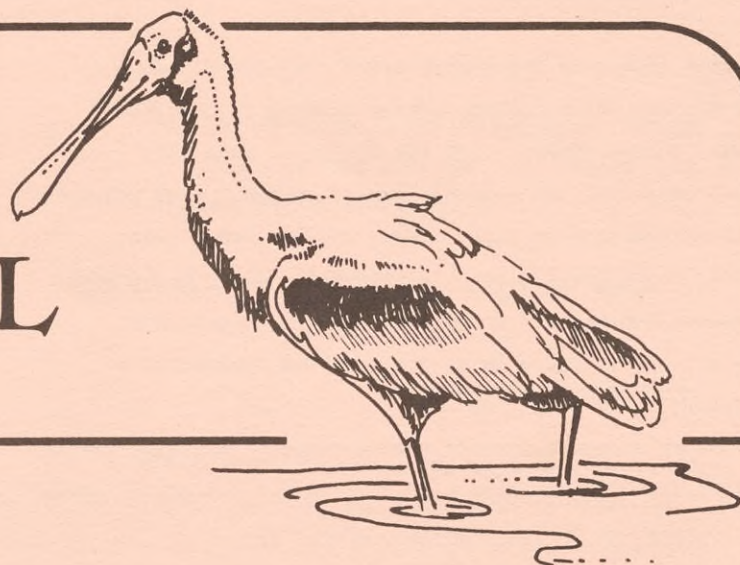


The SPOONBILL



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PUBLISHED BY THE ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB
HOUSTON, TEXAS B.C. ROBINSON, EDITOR

MINUTES OF THE OG MEETING, FEB. 3, 1983

Ted Eubanks opened the meeting. Linda Walsh reported there is \$4,749.95 in the OG treasury. New dues are \$11.00 per person, \$9.00 for subscribers only. The upcoming field trips and programs were announced. Rare birds for the month included numerous Bewick's Wrens and Harris Hawks, also Caracara, White-tailed Hawk, eagles, Cinnamon Teal in West Harris County. A Rough-legged Hawk was seen on the Lone Star Trail and Fulvous Whistling Ducks at Anahuac. Checklists for UTC birds are on sale at every meeting for 25¢.

Ted announced that both Mitchell Development and Homecraft received permission this month from the Corps of Engineers to go ahead with their developments on West Galveston Island. However in another area, the Sierra Club won its suit against Galveston in the matter of the deep water port. That case now goes back to the District Court for further environmental investigation.

The nomination committee of the OG presented the slate of

officers for the upcoming year: Pres.-Don Richardson, V.Pres.-Wes Cureton, Sec.Javan Shelly, Treas.-Linda Roach. A motion was made by Peggy Milstead that the slate be accepted by acclamation. It passed unanimously.

There was an auction of a model of a Bufflehead for the benefit of the High Island Fund of the Houston Audubon Society. It was sold to Larry Ballard for \$50.00.

Bruce Halstead of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gave a film and slide show emphasizing the importance of wetlands to wildlife. It was both informative and disturbing as we were shown the far reaching consequences of destroying the marshes.

Ellen Red, Secretary

MINUTES OF THE OG MEETING, MARCH 3, 1983

Ted Eubanks opened the meeting and called for the Treasurer's report. Linda Walsh stated there was a balance on hand of \$5,762.24.

Ron Braun announced the coming field trip and program. Rare birds for the month include a grey-crowned yellow throat found at San Ignacio, Texas. For the UTC there have been black-headed grosbeaks and golden plover reported. Also purple martins and yellow-crowned night herons are now being seen.

Ted told about putting out the Spoonbill in its new printed form and encouraged members to be creative and imaginative in sending in articles. There is also a need for typists with IBM typewriters.

Ben Feltner introduced Linda Roach, talented wildlife artist and member of the OG. She gave a delightful program on the steps she takes to make one of her beautiful paintings.

Ellen Red, Secretary

MINUTES OF THE OG MEETING, APRIL 7, 1983

Ted Eubanks opened the meeting. Bob Behrstock reported for the treasurer. There is a balance on hand of \$6,042.99.

Future field trips and programs were reported. The rare birds seen this month included Arctic Loons at Offats Bayou, four Chestnut-collared Longspurs on West Galveston, Black throated Gray and an early Cape May Warbler at High Island, two Old Squaws, a Henslow Sparrow near the ferry, White Wing Scoters near H.I. and a Green-tailed Towhee at Old House.

Ted Eubanks gave the program on Spring Migrants of the UTC.

Ellen Red, Secretary

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

No trips planned due to lack of willing, available, qualified leaders.

May

Saturday Annual Spring Round Up. Choose your own party and
May 7 area. Contact coordinator David Matson for details.

Calendar, Cont'd.

May

Fri-Sunday OG weekend in Hill Country at Pendernales Falls State Park. Arrange own camping within park or stay in motels in nearby Johnson City. Birding on Saturday and Sunday. Owling on Saturday night.

May 7

* * * * *

Spring Round-Up. Choose your partners for this year's OG Spring Round-Up. The idea is to bird anywhere you like and with anyone you like, with the hope that together we will find all the birds that are on the Upper Texas Coast on that day. Report forms and checklists will be handed out the April and May OG meetings. For more information on the Round-Up or to get forms, call or write David Matson, 5510 Arboles, Houston, TX 77035, phone: (713) 723-1968. Those participants who would like to meet for a "count-down" can gather at Hill's Restaurant, at the corner of 20th and the docks in Galveston, at 7:00 p.m. on the 7th. To get to the restaurant, take Broadway to 19th and turn (Lipton Tea building). Turn left, to 20th, and then right to the docks (you'll be right there!). Those who don't make it can send their completed forms to David Matson at the above address. All reports will be forwarded to the Clearing House.

Spring Migration Field Trips:

Elaine Robinson Adams will lead two field trips to the stopping places or "traps" of thousands of migrating passerines and shore birds.

TRIP I: Visit the High Island migrant traps and then drive to Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, birding and roadside and flooded rice fields along the way.
Saturday, April 30th and again May 7th.

TRIP II: Visit the High Island migrant traps, then bird the Bolivar Peninsular for migrant shore and wading birds.

Sunday, May 1st and again May 8th.

For more information and a brochure, call Rice University's Offices of Continuing Studies and Special Programs: 527-4803.

served basis, until all 40 spaces are filled. You won't want to miss this one. Great birding in magnificent surroundings.

UPPER TEXAS COAST CHECKLIST SUPPLEMENT AND UPDATE
AS OF
DECEMBER 31, 1982

T. Ben Feltner, Jim Morgan,
Noel Pettingell

OG Big Bend National Park Trip: Sept. 13 - 18th

A five-day field trip to Big Bend National Park is being finalized for the 13th through 18th of September, 1983, during the heart of fall migration. We have been fortunate enough to book twenty rooms at the park lodge, a feat of no small accomplishment. Tentative plans call for us to leave Houston in early evening on Tuesday, 13th. Our first stop will be Davis Mountain State Park with a day's birding in the vicinity. Specialties here include Montezuma Quail, Black Hawk and Mountain Plovers. (Overnight in Fort Davis). The remaining three days will be spent at Big Bend National Park. Varied Bunting, Townsend's Warblers, Hermit-Warbler, and Colina Warbler (late) are targeted among many others. We will return to Houston on Sunday, Sept. 18th, 1983.

Approximate Cost: \$260/person. (Includes transportation to and from Houston and lodging.)

Leader: Ben Feltner

To reserve your place please send a deposit of \$100 per person to:

Big Bend Trip
C/O Mary Ann Chapman
P.O. Box 3062
Houston, TX 77001

Since space is limited, applicants should remit payment as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Applicants will be taken on a first come first

In accordance with policy (see The Spoonbill Vol. XXIX, No. 11, March 1981, pp. 3-5) the O.G. Checklist Committee met on March 19, 1983 to review 1982 records pertinent to checklist status. Thirty-seven records were accepted unanimously, each representing one of the following categories:

1. Accidental - one valid record
2. Vagrant - one to ten records
3. Out-of-season occurrences
4. Revised early and late dates

Three new species were added to the checklist during 1982. This brings the current total of full species now recognized as having occurred on the U.T.C. to 427. (Table follows)

In order for records to qualify for inclusion on the checklist, written details or other documentation such as photographs should be made available to the checklist committee either by direct submittance or through publication in The Spoonbill. Acceptance or rejection of any record rests wholly on adequate documentation. It is also important to have all observations which would affect the O.G.-U.T.C. Checklist status confirmed by as many deservers as possible. All accepted records will have received the unanimous approval of the committee.

