n/c)13, W. Harris, FC; (1)19, W. Harris, GH; (20)19, 20, yard, DM.
- Starling: (nesting pair)Feb. 4 to March 26 yard, DM (see notes).
- Vireo, White-eyed: (1)13, 28, 29, White Oak Bayou, (1)27, City Hall, (30)26, High I., W&GC; (5)13, Ft. Bend, (50)30, High I., J&KM; (1)19, 20, Lake Jackson; (10)25, Freeport Park, T&SC; (10)20, Kempner Park, TEⅅ (2)22, High I., (9)24, Kempner Park, BF; (1)27, South Blvd., P&MJ; (32)28, High I., R.
- Vireo, Yellow-throated: (2-3)24, 25, Freeport Park, T&SC; (2)24, Kempner Park, BF; (1)25, Freeport Park, L&MB; (2)26, High I., WC; (1)27, South Blvd., P&MJ; (6)28, High I., R; (1)30, High I., JM.
- Vireo, Solitary: (1)13, Ft. Bend, (1)30, White Park, (2)30, High I., JM.
- Vireo, Red-eyed: (1)18, Houston, T&JE; (2)20, TE&DD, (2)26, W&GC, (1)28, R, (2)30, JM - High I.; (1)24, Menard House, BF; (1)28, White Oak Bayou, W&GC.
- Warbler, Black-and White: (10)12, OG, (10)13, E, (3)19, JB, (15)20, TE&DD, (2)22, BF, (10)26, WC, (n/c)28, R. - High I.; (1)12, BH, (2)16, 24, BF, (1)26, JB - Galveston; (1)13, Baytown, D&JD; (1)14, W. Harris Co., JH; (1)17, AA, (1)17, 20, (1-15)23-28, T&SC, (1)23, (3)25, (4)27, L&MB - Freeport Area; (1)17, Dike, JH; (3)18, T&JE, (1)27, WC, (2)27, P&MJ - Houston area.