| SPECIES | DATE | OBSERVERS | REMARKS | LOCATION |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| ARCTIC LOON | 20 April 28 May 82 | Jane Hamilton Ellen Red Fae Humphrey, m.ob. | 10th record | Offutt's Bayou Galveston |
| RED-NECKED GREBE | 19 Dec 82 | David Dauphin, et al | 7th record | Freeport Jetties |
| MASKED BOOBY | 22 Mar 82 | Bob Behrstock Tony Gallucci | 2nd March record | Off Bolivar Peninsula |
| MASKED BOOBY | 19 Dec 82 | David Dauphin, et al | 1st Dec Record | Freeport Jetties |
| PURPLE SANDPIPER | 2 May 82 | Bruce Halstead | Latest ever, 1st May record | Texas City Dike |
| HUDSONIAN GODWIT | 1-2 June 82 | Wes Cureton Gary & Randi Clark | Latest ever Spring | Navigation Dist. |
| NORTHERN PHALAROPE | 4 Sep 17 Oct 82 | Jim Morgan, Bob Behrstock, et al | 4th record | East Galveston |
| THAYER'S GULL | 23 Apr 82 | Britt Whitney | 2nd record formerly rated as hypothetical/ probable now up- graded in light of new records | Bolivar Flats |
| THAYER'S GULL | 16 Jan 82 | Dr. David Mark | 3rd record | Bolivar Ferry, Galv. |
| LONG-EARED OWL | 12 Feb 82 | Specimen fide Ben Feltner, Linda Roadi | 8th record | Holcombe at Highway 288 |
| LESSER NIGHTHAWK | 21 Sep 82 | Steve Williams | 1st Sep record | Northwest Houston |
| LESSER NIGHTHAWK | 26 Dec 82 | Bruce Halstead, et al | 1st Dec record | Galveston |
| ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD | 2 Mar 82 | Fae Humphrey Jane & John Hamilton, Katy Willis | 1st Mar record | New San Barnard N.W.R. |
| BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD | 19 Dec 82 | Margaret Anderson, et al | 10th record | Freeport |
| BLUE-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD | 9 Sep 82 | Steve Williams, et al | 1st record accidental | Houston Baptist Univ. |
| WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER | 19 Dec 82 | Kelly Bryan, Tony Gallucci, et al | 1st record accidental | Jones Creek, Brazoria Co. |
| COUCH'S/TROPICAL KINGBIRD | 16 Nov 82 | Jim Morgan | 1st Nov record | Near Anahuac NWR |
| CHICHUAHUA (WHITE- NECKED) RAVEN | 21-22 Apr 82 | Rich Krenzes, Ben Feltner, Jim Morgan | 4th record | Bolivar Peninsular |
| | 7 May 82 | Ben Feltner | Probably the same individual at new location | West Galveston |
| BEWICK'S WREN | 3 May 82 | Sharon Boat- wright | Latest ever Spring | Seabrook |
| WARBLING VIREO | 5-6 Apr 82 | Greg Lasley | Earliest ever | Johnson's Grove |
| WARBLING VIREO | 19 Dec 82 | Jim & Linda Hargrove | 1st winter record | Chubb Lake, Freeport |
| NASHVILLE WARBLER | 4 Mar 82 | Jane Hamilton, Margarte Ander- son, et al | No previous record for 1st week in March | West Galveston |
| VIRGINIA'S WARBLER | 11 Sep 82 | Chuck Sexton | 3rd record | Northeast of High Island |
| VIRGINIA'S WARBLER | 24 Sep 82 | Linda Graety Bob Behrstock | 4th record | Anahuac NWR |

| SPECIES | DATE | OBSERVERS | REMARKS | LOCATION |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| TROPICAL PARULA WARBLER | 19 Dec 82 | Victor Emanuel Fred Collins, et al | 1st record accidental | Jones Creek |
| CAPE MAY WARBLER | 9 Oct 82 | Jim Morgan, m.ob. | 4th fall record | Smith Woods, High Island |
| TOWNSEND'S WARBLER | 3 Apr 82 | Don Richardson, et al | 7th record | High Island |
| BAY-BREASTED WARBLER | 1 Jun 82 | Margaret Anderson | Latest ever Spring | Houston |
| MARGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER | 15 Apr 82 | Tony Gallucci, et al | 3rd record | Landed, Johnson's Grove |
| MARGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER | 21-22 Apr 82 | M. Anderson, Ben Feltner, Jim Morgan | 4th record | New Kemper Park Galveston |
| NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH | 23 Jan 82 | Bill & Jean Harwell | No previous record for 3rd week of Jan | Maner Lake |
| YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD | 7 Feb 82 | Randy Pinkston | 2nd and latest Feb record | West Harris County |
| YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD | 11 Sep 82 | Bob Behrstock, m.ob. | Earliest ever Fall | High Island |
| WESTERN TANAGER | 11 Sep 82 | Bob Behrstock, m.ob. | Earliest ever Fall | Johnson's Grove |
| PYRRHULOXIA | 19 Dec 82 | Larry Ballard, et al | 10th record | Lake Jackson |
| BLACK-HEADED CROSBEEK | 29 Sep 82 | Jane Hamilton | Earliest ever Fall | West Galveston |
| BLACK-THROATED SPARROW | 7 Sep 82 | Bob Honig | 2nd record | West Harris County |

The following species have their checklist status changed:

RINGED TURTLE DOVE - The Bellaire population has been self-supporting and in existence for ten years as of April 1983 and is therefore a bona fide introduced and successful bird.

Jim Morgan

On December 28, Tony Gullucci and I flew to Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, in northeastern Mexico. We picked up a rental car, stayed overnight there, and set off the next morning for Ciudad Mante. The morning broke cold and misty, a weather condition that was to follow us around for more than a week!

We opted not to go straight to Mante, and instead, we came "in the back door" by birding our way through the El Naranjo count circle from west to east. Once in the foothills, the weather became miserable - cold, damp, mist and clouds. We thought about the prospects of this weather staying through the next day which was El Naranjo Christmas Count Day! It did not look good.

We arrived at Mante about 7:00 p.m. to find about 14 other birders, including OG'ers Ben Feltner (El Naranjo compiler), Linder Roach, Wes Cureton, and Bob Behrstock, the latter leading a NE Mexico Peregrine tour. Also, our good friend Wayne Shifflett (Attwater NWR Manager) was there and two birders from Massachusetts, one of which was very experienced with neotropical birds.

On count day Wayne Shifflett joined Tony and I to cover the entire eastern portion of the count circle. This did provide us the advantage of being in the lowlands and out of the clouds. Also, it is an area of the count circle Tony and I know very well. It wasn't too far into the day before we realized we were going to have a good day, but we didn't realize how good!

As the day progressed we found the Bare-throated Tiger Heron along the river, an Orange-billed Nightengale-Thrush, and Crimson-collared Grosbeak among the many species which were being seen. By early afternoon we realized we were having a big raptor day as we had picked up most the usual species plus a nifty, perched Collared Forrest-Falcon and an equally exciting, perched Laughing Falcon. By 5:00 p.m. we had 17 species of raptors and were making our way out of the southeast corner of the circle to try and make the falls to see the swifts come in. At 5:15 p.m. Tony spotted a large white spot on a heavily

forrested hillside. We stoppéd and got the scope on it and we knew we had something good! It was a raptor, and it was obviously HUGE! On its perch it showed immaculate white underparts and all black head, neck, back and upper wings. Cooperating beyond belief, the bird took flight and its immense proportions had us in awe! Immediately noticeable were the white underwing linings and black flight feathers. This pattern was familiar to me and led me to call out what it looked like but we remained a little confused with the black head, neck and upperparts. Also, in flight the bird showed an all black tail. The bird returned to its perch and then walked up the branch, as vultures tend to do. We were then convinced of our identification - the bird was a sub-adult KING VULTURE! WOW! A check of field guides and reference material cleared up confusing plumage characteristics as young King Vultures can start out almost entirely black and progressively obtain the white parts of their plumage and also the change of head and neck colors. Among the three observers only I had seen the species before and my previous sighting was a full adult plumaged bird just this last year in Panama. To the best of our knowledge this El Naranjo observation is the most northerly sighting of this species in modern times. Needless to say, it was also THE bird of the count.

The next morning we said goodbye to many of the Houston birders and Tony and I followed Bob Behrstock and his group south. Our destination was Teziutlan but we were going to overnight in Tuxpan. We made occasional birding stops along the way and on January 1, we arrived in Teziutlan among heavy, wet clouds (again!).

The next day Tony and I had the eastern third of the Teziutlan count circle for the Christmas count being held that day. Again, this was an advantage because we were in the lowest part of the count circle, and, with a little effort, we were able to stay out of the clouds and mist. Tony and I logged 92 species on the day, including about 20 species of warblers and we added about five new species to this young count's

accumulated list. One of the new species was a Red-legged Honeycreeper.

During our stay at Teziutlan we saw Emerald Toucanet, Unicolored Jay, Hooded Yellow throat, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia, White-naped and Chestnut-capped Brush-finchers, among many wintering neotropical migrants. This was accomplished in spite of the generally miserable weather. Tony was also lucky enough to see the Azure-hooded Jay, which I missed.

Our next stop was Catemaco and we again had bad weather - first a light mist, then rain, rain, rain. We did manage a few good species though, like White Hawk, Collared Aracari, Keel-billed Toucan, and Lovely Cotinga. I was fortunate to get excellent looks at a "most wanted" species - the Black-throated Shrike-Tanager.

Because of the bad weather, we cut our stay short and headed for Palenque. On the way we added Yellow-headed Vulture, Great Black Hawk and Plain-breasted Ground Dove.

At Palenque the next day we saw our first sunshine in 10 days! This also provided us with excellent birding. In the morning we had a beautiful White Hawk soaring over the ruins, Barred Woodcreeper, Black-crowned Tityra, Black-cowled Oriole, among many Mexican and neotropical migrant species. The best bird of the morning came as we were birding a jungle trail. I rounded a corner with Tony right behind, and right in front of me in the trail, at a small water crossing, was this plump, almost tail-less bird with long legs. I knew immediately what it was, but because of the excitement, I could only get half a word out...uh-uh-PITTA! Here was something I have been wanting to see since I first started birding the neotropics, an Antpitta! It was the Scaled Antpitta, a beautiful but very secretive bird which, nevertheless, provided full back and side views at about 20 feet. What a nifty find!

In the late morning we were joined by John Barrera and Simon Perkins, the two Massachusetts birders we met at El Naranjo. After birding some more around the ruins, with

Tony fortunate to see the Green Shrike-Vireo, the four of us birded a road outside Palenque. Along this road we found Bare-throated Tiger Heron, Aplomado Falcon, and 31 Double-striped Thick-Knees, plus numerous buntings and finches.

The next morning we birded along the Ocosingo Highway before setting off towards the Ucatan Peninsula. By evening we reached Uxmal after numerous birding stops through marshes and Thorn-scrub habitat. On the way we had excellent looks at Yucatan (Yellow-ored) Parrots.

In the Yucatan we birded around the ruins of Uxmal, Kabah, Labna, Xlapak and Sayil. While we didn't turn up anything unusual it was most enjoyable to watch such beautiful species as Turquoise-browed Motmot, Yucatan Jay, and Orange Oriole. In this area neotropical migrants really dominated the scene. Wintering vireos and warblers were most numerous. Also in great abundance were Ferruginous Pygmy Owls. Using a tape of their call, we carefully counted 24 of these little owls in one day of birding, and we got looks at 12 of these, two of which were sitting shoulder-to-shoulder on a branch.

We finished our two week trip with a tally of 357 species, including 28 species of raptors, and 33 species of warblers. Considering bad weather much of the way, this was a respectable total.

Other than the weather, the only other problem I had during the trip was fighting off a few days worth of depression and sadness. For the forests of Mexico continue to fall. In areas I birded just 2½ years ago, there was obvious and sometimes extensive, clearing. This was most evident along the Ocosingo Highway, especially in the area of the Las Cascadas (waterfall) which is now a national park(!), and in the thorn-scrub forest area of Northern Campeche. In the latter area, several tracts of hundreds of acres were bulldozed down to bare earth. The previously beautiful area known as Las Cascadas just off the Ocosingo Highway has had all the understory cleared out and the trees thinned. In an area where I viewed Blue-Black Grosbeak and Violet Sabrewing on my last trip, only a Wood thrush could be found. This is a national park?

On the positive side, the habitat around the ruins at Palenque and in the state of Yucatan was found to be the same as it was 2½ years ago. Also, much wilderness and birding habitat remains around El Naranjo, probably one of the most extensive areas of good habitat remaining in Mexico. But even here, Ben Feltner has noticed recent thinning of the oaks.

In spite of diminishing habitat much good birding remains in Mexico, as can be seen by a two-week trip list of 357 species. However, the sooner you can bird Mexico, the better your chances will be to enjoy the marvelous avifauna of our southern neighbors.

HONEYMOON BIRDING IN COZUMEL

Randy Pinkston

Active birders, like all people who must invest considerable time and effort in their hobby in order to really enjoy it, receive maximum enjoyment birding either alone or in the company of casual - or non-birders without feeling inconsiderate, stubborn, or whatever. This can be a problem on vacations or other trips when time is limited and interests are varied. Compromise is a great solution.

My bride, Patricia, and I were married on December 11th of last year. She is one of those people who can create interest in almost anything but she is not a birder.

We made plans for a 3-day honeymoon on Cozumel Island and I, as a fairly active birder, was aware of the birding potential there. Right away I began researching potential lifers and where I could find them. I felt a little inconsiderate even before we left Houston. After all, this was to be our honeymoon. I should have been dreaming of kissing and candlelight dining. As it all turned out Patricia was very understanding, as usual, and I compromised a bit myself. The result was 3 full days of pure enjoyment on the island.

Cozumel is located in the Caribbean Sea just offshore from Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. It is about 30 miles long, north and south, and 12 miles wide, composed chiefly of calcite, and fringed with coral reefs. The surrounding water is crystal clear and beautiful blue in color. Cozumel has one fair-sized town, San Miguel, which lies on the Yucatan side where there is also a decent commercial airport.

I was surprised at the nature of the island's habitats. Words like "arid" and "sparse", which I had expected to use in describing them, were dropped and replaced by the words "lush" and "dense". Much of the periphery is broken with flooded mangroves and tidal lagoons. On higher ground we found dense jungle habitat with an almost impenetrable understory.

We rented a motor-scooter the first morning and this proved to be an excellent mode of transportation for exploring the island. It cost us about \$12 per day, including fuel and insurance, but Patty bargained with the Mexicans in her native Peruvian Spanish. Another couple, neither of whom spoke much Spanish, paid well over twice that much! Jeeps can also be rented for a small fortune. Insects can be a problem on the paved road at night (I was a case of the classic "happy motorcyclist" after riding 15 miles back to the hotel one evening.).

We stayed at the Hotel el Presidente which I recommend highly. One wing of the hotel is only one story and each room has sliding glass doors which open onto a stone-rimmed patio. Ours faced a large lawn bordered with flowering shrubs such as hibiscus. This gave me great birding opportunities right from the room.

I was enraged when we saw our first bird of the trip - Myrtle Warbler. That species is my candidate for the most ubiquitous winter bird on the UTC and to com 800+ miles only to find it first was too much for me to take. I began searching desperately for something more interesting and soon found several Palm Warblers and Yellow-faced Grassquits feeding together on the lawn outside our room. It was interesting to later find several wintering warblers which are mainly migrants

on the UTC: many American Redstarts and Palm Warblers, Yellow-throated, Blue-winged, Blackburnian, and Ovenbird Warblers, N. Waterthrush, Hooded Warbler, and I saw one Cape May Warbler. We also found two Golden Warblers, a tropical "cousin" of our Yellow Warbler and very much like it except for more intense reddish breast streaks and a rusty cap.

In and around the hotel were many Bahama Honeycreepers, all of the Cozumel race with white throats. "Cheaters" in the coevolution between plant and pollinator, these honeycreepers would sip nectar from holes punctured at the base of hibiscus flowers. A male Fork-tailed Emerald, exhibiting the aggressiveness so typical of all hummers, tried to maintain exclusive access to a beautiful red hibiscus right outside our room. His stunning underside was velvety in appearance, the green glittering against jet black. A Southern House Wren (the so-called "Cozumel Wren") snuck cautiously around our patio on search of food, or perhaps looking for a potential nest site. It was slightly larger than a House Wren and intensely rusty-brown in color, like a cross between House and Carolina Wrens. We heard a Pauraque chorus each night from our patio. I had hoped to see Orange Orioles during our stay but, alas, the only orioles found were a pair of Hoodeds' in a palm at the hote.

The most common bird in open developed areas, like the airport and around our hotel, was Tropical Mockingbird. Patricia and I were amazed at the striking difference between this and our northern species. Their long tails, with more white laterally, are flicked so smoothly upward upon landing that they seem to be moving in slow motion. The same holds true for the graceful beating of their wings in flight. Great-tailed Grackles were also common and luckily confined in this habitat. Common, and more commonly Ruddy, Ground-Doves flocked together in open areas of more rural settings. Tropical Kingbirds were numerous along the paved road as were Roadside Hawks. Never before had I been so impressed by the tiny size of these buteos.

A field in front of the airport is a good place to see Green-breasted Mango, second of two common hummingbirds on

Cozumel. We found a nice male maintaining his territorial vigil from a cedar tree at the end of a long row of flowering shrubs. From our angle he appeared almost all black except for an irridescent green stripe extending from his bill down each side. When feeding, his ample tail was a pulsating bright purple. Just after this sighting an adult Swainson's Hawk soared overhead, a familiar but unexpected bird for me. Also at the airport a Bat Falcon jetted over us at dusk one evening.