- Warbler, Prothonotary: (2)24, Kempner, BF; (4)26, WC, (4)28, R, (2)30, JM - High I.; (1-3)26, 27, T&SC, (3)27, L&MB - Freeport Park.
- Warbler, Swainson's: (1)26, Kempner, JB.
- Warbler, Worm-eating: (1)22, BF, (1)26, WC, (2)28, R, (1)30, JM - High I.; (1)23, 25, 28, L&MB, (1-15)25-28, T&SC - Freeport Park; (1)24, BF, (1)26, JB, (3)27, HH - Kempner; (1)28, T&JE, (1)31, WC - City Hall; (2)27, South Blvd., P&MJ
- Warbler, Blue-winged: (1)21, yard, Houston, Avis Brister; (3)26, High I., WC; (3)27, Kempner, HH.
- Warbler, Orange-crowned: (1)12, Galveston, BH; (1)19, 30, High I., JM; (1)28, High I., R.
- Warbler, Nashville: (2)22, High I., BF.
- Warbler, Northern Parula: (3)12, OG, (1)13, E, (3)19, JB, (2)20, TE&DD, (6)26, W&GC, (6)28, R, (8)30, JM - High I.; (1)13, Baytown, D&JD; (2)16, Galveston, (2)24, Kempner, BF; (1)17, SW, (1)18, (1)20, (1-6)23, 26, T&SC, (1)25, L&MB - Freeport area; (1)19, Kempner, JM; (3)27, South Blvd., P&MJ.
- Warbler, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle: (200+)5, (5)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (n/c)6, 13, W. Harris, FC; (1)17, Dike, JH; (2)26, High I., WC; (n/c)27, South Blvd., P&MJ; (4)28, High I., R; (4)30, Galveston, DM.
- Warbler, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's): (1)20, High I., D&JD.
- Warbler, Black-throated Green: (1)24, Kempner, BF; (1)28, High I., R; (1)28, City Hall, T&JE.
- Warbler, Yellow-throated: (1)5, JB, (1)22, BF, (1)28, R, (3)30, JM - High I.; (2-6)25, 26, T&SC, (1)25, 27, L&MB - Freeport Park.
- Warbler, Palm: (1)Feb. 4, White Oak Bayou, WC.
- Ovenbird: (1)30, (3)31, Freeport Park, L&MB.
- Waterthrush, Northern: (1)24, Kempner, BF.
- Waterthrush, Louisiana: (1)6, D&JD, (1)12, OG, (1)16, PJ, (1)19, JB, (1)20, TE&DD, (2)26, WC, (3)28, R - High I.; (1)13, Baytown Civic Center, D&JD; (1)27, Freeport Park, T&SC; (1)27, City Hall, WC; (2)27, Kempner, HH.
- Warbler, Kentucky: (1)26, High I., WC; (1)27, Freeport Park, T&SC; (3)27, Kempner Park, HH; (2)28, High I., R; (2)28, City Hall, T&JE.
- Warbler, Hooded: (1)19, JM, (4)20, TE&DD, (5)24, BF, (3)26, JB, (4)27, HH - Kempner; (2)23, 27, (1)25, L&MB, (1-6)24-28, T&SC - Freeport Park; (3)26, WC, (4)28, R, (1)30, JM - High I.; (1)27, W. Harris, GH; (1)27, South Blvd. P&MJ; (1)28, City Hall, BH.
- Oriole, Orchard: (1)12, Kempner, OG; (1)24, Freeport Park, (1)28, Lake Jackson, T&SC; (1)27, W. Galveston, HH; (1)27, South Blvd., P&MJ.
- Oriole, Northern (Baltimore): (1)17, High I., Wesley Brannan.
- Blackbird, Rusty: (7)4, Ft. Bend, C.
- Blackbird, Brewers: (n/c)13, W. Harris, FC.
- Cowbird, Bronzed: (1)10, Lake Jackson, SC, SW (previously reported).
- Tanager, Summer: (1)12, High I., OG; (1)13, High I., E; (1)26, High I., WC; (1)27, Kempner, HH
- Grosbeak, Black-headed: (1)26, 27, 28, Lake Jackson, T&SC (see notes).
- Bunting, Indigo: (4)27, Kempner, HH; (1)28, High I., R; (6)31, High I., WC.
- Finch, Purple: (1)1, yard, JM; (1)4, yard, P&MJ; (5-10)5, 6, 8, White Oak Bayou, WC.
- Siskin, Pine: (40+)13, Dow Nature Trail, L&MB.
- Goldfinch, American: (n/c)13, W. Harris, FC; (9)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM.
- Towhee, Rufous-sided: (1)5, Ft. Bend, (1 spotted)5, W. Harris, JM; (1-2)all month, White Oak Bayou, WC; (1)16, Galveston, BF; (1)27, Kempner, HH.
- Sparrow, Savannah: (2)5, Ft. Bend, JM, GC; (n/c)6, 13, W. Harris, FC; (n/c)28, Anahuac, R.
- Sparrow, Grasshopper: (1)13, White Oak Bayou, WC (see notes).
- Sparrow, LeConte's: (1)1, 7, White Oak Bayou; (8)19, Spaceland Airport, JM, GC; (1)22, Galveston, BF.
- Sparrow, Henslow's: (1)19, Spaceland Airport, JM&GC (see notes).
- Sparrow, Vesper: (3)5, W. Harris, JM&GC; (2)30, Galveston, DM.
- Junco, Dark-eyed (Slate-colored): (15)5, W. Harris, TEⅅ (13)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM; (5)13, Dow Nature Trail, L&MB; (4)13, W. Harris, FC.
- Sparrow, Chipping: (18)16, White Park, PJ.
- Sparrow, Field: (1)Feb. 4, 17, White Oak Bayou, WC; (3)5, Ft. Bend, JM&GC; (1)13, W. Harris, FC; (3)19, W. Harris, GH.
- Sparrow, White-crowned: (n/c)13, W. Harris, FC; (75-one flock)16, W. Harris, T&JE.
- Sparrow, White-throated: (2-5)all month, yard, P&MJ; (100+)5, (150+)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (3)11, yard, DM; (n/c)13, W. Harris, FC; (n/c)28, High I., R.
- Sparrow, Fox: (5)5, W. Harris, JM&GC.
- Sparrow, Lincoln's: (2)13, (2)5, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC.
- Sparrow, Swamp: (1)5, (1)13, Ft. Bend, J&KM, GC; (1)13, W. Harris, FC; (8)28, Anahuac, R.
- Sparrow, Song: (1-6)1-20, White Oak Bayou, WC; (3)5, W. Harris, (1)13, Ft. Bend, JM; (n/c)13, Bolivar, JB.