In more dense jungle habitat the most numerous species was Black Catbird. This bird is just what its name implies and it was rewarding to see them on a few occasions together with wintering Gray Catbirds. We found two Cozumel Vireos along unimproved road to El Cedral, one of many Mayan ruins on the island. This little endemic is sort of a rust-colored version of our White-eyed Vireo, which we also saw on the trip. I had hoped to see a Yucatan Woodpecker in the jungle but I succeeded in finding only a Golden-fronted.

One thing that truly amazed me about this island so close to the Yucatan shore was the paucity of coastal birds. Laughing Gulls were most numerous but even they could be easily counted, and only a few Sandwich and Royal Terns leisured back and forth over the docks in town. Other than these we saw very little. Frigatebirds soared by infrequently (at least relative to what I've seen on the Pacific coast), and we saw only a few Brown Pelicans. I spotted one immature Herring Gull feeding with several frigatebirds out over the surf on the Caribbean side. In the lagoons we found Least Grebe and the same wading birds one would expect on the UTC, including one spoonbill.

This article would not be complete without some mention of the fantastic skin diving we enjoyed on the island. After all, reef fishes are just underwater versions of birds, and equally challenging to identify. We saw quite a diversity, ranging from brightly colored triggerfishes and damsels to incredibly cryptic flounders encircled by ornate fins, one barracuda in close proximity, a couple of skates, and even a polka-dotted eel.

To wrap it up, Cozumel is great for a cheap thrill in tropical birding. These days one person can visit the island as we did for under \$300 (including round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations, transportation and meals). Although it is not well represented with the great diversity of tropical families, it does offer certain species virtually impossible from San Luis Potosi northward (areas in Mexico most often visited by UTC birders). I would recommend it to anyone as an introduction to tropical birding or to those with experience limited to northern Mexico.

HIGH COUNTRY PEREGRINES

Dr. Larry N. White

From December 29 thru January 3, I had the pleasure of visiting Dr. James Enderson of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Enderson, Professor of Biology at Colorado College, has been actively working for the last 20 years helping restore the Peregrine Falcon to its former range in the Rocky Mountains.

Since my arrival was only a few days after the great Denver blizzard, I wasn't very optimistic about seeing many birds. However, as a neophyte birder nearly anything that I saw would more than likely be a lifer. So, while accompanying Dr. Enderson on his routine errands around Colorado Springs, I made sure to carry my binoculars. This wasn't a bad idea, since just driving through town allowed me to see Black-billed Magpie, Gray headed Junco, Dark eyed Junco, Tree Sparrow, House Finch, and Scrub Jay.

Friday morning, New Year's Eve, dawn clear and cool (about 2°F). Dr. Enderson decided that we would ride out west of town on the prairie and try to capture a Prairie Falcon or Merlin. While cruising the roads across the snow covered prairie we found four or five Prairie Falcons perched atop the telephone poles as well as an occasional Rough-legged Hawk, but my greatest thrill was seeing a large adult Golden Eagle perched in a tree about 100 yards off the road. Merlin appeared to be much more

plentiful on the Colorado prairies than along the coast here in Texas. In our two or three hours of cruising the roads, we saw four birds, whereas I've only seen one in the last four months along the coast. Horned Lark appeared to be the most common bird on the prairie. We saw numerous flocks of 15-20 birds.

On New Year's Day we took a short trip into the foothills of the Rockies to a scenic area known as Garden of the Gods. Birding here was disappointing, but we did find Townsend's Solitaire, Scrub Jay, Rufous-sided Towhee, Mountain and Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Shrike, numerous Junco, and Common Raven.

Sunday, January 2 was another beautiful day so we took a trip down to Royal Gorge, a large canyon along the Arkansas River. The picnic grounds were our destination, and although the scenery was breathtaking, the birding was again disappointing. Mountain Bluebird was the only new finding. Before we left the area we did drive down to Canyon City and walked the railroad tracks adjacent to the Arkansas River. Here we found three dippers, and watched as they plunged into the icy water for food. In a thicket along the tracks we also saw several Song Sparrows in a group of Grey-headed Juncos.

Monday January 3 was to be my last full day in Colorado. Since Dr. Enderson and I are both pilots, he wanted to take me for a short ride in his airplane. We took off from a small airport west of town and headed out over the prairie and quickly found four more Golden Eagles as well as several Rough-legged Hawks. Enderson claims that there is no shortage of Golden Eagles in Colorado. In fact they have been one of the biggest problems with re-establishing the Peregrines in the Rockies. Golden Eagles and Great Horned Owls are the major predators of the young fledgling Peregrines.

Enderson has been studying egg shell problems in the Peregrines for years. Even though DDT and its analogs are no longer legal for use within the United States, many of our neighbors to the south are still using it. Since the Peregrine

is a migratory species, it still picks up considerable insecticide on its trip south. Many of the birds eaten by Peregrines within the United States are also migrants and contain considerable quantities of insecticide. Enderson has noted however that the eggshells of the birds are beginning to thicken again and there is some optimism that they will make a comeback.

South of Canada, the nesting Peregrines have been more severely reduced in the United States than in any comparable sized area of the world. It is estimated that no more than 5-10 per cent of the original population remains. Conservationists have recognized that a significant recovery in numbers by strictly natural processes is unlikely due to the greatly diminished populations and the vast stretches of vacant habitat now separating the few surviving natural pairs. All of the official recovery plans of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service depend for their success on the establishment of captive produced falcons as the only likely way to increase the density and extend the distribution of breeding peregrines. During the 1982 season the captive females produced a total of 202 peregrines.

In the Rocky Mountains and adjacent western states, the Peregrine Fund received reports of 24 returning adults seen at cliff-side eyries or at hawk-towers, including members of nine pairs. However, only one pair laid eggs, but even so it is believed that the decline in Colorado has been arrested. The Peregrine Fund has begun to extend the distribution and increase the numbers of potential nesters in northern Utah and Wyoming. Hopefully, before too many more years these magnificent birds will be restored to their former place in the avifauna of North America.

POSSIBLE NEW ENDANGERED SPECIES

Allan J. Mueller

As we all know, the upper Texas coast (UTC) is an excellent birding area both in terms of numbers and rarities. This fact was recently reinforced when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published in the Federal Register a Notice of Review of species under consideration for listing on the federal endangered species list. Several of these species are common or at least regular on the upper Texas coast.

The Notice of Review is in part a request for information. There is some existing information that indicates that these species may be endangered or threatened, but more is needed before a decision can be reached. Since several of these species do occur in our area, you can assist by reporting any significant observations.

Listed below are the species or subspecies under consideration that occur in the upper Texas coast, some status information for each species mostly taken from Oberholster's "The Bird Life of Texas", and the kind of information that would be useful.

Reddish Egret (Egretta rufescens)

Common in the United States only on the Texas coast. Nesting is monitored by the Texas Fish-eating Bird Survey. Any unusual concentrations or areas of regular use are of interest.

Wood Stork (Mycteria americana)

Most of our birds are probably nonbreeding immatures and post breeding season wanderers from Mexico, but there are three UTC breeding records. Any nests, night roost locations, or large (25+) flocks are of interest.

American Swallow-Tailed Kite (Elanoides forficatus forficatus)

Formerly a fairly common breeding bird, but declined rapidly from 1900-1910. The cause of the decline is unknown. All sightings are of interest.

Swainson's Hawk (Buteo swainsoni)

We are just east of the normal breeding range for this species, so a nest on the UTC would be very usual but possible. Any nests or migratory concentrations are of interest.

Ferruginous Hawk (Buteo regalis)

Occasionally nests in the Panhandle (six records). Any areas of regular use or migratory concentrations are of interest.

Southeastern American Kestrel (Falco sparverius paulus)

Oberholser describes this subspecies as,

"Similar to T.s. sparverius [our common Kestrel] but considerably smaller; in male, dark spots on lower surface confined mostly to sides of body, leaving middle abdomen immaculate."

This will be difficult to identify in the field. There is a winter record from Chambers County. All confirmed sightings are of interest.

Western Snowy Plover (Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus)Southeastern Snowy Plover (C. a. tenuirostris)

These are the only two subspecies of Snowy Plover that occur in Texas. Oberholser describes the Southeastern as, "Similar to C. a. nivosus, but upper parts much lighter." These two will be difficult to separate in the field. The Southeastern Snowy Plover nests in Texas, but the Western does not. Any nest, unusual concentration (10+), or area of regular use is of interest.

Piping Plover (Charadrius melodus)

This is a common species on UTC tidal flats. Any unusual concentrations (25+) and areas of regular use are of interest.

-billed Curlew (Numenius americana)

This is also a common UTC species. There is one UTC breeding record (Harris County 1910). Any nest, unusual concentration (50+), or area of regular heavy use is of interest.

Migrant Loggerhead Shrike (Lanius ludovicianus migrans)

Another nearly impossible field identification. Oberholser describes it,

"Similar to L. l. ludovicianus [our common shrike], but smaller (shorter and slenderer); wing longer; tail shorter and decidedly shorter than wing; upper parts lighter, upper tail-coverts often so."

This subspecies apparently does not nest on the UTC, but there are winter records. Any confirmed sighting is of interest.

Bachman's Sparrow (Aimophila aestivalis)

This piney woods species prefers open, parklike stands of tall pines. The location of areas with established breeding or wintering populations is of interest.

Texas Henslow's Sparrow (Passerherbulus henslowii ssp.)

This refers to the population near Hobby Airport. The taxonomic status of this subspecies is uncertain. Any summer records away from Hobby Airport location are of interest.

* * * * *

If you have any significant observations of these species, record the time, date, location, number of birds, and activity of the birds and report it to the Clearing House or to:

Allan J. Mueller
U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211
Houston, TX 77058
(713) 229-3682

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CLEARING HOUSE - FEBRUARY, 1983

- Loon, Common: 3 reports (2-40)
 Grebe, Horned: Galv. (1)24,JH; High Island (2)13,S
 Grebe, Eared: 3 reports (10-60)
 Grebe, Western: Armand Bayou Christmas Count (1)Dec.22...notes submitted
 Grebe, Pied-billed: 9 reports (1-10)
 Pelican, White: 6 reports (7-200)
 Gannet: Galv. (2)12,R
 Cormorant, Double-crested: 10 reports (2-115)
 Cormorant, Olivaceous: 3 reports (1-6)
 Anhinga: Brazoria Co. (10)1,M; Anahuac NWR (3)13,S; Brazoria NWR (1)26, HAS
 Heron, Great Blue: 11 reports (1-15)
 Heron, Little Blue: 6 reports (1-4)
 Egret, Cattle: 10 reports (1-50)
 Egret, Reddish: 5 reports (1-4)
 Egret, Great: 12 reports (1-25)
 Egret, Snowy: 10 reports (3-50)
 Heron, Louisiana: 4 reports (1-3)
 Night Heron, Black-crowned: Brazoria Co. (129)1,M; 3 other reports (4-32)
 Night Heron, Yellow-crowned: Galv. (50)12,R
 Bittern, American: Anahuac NWR (1)19,JH; SW Houston (1)20,DM
 Ibis, White-faced: 5 reports (4-50)
 Ibis, White: 2 reports (20,50)
 Spoonbill, Roseate: 7 reports (1-25)
 Goose, Canada: 2 reports (50,320)
 Goose, White-fronted: 5 reports (50,183)
 Goose, Snow: 5 reports (200-1800)
 Goose, Snow (blue form): 2 reports (360,200)
 Mallard: 5 reports (2-50)
 Duck, Black: W. Galv. (2)24,JH, W. Harris Co. (11)19,BH...see notes
 Duck, Mottled: 5 reports (4-50)
 Gadwall: 7 reports (4-400)
 Pintail, Common: 6 reports (1-500)
 Teal, Green-winged: 7 reports (4-1000)
 Teal, Blue-winged: Brazoria NWR (300)26,HAS; 3 other reports (2-12)
 Wigeon, American: 5 reports (4-250)
 Shoveler, Northern: 9 reports (2-900)
 Redhead: Warren Lake (3)26,SW
 Duck, Ring-necked: Warren Lake (250)26,SW; North of Hockley (500)13, H; 2 other reports (10,212)
 Canvasback: Warren Lake (175)26,SW; 5 other reports (5,30)
 Scaup, Lesser: 5 reports (10-30)
 Bufflehead: 4 reports (2-8)
 Duck, Ruddy: 4 reports (30-300)
 Merganser, Red-breasted: Warren Lake (3 imm.)19,DM; 3 other reports (3-40)
 Vulture, Turkey: 6 reports (5-25)
 Vulture, Black: Eisenhower Park (35)3,B; 2 other reports (2,8)
 Kite, White-tailed: 9 reports (1-17)
 Hawk, Sharp-shinned: Houston (1)12,SW; LaMarque (1)27,SW; Tomball (1)5,SW; Chambers Co. (1)13,S
 Hawk, Cooper's: Hockley (1)5,SW
 Hawk, Red-tailed: 8 reports (1-20)
 Hawk, Red-tailed (Kriideri): Hockley (1)13,SW
 Hawk, Red-shouldered: 5 reports (1-4)
 Hawk, White-tailed: Brazoria Co. (1)26,W...notes submitted: Galv. Co. (1)12,R; Chocolate Bayou (1)6,H...notes submitted
 Hawk, Ferruginous: W. Galv. (1)24,JH...see notes
 Eagle, Bald: W. Harris Co. (1)5,SW; (3)19,DM; (2)12,TM; Brazoria Co. (1)13,PM
 Hawk, Marsh: 6 reports (2-40)
 Osprey: Eisenhower Park: (1)3,B
 Caracara: Hockley (1)5,SW
 Kestrel, American: 10 reports (1-40)
 Bobwhite, Common: 2 reports (9,30)
 Crane, Sandhill: 4 reports (4-80)
 Rail, King: 3 reports (1)
 Rail, Virginia: Brazoria NWR (20)26,HAS (!)
 Sora: Brazoria NWR (4)26,HAS
 Rail, Yellow: Brazoria NWR (2)26,HAS
 Gallinule, Common: 4 reports (2-50)
 Coot, American: 6 reports (25-1600)
 Plover, Piping: Galv. (2)11,24,JH; (10)12,R; Bolivar (4)13,S
 Killdeer: 12 reports (2-250)
 Plover, American Golden: Galv. (2)27,SW...see notes
 Plover, Black-bellied: 6 reports (2-25)
 Turnstone, Ruddy: 3 reports (1-10)
 Snipe, Common: Sheldon Reservoir (23)3,B; 3 other reports (2-6)
 Curlew, Long-billed: 5 reports (1-80)
 Sandpiper, Spotted: 4 reports (1-6)
 Willet: 5 reports (2-30)
 Yellowlegs, Greater: 7 reports (1-200)
 Yellowlegs, Lesser: 3 reports (2-25)
 Sandpiper, Pectoral: Galv. (1)27,SW...see notes
 Sandpiper, Least: Brazoria NWR (50)26,HAS
 Dunlin: 3 reports (10-1600)
 Dowitcher, Long-billed: 2 reports (35,1000)
 dowitcher species: 2 reports (50,80)
 Sandpiper, Western: 5 reports (4-1000)
 Godwit, Marbled: Galv. (10)12,R
 Sanderling: 4 reports (20-30)
 Avocet, American: 3 reports (1-100)
 Stilt, Black-necked: Brazoria Co. (9)26,PV; Bolivar (4)13,S
 GULL, GREATER BLACK-BACKED: Kemah (1)12,S...previously described
 Gull, Herring: 6 reports (3-300)
 Gull, Ring-billed: 7 reports (5-200)
 Gull, Laughing: 7 reports (4-1500)
 Gull, Bonaparte's: 3 reports (1-16)
 Tern, Gull-billed: Galv. (1)12,JH
 Tern, Forster's: 6 reports (1-50)
 Tern, Common: Galv. (2)24,JH; Brazoria Co. (2)1,M; Texas City (1)5,BH; Bolivar (2)13,S
 Tern, Royal: 6 reports (1-20)
 Tern, Caspian: 5 reports (1-6)
 Skimmer, Black: 3 reports (90-130)
 Dove, Rock: 4 reports (2-100)
 Dove, White-winged: 2 reports (4,10) from Galv.
 Dove, Mourning: 15 reports (2-100)
 Dove, Inca: 6 reports (1-50)
 Ani, Groove-billed: Galv. (3)27,SW; Brazoria Co. (2)12,M
 Owl, Barn: Galv. (1)10,14,J; Westbury (1)9,PM
 Owl, Screech: Algoa (1)all month,DW; Alvin (1)all month,M; Bayport (5)13,S
 Owl, Barred: (1)6,R
 WHIP-POOR-WILL: High Island (1)13,S...needs notes!
 SWIFT SPECIES: SW Houston (1)Jan.26,David Matson
 Hummingbird, Ruby-throated: Alvin (1)19,M...see notes
 HUMMINGBIRD, ANNA'S: Yard (1)1-11,WC...see notes
 Hummingbird, Rufous: Yard (1)all month, Margaret Anderson
 Kingfisher, Belted: 10 reports (1-8)
 Flicker, Common (Yellow-shafted): 13 reports (1-9)
 Woodpecker, Pileated: 4 reports (1-2)
 Woodpecker, Red-bellied: 8 reports (1-4)
 Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: 6 reports (1-2)
 Woodpecker, Downy: 5 reports (1-4)
 Phoebe, Eastern: 9 reports (1-4)
 empidonax species: W. Galv. (1)8,J...notes submitted
 Lark, Horned: 2 reports (2,12)
 Swallow, Tree: Houston (1)20,SW; (3)21,DM
 SWALLOW, BARN: SW Houston (1)21,DM...needs notes!
 Martin, Purple: Houston (1)20,WC; (2)28,DM; Brazoria Co. (2)26,M; W. Harris Co. (1)19,BH
 Jay, Blue: 11 reports (1-12)
 RAVEN, WHITE-NECKED: Armand Bayou Christmas Count (1)Dec.22 see notes
 Crow, Common: 7 reports (5-60)

CONTRIBUTORS - FEBRUARY, 1983

B-Dr. A.B.Benson, BH-Bob Honig, DM-David Marrack, DW-Diane Wise, H-Bill and Jean Harwell, HAS-Houston Audubon Society, J-John and Jane Hamilton, Allen Mueller, JH-Jane Hamilton, Martha Micks, Faye Humphrey, Carolyn Killian, M-Don, Ruthie, Pat and Roger Melton, PM-Peggy Milstead, PV-Peter Vennema; R-Don and Lee Richardson, Gil and Linda Douglas, S-Stennie Meadours, Fred Dalbeys, Sam Fruehling, SW-Steve Williams, W-Lovat Watts, Ruthie Melton, WC-Wesley Cureton.