A summary of reports of abundant and fairly common species occurring throughout March, April and May in the UTC will be published in the June issue of the SPOONBILL - C-H Editor.

CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS (39 plus OG field trip): AA-Anne Atkin; JB-Joyce Brannon, L&MB-Larry & Martha Ballard; C-party of Mary Ann Chapman, T. Ben Feltner, & C. Dean Fisher; BC-Bessie Cornelius; FC-Fred Collins; G&WC-Glenn & Wesley Cureton; T&SC-Tom & Sherry Collins; AD-Archer Dillard; D&JD-David & Jan Dauphin; E-Ted Sr., Jr., and Mary Eubanks; T&JE-Ted, Jr. and Janet Eubanks; BF-T. Ben Feltner; B&JH-Bill & Jean Harwell; GH-George Howe; HH-Holly Hobart; P&MJ-T. Paul & Margaret Jones; DM-David Marrack; J&KM-Jim & Kevin Morgan; BM-Bob Moulton; BO-Babette Odom; OG-Ornithology Group field trip; R-party of LW & Margaret Anderson, Virginia Courtney, P&MJ & Norma Oates. SW-Shirley Wright. These observers reported a total of 242 species seen in March.

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES, March, 1977

Red-throated Loon: Bird in winter plumage was much smaller than nearby Commons. Finer specking on back and definitely upturned, thin bill. Seen in good light at 25 yds. with 15-60X teles. and 10x50 binocs. --David Dauphin

Greater Scaup: Like Lessers, but white wing-stripe went through the bend of the wing. Seen in flight at 40 yds. with 10x50 binocs. --David Dauphin

Bird first seen on water and appeared much "whiter" on sides than nearby Lesser Scaup. When the bird flew, the white in the wing linings was very noticeable and extended well beyond the bend of the wings, confirming the species. Bird was seen by both observers for 2 minutes in good light with 8x40 and 10x50 binoculars. -- Jim Morgan and Glenn Cureton.

Oldsquaw: Female, probably from same pair seen at this location all winter by me and others. The bird reported at the HL&P Cooling ponds was described and reported to me by Mrs. Mary Jones. --David Dauphin

Seen just beyond the breakers - white face marks, pintail; white flanks on otherwise dark appearance. --Joyce Brannon

Surf Scoters: Males with white nape and forehead patch; orange, white and black bill that sloped out from forehead. Females with two white patches on face - one in front of and below eye, other patch was about even with and behind eye. Large black ducks swimming low in water. Observed very close to water's edge, about 30-40 feet out into the surf. --T. Paul Jones

Common Scoter: Males had yellow protuberance on upper mandible just in front of forehead. Rounded head and short neck. Swam low in surf. Females not as black as males. Facial pattern was dark over top of head and down nape. Lighter brownish gray on cheeks and front of throat. Back of body was brownish black. These birds commingling with Scaup along shallow beach surf for a distance of about 2 miles between Shorty's Longest Pier and Gulf Haven Pier around 3-4 PM with densely overcast sky and some mist and fog. Temperature approximately 70°. --T. Paul Jones

Swallow-tailed Kite: Two birds about 10 miles east of Galveston Ferry along Hwy 87 over open farmland. These graceful creatures were hawking insects just over the fence line, swooping up and down in an effortless performance. A medium sized hawk with long pointed wings and deeply forked tail, white head, hindneck and rump patch. Black backs, upper wings and tails. In flight underparts were white and wing linings were black and light gray on leading edge. Birds were so near to us that no binoculars were used. --Betty Cornelius

MISSISSIPPI KITE: Bird flew overhead, circling about 100 ft. above me. Falcon-shaped wings were very light in the rear edge, black at the tips. Tail was long, slightly notched, black, and I saw no barring. Body was gray, head and throat were very light, almost white. Bird often folded wings and dived close to ground. Good light with 7x35 binocs. --David Dauphin

Swainson's Hawk: Distance 10 yds., light fair, no binoculars, bird flew over car; in view 20 sec. plainly seen light belly, underwing coverts and dark throat ("hood") and dark flight feathers. 6PM. --Holly Hobart & Debbie DeKeyser

Merlin: One on the Sun Oil property west of Gilchrist on Hwy 87, Galveston Co., in a sparse stand of small trees. This small falcon had the typical pointed wings, was stocky and lacked strong facial markings; brown back indicating either a female or an immature. Mostly grayish brown overall with four or five light and dark bars on tail. "Eyebrows" appeared an indistinct buffy color. Dr. Stuart Wier of Lumberton discovered the bird on 2/20/77, and said he had seen a Merlin in the exact spot 12 years ago. This bird was larger than the Kestrel and lacked strong facial marks of that bird. Observers: Babette Odom, Betty Cornelius and Dr. Stuart Wier. -- Betty Cornelius

American Woodcock: Plump, short-legged plover with brownish-orange face and breast.