FIELDNOTES - FEBRUARY, 1983

Black Duck: in field near end of Sharp Rd. in excellent light by Richard Orr (10X binocs) and myself (8X30). Very distinct contrast between pale head and very dark body, as opposed to 2 Mottled Ducks with them. Yellow bills observed on two Black Ducks, but bill color not observed on others. When rising into air, flashing white wing linings evident. Speculum not observed. Bob Honig

Black Duck: very dark body, light head and neck. One had green beak and the other had an orange beak. Orange feet and legs. Light wing contrasted in flight with black body. Jane Hamilton

Ferruginous Hawk: perched high in tree about 200 yds. from road. Light but patterned head, dark back, and clear white breast. Tarsi were covered with light feathers (making him immature) with yellow feet. Various binocs and 60X scope. Jane Hamilton

American Golden Plover: in winter plumage. Rather tan in color and scaly on back. Lack of black on axillars in flight and overall tan (not gray) coloration distinguished them from black-bellied. Steve Williams

Pectoral Sandpiper: in good spring plumage. Brown upper chest sharply demarcated from white of lower chest and belly. Scaly brown back and golden yellow legs. Noticeably larger and different in coloration from several nearby Least Sandpipers. Steve Williams

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: imm. male seen at feeder for about 30 seconds in shadow. Three or four match-head sized spots on throat. No rufous on entire bird. Dark green top-side, dirty white underside. Ruthie Melton

Anna's Hummingbird: fed at shrimp plants off and on from Dec.31 to Feb.11. Seemed fairly large, although there was no other hummer for comparison. Upper parts dark green. Under parts not white at all, but quite gray. Tail short and wide with a very tiny amount of white on each corner. Crissum whiter than rest of underparts. A few dull throat spots had appeared by end of period, but I never saw any color flash. No rufous or buffy anywhere on bird. A tiny white postocular spot. Gray breast and lack of buffy or rufous would seem to eliminate broad-tailed. Wesley Cureton

WHITE-NECKED RAVEN: seen on Armand Bayou Christmas Count on Dec.22. I noticed three crows sitting on telephone line, and the middle bird appeared larger. It had a prominently feathered, somewhat hooked bill. The throat feathers parted to reveal white neck feathers. When the three birds flew, its tail appeared longer and its flight pattern flatter than its neighbors. Over the Thanksgiving holidays I had had the opportunity to study a flock of these birds in the Rio Grande Valley. Stennie Meadours

Chickadee, Carolina: 8 reports (2-20)
Titmouse, Tufted: 3 reports (2-3)
Creeper, Brown: Houston (1)24,SW; (1)15,23,H; Bayport (2)12,S
Wren, House: White Oak Bayou (1)19,WC
Wren, Winter: White Oak Bayou (1)all month, WC
Wren, Carolina: 4 reports (1-2)
Wren, Marsh: High Island (4)13,S; Brazoria NWR (4)26,HAS
Wren, Sedge: Brazoria Co. (12)26,HAS
Mockingbird, Northern: 16 reports (2-17)
Catbird, Gray: Galveston neighborhood (1)9,16,J; E.Galv.(1)24,J;
Sheldon Res.(1)10,B; Bear Creek Park (1)13,H; High Island
(1)13,S
Thrasher, Brown: 10 reports (1-4)
Robin, American: 18 reports (20-2000)
Thrush, Hermit: 4 reports (1-2)
Bluebird, Eastern: 4 reports (2-9)
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: 5 reports (1-5)
Kinglet, Golden-crowned: Eisenhower Park (4)3,B; Deussen Park
(2)24,B
Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: 11 reports (2-18)
Pipit, Water: 7 reports (1-100)
Pipit, Sprague's: W.Harris Co.(1)12,TM; (10)19,BH
Waxwing, Cedar: Brazoria Co.(2000)26,W; 13 other reports (20-1000)
Shrike, Loggerhead: 10 reports (1-30)
Starling: 13 reports (1-100)
Vireo, White-eyed: Eisenhower Park (1)17,B
Vireo, Solitary: 2 reports (2,2)
WARBLER, TENNESSEE: W.Galv.(2)8,J...needs notes! No February records.
Warbler, Orange-crowned: 7 reports (1-3)
Warbler, Yellow-rumped: 15 reports (6-300)
Warbler, Yellow-throated: Eisenhower Park (1)17,B
Warbler, Pine: 2 reports (2,5)
Warbler, Palm: Brazoria NWR (2)26,HAS
Yellowthroat, Common: 2 reports (1,3)
Warbler, Wilson's: Bolivar (1)13,S
Redstart, American: High Island (1)13,S...previously reported
Sparrow, House: 9 reports (1-50)
Meadowlark, Eastern: 7 reports (4-200)
Blackbird, Red-winged: 13 reports (1-1000)
Blackbird, Brewer's: Brazoria Co.(5)26,PV; W.Harris Co.(150)6,R;
(100)19,BH
Grackle, Boat-tailed: 3 reports (4-25)
Grackle, Great-tailed: 7 reports (2-150)
Grackle, Common: 9 reports (5-150)
Cowbird, Brown-headed: 9 reports (8-500)
Cardinal: 14 reports (1-50)
Grosbeak, Black-headed: Ft.Bend Co.(1)9,Don Alexander
Finch, Purple: Houston (2)12,SW; (2)19,WC
Siskin, Pine: Brazoria Co.(6)26,W
Goldfinch, American: 10 reports (1-50)
Towhee, Rufous-sided: Bayport (3)12,S
Sparrow, Savannah: 9 reports (1-50)
Sparrow, Seaside: Brazoria NWR (100)26,HAS
Sparrow, Vesper: 6 reports (1-50)
Sparrow, Lark: Galv.(1)27,SW
Junco, Dark-eyed(Slate-colored): Galv.(1)12,JH
Sparrow, Chipping: Algoa (1)1,5,DW; Deussen Park (8)24,B; White
Oak Bayou (10)19,WC
Sparrow, Field: 4 reports (1-8)
Sparrow, Harris': Algoa (1)1-19,DW
Sparrow, White-crowned: Brazoria Co.(12)26,PV; W.Harris Co.(2)12,TM;
(8)19,BH
Sparrow, White-throated: 6 reports (1-30)
Sparrow, Fox: Sheldon Res.(4)6,B; W.Harris Co.(2)13,H
Sparrow, Lincoln's: 5 reports (1-2)
Sparrow, Swamp: 4 reports (1-5)
Sparrow, Song: 5 reports (1-5)

CLEARING HOUSE - JANUARY, 1983

The Clearing House is a monthly record of bird sightings made on the Upper Texas Coast. How to read the CH: Species: Location-- (how many) date, observers. Those common species which can be easily identified and are widely distributed in the UTC will also be listed, followed by the number of reports, with the lowest and highest number of individuals seen in parenthesis, i.e. (1-40). Noteworthy sightings will be underlined, capitalized, or both, according to their status. All observations reported below must be accepted by the Checklist Committee (Ben Feltner, Jim Morgan and Noel Pettingell) before they are considered valid and included in the next edition of the UTC Checklist.

Loon, Common: 3 reports (5-37)
 Loon, Arctic: Texas City Dike (1)11,J...notes submitted.
 Probably the same as on the Galveston Christmas Count.
 GREBE, RED-NECKED: Texas City Dike (1)11,J...see notes
 Grebe, Horned: Texas City Dike (4)11,J; Galv.(2)23,H; Cooling Ponds (4)8,OG
 Grebe, Eared: 9 reports (2-26)
 Grebe, Pied-billed: 7 reports (2-50)
 SHEARWATER, CORY'S: Shorty's Longest Pier (1)20,B...see notes
 Pelican, White: 6 reports (15-250)
 Pelican, Brown: Galv.(3)27,AB
 Cormorant, Double-crested: Texas City (3000)15,BH; 8 other reports (1-280)
 Cormorant, Olivaceous: 3 reports (1-5)
 Anhinga: W.Harris County (1)16,23,C,M; Brazos Bend State Park (20)29,T,PV; Anahuac (2)27,30,R,G
 Heron, Great Blue: 7 reports (1-20)
 Heron, Green: Sheldon Res.(1)30,AB; Maner Lake (1)23,BH
 Heron, Little Blue: 5 reports (1-3)
 Egret, Cattle: 4 reports (2-220)
 Egret, Reddish: 3 reports (1-2)
 Egret, Great: 9 reports (1-70)
 Egret, Snowy: 8 reports (5-50)
 Heron, Louisiana: 6 reports (1-4)
 Night Heron, Black-crowned: 4 reports (6-50)
 Ibis, White-faced: 5 reports (12-5000)
 Ibis, White: 4 reports (2-50)
 Spoonbill, Roseate: 5 reports (1-50)
 Goose, Canada: 3 reports (10-125)
 Goose, White-fronted: 4 reports (30-750)
 Goose, Snow: 7 reports (25-40,000)
 Goose, Ross's: Chambers Co.(2)23,L
 Whistling Dusk, Black-bellied: W.Harris Co.(1500)23,G,M;
 Brazos Bend State Park (100)29,T,PV,L
 Whistling Duck, Fulvous: W.Harris Co.(1)30,JM...notes submitted;
 Anahuac NWR (28)15,L,P...notes submitted
 Mallard: 4 reports (1-20)
 Duck, Mottled: 4 reports (2-10)
 Gadwall: 8 reports (4-300)
 Pintail, Common: 5 reports (4-4000)
 Teal, Green-winged: 4 reports (3-12000)
 Teal, Blue-winged: Brazos Bend State Park (2)29,L; W.Harris Co. (5)30,JM
 Teal, Cinnamon: Cypress Creek Christmas Count (100)2; lesser numbers throughout the month
 Wigeon, American: 6 reports (6-500)
 Shoveler, Northern: 7 reports (1-7500)
 Duck, Wood: Brazos Bend State Park (25)29,T,PV; Chambers Co. (Yard) (15)20,DD; Sheldon Res.(2)30,S
 Redhead: Cooling Ponds (3)8,OG; Anahuac (2)15,R
 Duck, Ring-necked: 3 reports (2-80)
 Canvasback: 7 reports (1-125)
 Scaup, Greater: Cooling Ponds (2)8,OG
 Scaup, Lesser: 8 reports (3-200)
 Goldeneye, Common: (2)8,OG
 Bufflehead: 4 reports (1-100)

Oldsquaw: High Island (1)all month,m.ob.; Cooling Ponds (1)8, OG...see notes
 Scoter, White-winged: High Island (1)20,B; Cooling Ponds (2)8, OG
 Scoter, Black: High Island (3)20,B...needs notes
 Duck, Ruddy: 5 reports (4-300)
 Merganser, Hooded: San Jacinto Mnmt (5)8,C; (22)27,R
 Merganser, Red-breasted: Galv.(8)21,H; Texas City Dike (50)15, F; High Island (80)27,R
 Vulture, Turkey: 7 reports (2-60)
 Vulture, Black: 5 reports (1-38)
 Kite, White-tailed: 4 reports (1-6)
 Hawk, Sharp-shinned: 5 reports (1-2)
 Hawk, Cooper's: W.Harris Co.(4)23,M,G,D;(1)9,L; SW Houston (1)all month,TM
 Hawk, Red-tailed: 5 reports (1-60)
 Hawk, Red-tailed (kriideri): Chambers Co.(1)22,PV
 Hawk, Red-tailed (harlani): W.Harris Co.(1)23,M...previously reported
 Hawk, Red-shouldered: 6 reports (1-10)
 Hawk, White-tailed: W.Harris Co.(2)23,G...see notes on imm
 Hawk, Ferruginous: Ft.Bend Co.(1)23,BH...see notes; W.Harris Co.(1)9,L...previously described
 Hawk, Harris': Kemah(1)Dec.30,Marilyn Crane,Ellen Red; Ft.Bend Co.(1)23,BH...notes submitted
 Eagle, Bald: 3 reports (1-8)
 Hawk, Marsh: 4 reports (1-75)
 Osprey: Eisenhower Park (1)20,30,AB; San Jacinto Mnmt (1)8,C
 Caracara: W.Harris Co.(1)23,30,M,JM
 Merlin: Yard (1)1,DD
 Kestrel, American: 11 reports (1-75)
 Bobwhite, Common: 3 reports (7-21)
 Crane, Sandhill: Brazoria,Ft.Bend Cos,(350)23,BH; Brazos Bend State Park (11)29,PV; Galv.(100)all month,Ted Eubanks
 Rail, King: Chambers Co.(1)23,L
 Rail, Clapper: Chambers Co.(4)23,L
 Gallinule, Common: Texas City (2)11,J; High Island (1)20,B; Anahuac (20)30,G; Brazos Bend State Park (30)29,L
 Coot, American: 5 reports (4-400)
 Oystercatcher, American: Texas City Dike (2)15,18,P,E
 Plover, Piping: Galv.(35)27,AB; High Island (8)20,B; Bolivar (2)30,G; (6)23,L
 Plover, Snowy: High Island (6)20,B
 Killdeer: 7 reports (1-700)
 Plover, Black-bellied: 4 reports (2-30)
 Snipe, Common: 3 reports (1-50)
 Curlew, Long-billed: 4 reports (3-20)
 Sandpiper, Spotted: 4 reports (1-2)
 Willet: 3 reports (5-35)
 Yellowlegs, Greater: 4 reports (2-20)
 Yellowlegs, Lesser: 2 reports (8,4)
 Dowitcher, Long-billed: Chambers Co.(40)23,L
 Dowitcher, Short-billed: Chambers Co.(20)23,L
 dowitcher species: 2 reports (40,500)
 Sandpiper, Western: 3 reports (10-100)
 Godwit, Marbled: Bolivar (10)23,L
 Sanderling: 3 reports (12-40)
 Avocet, American: 4 reports (3-1000)
 Stilt, Black-necked: E.Galv.(3)15,30,H,G; High Island (1)20, B; Bolivar (5)15,23,L
 PHALAROPE, WILSON'S: E.Galv.(2-3)15,23,30,H,J,G...see notes
 Gull, Herring: 4 reports (3-12)
 Gull, Ring-billed: 8 reports (5-370)
 Gull, Laughing: 5 reports (2-15000)
 Gull, Bonaparte's: 6 reports (1-80)
 Tern, Gull-billed: High Island (1)18,PV
 Tern, Forster's: 3 reports (7-100)
 Tern, Common: Texas City Dike (1)11,J; Bolivar (2)15,P
 Tern, Royal: 4 reports (1-200)
 Tern, Caspian: 3 reports (1-2)