In short-grass field at dusk. Gave a one-note nighthawk-like call. With each note turned its head so that beak was almost parallel to the ground. 10x50 binoculars, 30 ft. --Wesley Cureton

REEVE: Seen in almost exact spot at which Margaret Jones and Margaret Anderson reported seeing it earlier this year. (Bob and Mary Ann Moore reported it from here several years ago). The bird was feeding with Pectorals and Lesser Yellowlegs. It was larger than both, but not quite as tall as Lesser Yellowlegs. Back, wings, head and tail: warm brown. Back "scalloped" something like Baird's Sandpiper. Legs shorter than Lesser Yellowlegs: dull orange yellow; beak about same length as Lesser Yellowlegs: black in color with thickened base same color as its legs. Fore neck and upper breast very lightly streaked with brown. Bird flushed twice, both times exhibiting white saddlebags on rump like large Violet-green Swallow. Bird was not heard to call. Observed for about two minutes at approximately 18 ft. Too close for telescope; used 8x40 binoculars in sunlight, thus noticing all field marks under excellent conditions. Also seen by several members of Roadrunner Nature Tours, including Dr. Jack D. Taylor, Ornithologist, University of Oklahoma. This was my third Texas sighting of this bird. --T. Ben Feltner

Wilson's Phalarope: Pale stiletto-beaked shorebird observed on Sportsman Road. Phalarope was still in winter plumage, the tail showing no markings (all white) when the bird flew. --Ted Eubanks, Jr.

Slender dark bill, needle shaped; short black stripe through eye; pale gray cap on crown of head; white breast; greenish legs; uniformly dark wings and back. Observed near a pond close to the Brazos River commingling with a group of snipes and yellowlegs. Observed at about 30 yds., overcast sky, fair light for about 5 minutes with 8x50 and 10x50 binoculars. --Larry Ballard

Burrowing Owl: Observed by Tom and Alberta Childress about 5:00 PM west of Mayde Creek, W. Harris Co., March 6, 1977. They made no field notes but were convincing in their description. I decided to return to try to find the bird exactly a week later. On March 13, 1977, accompanied by Loern Korne I drove to the spot described by the Childress's. It was about 7:30 AM and the dew was heavy. I stopped about 1/2 mile west of Mayde Creek and scanned the fence post. I spotted a small brown owl hunched up in a roosting position on a post. I drove closer to obtain a picture. The owl stood erect, shook its feathers and dropped to the ground. Its small size (about 12 inches overall) long, bare tarsus, and earless head left no doubt that it was a burrowing owl. No other American owl is similar. I obtained a photo of the bird while it stood in its very distinctive posture near the crest of a low levee. As we moved closer (to within 50 feet) it flew into an area of fresh, low green forbs. There, instead of the brown plowed brown field, it seemed not very cryptic, however the owl proceeded to exhibit a behavior novel to me. Instead of leaning forward as is characteristic for this species (at least in north and west Texas) it laid down and prostrated itself on the ground. Only the yellow eyes and top of its round head were visible. Suddenly it was almost indistinguishable from several cow chips in the green forbs. Where the owl stood conspicuously moments before I now required my binoculars to distinguish it. We proceeded to its roost post and found five pellets. A burrow nearby showed no signs of entry and smelled of skunk. I concluded the owl was not entering the burrow and its proximity to the roost post was coincidence. At this writing the pellets have not been analyzed but appear to contain more mammal material than I have yet seen in this species. I visited this roost pole again on March 19th and found no owl nor any more pellets. Apparently the owl has left the area and was there for only about a week. --Fred Collins

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD: Bird observed feeding in flowers near entrance to Scout Woods; male in full nuptial plumage; black chin bordered below by a violet-purple gorget; clear white breast below the gorget. --Ted Eubanks, Jr.

Mockingbird: Nesting in yard in a Holly bush about 4 feet high. Eggs in nest since 16th March. We meet eye-to-eye but she does not move. --David Marrack

Swainson's Thrush: Seen at 33rd and Ursaline in Galveston. Wood and Hermit Thrushes also present for direct comparison with this bird. Observed for about 15 minutes intermittently by approximately 20 observers. Uniformly dusky gray-brown back, wings, nape and upper tail. Prominent ochrous eye-ring and wash about face and upper breast. Spotting a little heavier than Hermit Thrush, but considerably less than the Wood Thrush. Seen at distances down to 20 ft. with 8x40 binoculars in subdued and shaded light. Same size as Hermit Thrush. Writer has seen thousands of these birds. --T. Ben Feltner

Sprague's Pipit: Seen in field of short grass. Smaller than meadowlarks. Walked instead of hopping. Sandy brown color; scaly looking on back. Gave a sweet tinkling call in flight. 20 feet, 7x50 binoculars, full sun. Observed by Jackie May, Glenn and Wesley Cureton. --Wesley Cureton

Starling: Pair of starlings first seen at nesting activity in yard on 2/4 and last on 3/26. Nest is in a hole on the underside of a rotten tallow tree branch. How the young left from this hole I don't know, as it is 20 feet to the ground. --David Marrack.

Black-headed Grosbeak: Seen from our yard for 3 days in a row as close as 15 feet. Adult male: head black with heavy grosbeak bill. Black wings with one prominent white wing bar, one less well marked. Breast and belly brick orange, with orange extending up around the back and down the center of the back. Black streaking on the back. Tail black with white. Our house is about 1/2 mile from the place where we saw a female in December. --Sherry Collins

Grasshopper Sparrow: Second sighting at White Oak Bayou; last year on April 2. In edge of thicket bordering on grassy field. Very small in comparison to nearby white-throats. Long, flat-topped head. Short, pointed tail. Unstreaked buffy breast, belly, flank and face. No hint of yellow as in Le Conte's sparrows which have been in the same area this winter. Two dark stripes on crown. Strongly streaked back. Streaked, purplish nape. Dark eye. 7x50, up to 10 ft., in full sun. --Wesley M. Cureton

Henslow's Sparrow: This bird was located in the grassy area north of North Runway at Spaceland Airport. The bird flew to perch in fork of a small bush and remained there for 5 minutes. The bird had an olive green head with dark streaks through crown, dark brown/chestnut back streaks and chestnut in back edges of folded wings. A small white eye ring was visible as was a white throat. The breast was light buffy colored with dark streaks, extending over to sides. Light, unstreaked belly and large, light-colored bill. Short, sharp tail. After both observers viewed the bird and notes were taken at no more than 12-15 ft. away, the bird was approached to within 4 ft. before it flew. Bird was seen at 7:00 AM in good early morning light with 8x40 and 10x50 binoculars. --Jim Morgan

SPECIAL REPORTS TO THE CLEARING HOUSE

Some past sightings from Tom and Sherry Collins in the Lake Jackson area before they knew of the SPOONBILL and the OG:

1. RED CROSSBILL: One on January 7, 1973. We later found that this was a time of a Red Crossbill invasion, but Vic (presumably Victor Emanuel--C-H Ed.) told us he did not know they had come this far. We saw the bird from a distance of about 25 feet -- dull red color, darker wings, heavy bill crossed at end.
2. NORTHER PHALAROPE: One on May 4, 1975. This bird was seen several times during a week and a half period, first by us, then by the Ballards. We noticed it because the bill was not as needle-like as the Wilson's Phalarope we were used to seeing. We flushed it and saw the wing stripes and the dark tail which also eliminated the Wilson's. The bird was still in winter plumage and had a dark stripe through the eye.

Possible nesting of a Hooded Merganser in Ft. Bend County

On March 4, 1977, several members of the OG team doing a bird survey for the TP&W Dept. on the Hale Ranch Park Site in Ft. Bend County observed a female Hooded Merganser as it flew into a hole about 20 feet up on the side of a dead pecan tree. An examination of the hole on the next day revealed one egg in the nest. Weather conditions prevented further examination or observation at the site until April 8, at which time the nest was found to contain 5 or 6 eggs. The merganser was not seen on the April date, and the park manager had not seen any mergansers for some time. Further observation and examination will be made. Observers in the original party were Mary Ann Chapman, T. Ben Feltner and C. Dean Fisher. There are no prior nesting reports by Hooded Mergansers in Texas. --C-H Editor

Research reports on "all white gull" observed at Quintana and other nearby locations in February:

A letter from Ben Feltner: "The following two letters should be of interest to all who were concerned about the identification of the mysterious all-white gull discovered earlier in the season. The letter from Alan Wormington was unsolicited and helps, I believe, lay to rest one of our theories. The letter from Davis Finch was, as you can see, in answer to a query by me.