- Skimmer, Black: 3 reports (40-200)
 Dove, Rock: 6 reports (2-40)
 Dove, White-winged: 6 reports (2-20)
 Dove, Mourning: 10 reports (1-120)
 Ground Dove, Common: Brazos Bend State Park (5)29,T; W.Harris Co. (4)23,30,M,G,JM
 Dove, Inca: 5 reports (2-50)
 Ani, Groove-billed: High Island (5)15,P,L
 Owl, Barn: 4 reports (1-4)
 Owl, Screech: Algoa (1)all month,DW; Houston (1)26,RT
 Owl, Great Horned: W.Harris Co. (2)23,30,M,JM; Yard (1)21,JM
 Owl, Barred: W.Harris Co. (1)8-19,E
 Hummingbird, Anna's: Houston (1 ad. male)1-10,Margaret Anderson; (1 female)all month, WC
 Hummingbird, Rufous: Houston (1)10-30,Margaret Anderson; (1) all month,Glenn Cureton
 Hummingbird, Buff-bellied: Galv. (1)all month,H...notes submitted. Same bird as on the Galveston Christmas Count.
 Kingfisher, Belted: 6 reports (1-10)
 Flicker, Common: 9 reports (2-15)
 Woodpecker, Pileated: 7 reports (1-3)
 Woodpecker, Red-bellied: High Island (1)20,B; 9 other reports (6)
 Woodpecker, Red-headed: Sheldon Res. (1)30,AB
 Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: 12 reports (1-4)
 Woodpecker, Hairy: Brazos Bend State Park (2)29,L
 Woodpecker, Downy: 4 reports (2-4)
 Flycatcher, Ash-throated: W.Harris Co. (1)14,PV...seen also on the Cypress Creek Christmas Count on Jan.2
 Phoebe, Eastern: 11 reports (1-16)
 Flycatcher, Vermilion: W.Harris Co. (1)14,PV; Brazos Bend State Park (1)29,PV,L
 Swallow, Tree: Chambers Co. (8)27,R
 Jay, Blue: 11 reports (2-20)
 Crow, Common: 9 reports (3-200)
 Chickadee, Carolina: 10 reports (2-40)
 Titmouse, Tufted: 6 reports (2-20)
 Nuthatch, Red-breasted: Bellaire (3 banded)all month, Ted Eubanks; SW Houston (1)22,25,TM
 Creeper, Brown: 7 reports (1-3)
 Wren, House: 6 reports (1-2)
 Wren, Winter: Eisenhower Park (1)6,AB; White Oak Bayou (3) all month, WC
 Wren, Bewick's: W.Harris Co. (1)23,M; (1)23,G...see notes
 Wren, Carolina: 10 reports (1-5)
 Wren, Marsh: Maner Lake (1)23,BH; Chambers Co. (2)23,L
 Wren, Sedge: W.Harris Co. (1)23,M; Chambers Co. (1)23,L
 Mockingbird, Northern: 15 reports (1-100)
 Catbird, Gray: Sheldon Res. (2)30,AB; Galv. (1)6,H
 Thrasher, Brown: 11 reports (1-5)
 Robin, American: 10 reports (20-300)
 Thrush, Wood: SW Houston (1)4,TM...see notes
 Thrush, Hermit: 7 reports (1-5)
 Bluebird, Eastern: 8 reports (2-30)
 Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: 7 reports (1-6)
 Kinglet, Golden-crowned: Eisenhower Park (2)9,AB; High Island (1)20,B; W.Harris Co. (2)16,C; Brazos Bend State Park (1)29,T
 Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: 14 reports (1-25)
 Pipit, Water: 4 reports (3-20)
 Pipit, Sprague's: Texas City (12)15,F
 WAXWING, BOHEMIAN: Houston (10-15)late December to Feb.6, Betty Jukes...see notes
 Waxwing, Cedar: 9 reports (1-60)
 Shrike, Loggerhead: 8 reports (1-50)
 Starling: 9 reports (5-200)
 [redacted], White-eyed: Brazos Bend State Park (1)29,PV
 [redacted], Solitary: 5 reports (1-2)
 Warbler, Orange-crowned: 10 reports (1-6)
 Warbler, Nashville: Sheldon Res. (1)9,AB...notes submitted
 Parula, Northern: Houston (1)9,RT...good notes submitted
 Warbler, Yellow-rumped: 12 reports (1-300)
 Warbler, Black-throated Green: High Island (1 adult male)20, B...notes submitted
 Warbler, Pine: 7 reports (1-6)
 Warbler, Palm: Chambers Co. (1)22,PV
 Yellowthroat, Common: 4 reports (2-15)
 Warbler, Wilson's: High Island (1)15,20,P,B
 Redstart, American: High Island (1)20,B...notes submitted
 Sparrow, House: 7 reports (2-60)
 Meadowlark, Eastern: 4 reports (25-200)
 Blackbird, Red-winged: 9 reports (1-1000)
 Blackbird, Rusty: W.Harris Co. (1)23,M; (6)9,L; Bear Creek Park (30)30,JM
 Blackbird, Brewer's: 3 reports (1-90)
 Grackle, Boat-tailed: Chamber's Co. (100)23,L
 Grackle, Great-tailed: 7 reports (5-100)
 Grackle, Common: 6 reports (8-300)
 Cowbird, Brown-headed: 5 reports (2-100)
 Cardinal: 14 reports (2-35)
 Grosbeak, Black-headed: Clear Lake City (1)13-31,Betty Tuck
 Finch, Purple: Memorial Park (1)31,PV; W.Harris Co. (2,3)21,22, E; SW Houston (2)15,(1)15,TM
 Siskin, Pine: Yard (1)15,DD; W.Harris Co. (1)28,E; Yard (1)all month, Ted Eubanks
 Goldfinch, American: 12 reports (1-50)
 Towhee, Green-tailed: Sheldon Res. (2)22,Gene and Gail Sankey ...needs notes
 Towhee, Rufous-sided: W.Harris Co. (1 spotted)30,JM; White Oak Bayou (1eastern)8,WC
 Sparrow, Savannah: 5 reports (1-800)
 Sparrow, LeConte's: SW Houston (1)all month,TM; W.Harris Co. (12)23,M
 Sparrow, Sharp-tailed: Bolivar (5)23,L
 Sparrow, Vesper: 4 reports (1-60)
 Sparrow, Lark: Brazos Bend State Park (2)29,T
 Junco, Slate-colored: SW Houston (5)12,TM; Galv. (2)21,J; W.Harris Co. (1)28-31,E; Bolivar (3)30,G; White Oak Bayou (5)29,WC...one or two of these were possibly the Oregon (pink-sided) race.
 Sparrow, Chipping: 8 reports (4-45)
 Sparrow, Field: 5 reports (1-6)
 Sparrow, Harris': Algoa (1)all month,DW
 Sparrow, White-crowned: 2 reports (3,40)
 Sparrow, White-throated: 10 reports (1-60)
 Sparrow, Fox: W.Harris Co. (1)14,PV; Sheldon Res. (2)30,AB,S; Bear Creek Park (8)30,JM
 Sparrow, Lincoln's: 7 reports (1-3)
 Sparrow, Swamp: 8 reports (1-6)
 Sparrow, Song: 6 reports (1-8)

CONTRIBUTORS - JANUARY, 1983

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FIELDNOTES - JANUARY, 1983

RED-NECKED GREBE: seen at Texas City Dike. Smaller than nearby loons and larger than eared and horned grebes. Long dark gray neck, heavy angular head, and white chin strap. Observed at 40-50 yards for approx. 15 minutes with 30X scope and assortment of binocs. One observer had previous experience. Jane Hamilton

CORY'S SHEARWATER: near High Island in the surf. Seen at 50 yds. in good light with good binoculars. Flying toward, by, and away from us. A large brown bird with long pointed wings. Dark line at leading and trailing edge of wings. Tail brown and rounded. Flew in trough of waves with stiff wing beats. The surf was very rough, and we had gulls nearby for comparison of size. Margaret Anderson has seen Cory's Shearwaters quite a few times. Ellen Red

Oldsquaw: fairly small white-faced duck with large roundish black postocular spot slightly lower than eye. Small dark crown patch was visible at certain angles. Throat and upper neck were white, turning into a darker breast band where breast met water. Small grayish bill. All dark wings. Dark back. As close as 40 ft. for 25 minutes with binocs and 20-30X scope. P.D.Hulce, Steve Schultz

Oldsquaw: reported by Linda Snyder on field trip to Cooling Ponds. Medium-sized white duck with brown wings. Seen in rapid flight for 5 seconds in good light. David Dauphin

White-tailed Hawk: immature. Uniformly pale gray tail. Blackish underwing coverts. Remiges blackish, but mottled with paler feathers. Breast had vertical blackish streaks. Head rather dark with a short pale stripe on side. Bob Behrstock, Linda Graetz

Ferruginous Hawk: large buteo with pure white breast and abdomen. Head almost white, but with some grayish on crown and dark line through eye. Back of neck streaked longitudinally. Rusty shoulders. Pale rusty tail, fading into white at base. Seen perched in tree and flying at 500-1000 yards with 30X and 30-60X Balscopes. Bill and Jean Harwell

Bewick's Wren: observed at south end of Borstedt's pond in shrubs. Responded to screech owl imitation. Pale eyeline, whitish breast with no extensive cinnamon, and whitish half circles along edge of tail. Bob Behrstock, Linda Graetz

Wood Thrush: eliminated from Hermit Thrush because of rusty head and back, grayish-brown tail, and bold dark breast spots. Tommy Michael

BOHEMIAN WAXWING: in late December I observed an unusual bird sitting on the side of our homemade fish pond which had a small amount of water in it. After looking at it with binoculars and consulting two bird books, I concluded it was a Bohemian Waxwing. Suddenly 10-15 more landed, drank, and flew off. I called Audubon, who suggested I observe more closely for specific color differences between the Cedar and the Bohemian. It was a week before they showed up again, and they fit the description of the Bohemian. In the second week of January they started coming late in the afternoon every day and sitting over the pool in the very tops of the trees. There was also a flock of Cedar Waxwings during this time. The Bohemians were much larger than the Cedars, and their crests were always erect instead of lying back as in the Cedars. The Bohemians were quite gray-breasted, without any of the yellowish that the Cedars had on the breast. Beginning between the legs and extending on toward the tail was a noticeable buffy color. I failed to notice any difference in the wing. Ate berries and buds on trees, but never came to the raisins and blueberries I put out for them. They also had a yellow rim on the end of the tail. Betty Jukes

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