"I should like it known that I personally believe Davis to be the best field expert on gulls in North America. I think the consensus is that the bird is unquestionably not an Iceland Gull. I personally feel that it is an aberrant Herring Gull."

A letter from Alan Wormington of Canada to Ben Feltner: "After meeting you at the Quintana jetty we spent some time fooking for the "Iceland Gull". We found it farther down on the beach. Without doubt the bird is not an Iceland Gull but a "white" or albino Herring Gull. The bird is too white for an Iceland Gull and, if an immature, lacks an all black bill or black-tipped bill (immature to adult transition), and if the bird is an adult it lacks a light gray mantle which you already mentioned. The legs are too long and the shape of the bird is unlike an Iceland Gull. I have enclosed a photo of an imm. Iceland Gull for yourself and other Texas birders to use in the future as a reference." (This photo was displayed at the April OG meeting. -- Ed.)

A letter from Davis Finch to Ben Feltner: ".....I really don't know what it is. Probably I can be most helpful by expressing a few negative certitudes, the first of which I share with you: it isn't a Glaucous Gull. I'm equally sure it isn't an Iceland Gull: bill too hefty, legs too long, and a number of subliminal impressions that I can't isolate contribute to this as well.....Bill looks big for Thayer's Gull. Iris color probably excludes it. Soapy whiteness of the bird together with the delicately fringed (worn?) look of the primary tips in flight suggests a leucistic bird, but the exact appearance of tips may just be a function of shutter speed, and the soapy look may just be exposure. If I had to say....maybe funny Herring Gull? Bleached and worn Thayer's are said by some to be very pale in second winter, but I can hardly imagine one this pale. Have you considered funny Glaucous-winged? Unlikely no doubt but one of the few remaining possibilities."

Ted Eubanks has summarized the comments of the preceding three plus those of Will Russell, who also viewed the slides that Ted took. These four have 1st hand knowledge of the Iceland Gull, and their comments add greatly to the less than comprehensive accounts of this gull in the field guides. The comments of all four, combined with the excellent photograph sent by Wormington, make it obvious that the Quintana Gull is not an Iceland, but an aberrant Herring Gull.

Bill Length: Measurements made on bill from slides of the Quintana gull were compared with those made by Feltner on the Iceland in Wormington's photograph. The measurements on the Iceland were in all instances much less than those of the Quintana Gull. Feltner described the bill of the Iceland as being "near in size to that of a Laughing Gull". Although the bill of the Quintana gull appeared to be markedly smaller than those of nearby Herring Gulls, this discrepancy can possibly be attributed to the normal size variation found in most species.

Feather wear: Russell, Finch and Feltner commented on the extreme feather wear observed in the flight slide. According to Russell, albino feathers wear more extensively than normal feathers.

Bill color: The bill of the Quintana gull is basally yellow with a reddish spot confined primarily to an area near the tip of the lower mandible, i.e., the bill of an adult. The Quintana gull, however, lacks any semblance of the silvery-gray mantle associated with an adult Iceland. An immature Iceland, depending on which field guide you read, has either an all-dark bill or a grayish bill with a dark tip.

Leg Length: All four remarked that the legs of the Quintana gull were much too long for an Iceland. The leg length is considered vital by these experienced observers, yet the most-used field guides don't mention this.

So THE SPOONBILL hopes we have all learned a bit more about how to sort out the "possibles" when we see a strange gull. Every little bit we can learn on one helps better prepare us for the next "puzzler".

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING, ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, April 7, 1977

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Avis Brister at 7:35 p.m. Since there were no corrections to the Minutes of the February meeting as published in the SPOONBILL, the Chairman declared the Minutes approved as published.

Treasurer Mary Gillette reported that income for the past two months amounted to \$127.81, expenses \$145.89, leaving a balance on hand March 31, 1977 of \$1045.94. Also, dues could now be paid to Mary, \$5.00 to the Outdoor Nature Club and \$2.00 to the Ornithology Group. But please don't send Ornithology Group dues to the Outdoor Nature Club, just send the \$5.00 and then send the OG \$2.00 to Mary.

SPOONBILL Editor Margaret Jones reported that 331 SPOONBILLS would be mailed this month.

Clearing House Editor Paul Jones said they were anxious to get reports from everyone, please put down quantities if possible, and the more common species would be summarized at the end of the quarter.

Aluminum Chairman Jerry Baker said that aluminum had not been coming in as well as previously and urged members to remember to bring aluminum to the meetings. Chairman Brister, in response to a question, explained that we collected aluminum cans on our field trips, sold them to Reynolds, and in this way felt we were helping the environment in a small way as well as our treasury.

Rare Bird Alert Chairman David Dauphin reported an alert on the Williamson's Sapsucker in Austin, which a good number of people got to see. The Ruff was seen February 15th in Galveston, a Glaucous Gull at Bolivar Flats, and the Ruff (really a Reeve) was seen again March 24th off Sportsman's Road in Galveston.

In his other role of Field Trip Chairman, David reminded us of the Audubon trip on Saturday to see the Black Francolin, the OG field trip April 16th, at High Island led by Paul Nimmons, the West Galveston trip May 14th to be led by Ted Eubanks, and the TOS field trip April 21-23.

Jack Gillette showed slides he had taken of the Black-legged Kittiwake which has wintered on the Texas City Dike, also some of the Williamson's Sapsucker in Austin.

Chairman Brister announced that the next regular meeting would be the annual picnic May 7th at the Clayton's beach house in Galveston, members will bring their own picnic lunch, have a meeting at 11 a.m. and directions will be given in the next SPOONBILL. David Dauphin said that there would be a meeting after lunch of all standing committee chairmen for next year.

Paul Jones reported that the survey of the Hale Ranch had been somewhat impeded by the wet weather and mud, but now they hoped to get a member of the team in about every week and were attempting to follow all recommendations of the Texas Park and Wildlife Department.

Chairman Brister said that Fred Collins is making a breeding bird survey at the Audubon Edith Moore Sanctuary and has asked our help. Anyone interested could pick up a form with map and directions, make a trip there, and leave the copy in the box by the house. Additional copies may be picked up there.

On March 19th Chairman Brister and Ted Eubanks talked with the docents at the Houston Arboretum who are trying to expand the services there and have asked the Outdoor Nature Club to help, specifically to make a bird check list. Ted Eubanks and Wesley Cureton have offered to head up a committee to do this and would be glad of any offers to help.

Chairman Brister also reminded members of the ONC meeting April 12th, visitors day at the ONC Sanctuary April 16th. As Activities Chairman for ONC next year Jack Gillette urged all ONC board members to attend the planning meeting the first weekend in June and all non-board members to let him know what kind of programs they were interested in having next year.

Vice-chairman Pat Sullivan said she had a count of 56 people present at the meeting, possibly more visitors than members. The visitors were introduced, welcomed, and urged to join if they were interested.

(Concluded on next page)

(Detach and return)

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Program Chairman Bob Moulton introduced the speaker, Kay Lewis, who showed moving pictures she had taken in and around the Houston-Galveston area. Members were treated to close-ups of birds in action--feeding, nesting, flying, perching, etc. Some species shown were spoonbills, herons, egrets, gulls, purple martins, blue jays, hummingbirds, house sparrows, evening grosbeak, American goldfinch, black skimmers, and a vermilion flycatcher; also white-tailed kite, prairie chickens, meadowlark, sparrows.

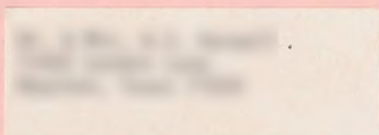
The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Suzi Campbell, Secretary

ORNITHOLOGY GROUP
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Names for Reference:

Chairman:	Mrs. Harry Brister, 2314 Saxon, Houston, 77018	681-6458
Treasurer:	Mrs. J.M. Gillette, 5027 Longmont, Houston 77056	626-1758
SPOONBILL:	Mrs. T. Paul Jones, 4902 Fern, Bellaire, Texas 77401	665-4198
Clearing House:	Mr. T. Paul Jones, 4902 Fern, Bellaire, Texas 77401	665-4198
Rare Bird Alert:	Mr. David Dauphin, 2300 Taft, #165, Baytown, Tex. 77520	422-7536
Change of address:	Mrs. Richard Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston, 77096	723-8558