

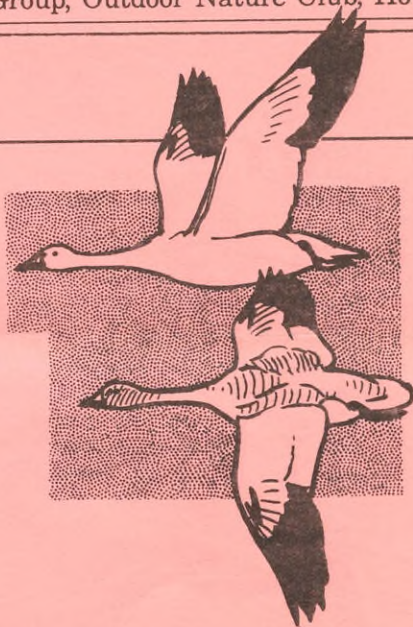
The Spoonbill

Published by The Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club, Houston

Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot.
...Shakespeare

Mid-morning on a clear sunny day in early January, a friend and I watched the geese and ducks in a grassy field on Highway 529 just east of 2855 in west Harris County. An incident occurred that I felt was a unique opportunity for observation: two Bald Eagles, soon joined by a third, landed in the field causing the geese and ducks to take flight--all except one Snow Goose, who was obviously unable to fly.

The eagles seemed to study the situation for some five minutes before one walked toward the goose, who attempted to scuttle to a line of slightly higher grass. Suddenly we were aware of what at first looked like a large dog walking across the field toward the eagle and the goose. As it came nearer, we realized that it was a coyote. When he was perhaps 100 feet



from the goose, the eagles flew away. One eagle landed on the far right of the field where it remained watching as the coyote attacked the goose.

With the bird clenched in its jaws, the coyote stood for a time as it waiting to see what would happen before he turned to lope back to the far side of the field into high brush. I have seen eagles take wounded or sick geese, but I have never seen one "bow" to a coyote! **Lettalou Whittington**

COMING EVENTS

MONDAY, MARCH 7: OG MEETING. 7:00 p.m. Harris County Bayland Community Park. Jim Morgan will discuss "Spring Migration Fallouts on the Upper Texas Coast--Case Histories: 1977-1990." There were 13 fallouts during this period. Jim will detail the major fallouts using data from his own field notes, reports to American Birds and articles published in The Spoonbill. Karen Beekman will review early spring migrants in the Learning Corner, which will meet at 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15: OG WEEKDAY FIELD TRIP to Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the sign-in booth across from the bathrooms at the refuge. Winnie Burkett, 992-5640.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19: HAS FIELD TRIP AND ANNUAL SPRING BEACH CLEANUP AT BOLIVAR FLATS. Meet Winnie Burkett at the Flats at 7:30 a.m. for a little morning birding then clean the beach beginning at 9:00 a.m. This is not the "official" statewide beach cleanup (April), but it is the only cleanup at Bolivar Flats this spring. This cleanup, sponsored by the OG and HAS, has been scheduled early to avoid disturbing nesting birds in April. If you bird the Flats, you have the responsibility to help clean it up! See you there! As an added bonus, Winnie will lead an afternoon birding trip to High Island after all the work is done, usually about noon. Winnie Burkett, 992-5640.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19: OG FIELD TRIP TO SAN BERNARD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE Call leader Richard Uzar at 527-0454 for meeting place and times.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26: OG FIELD TRIP TO NORTH LAKE HOUSTON STATE PARK. Marilyn Crane and Steve Gast, who are working on a bird checklist for the Park, will be the trip leaders. To reach the Park, go north on Highway 59 to FM 1485 at New Caney and turn right (east) and cross Caney Creek. Although a sign for North Lake Houston State Park will be on the left, turn to the right (across from the sign). This road leads to the park's entrance road. Turn left into the park at the second park sign. Go to the end of this road to the parking lot for visitors at the "Official Vehicles Only" sign, which closes the remainder of the road to unauthorized traffic. Meet at the Visitors Parking Lot at 8 a.m. The trip from downtown Houston should take about 1.25 hours.

SAT.-SUN., APRIL 2 AND 3: OG FIELD TRIP TO BEEVILLE, LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI AND CHOKE CANYON STATE PARK. Only a 4-hour drive from Houston, for species most birders associate with the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Meet in Beeville in the parking lot of the Best Western Drummers Inn at 6 a.m. Saturday (U.S. 181-Bypass just south of U.S. 59) They have a 24-hour restaurant. We will visit the brush country west of Beeville then drive to Lake Corpus Christi and the Nueces River, spend Saturday night near Choke Canyon State Park which we will explore Sunday morning. We'll head home at mid-day. We expect to see Ladder-backed and Golden-fronted Woodpeckers, Roadrunner, Couch's Kingbird, Ash-throated and Brown-Crested Flycatchers, Kiskadee, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Long-billed and Curve-billed Thrashers, and Lark and Cassin's Sparrows. We'll

probably get a glimpse of Olive Sparrow and, if we're lucky, Green Kingfisher, Bell's Vireo, or Audubon's Oriole. Friday night should be spent in the Beeville/Goliad area. Call Antlers Inn (Goliad) 512/645-8215, Drummers Inn (Beeville) 512/358-4000, or Goliad State Park 512/645-3405. Saturday night will be in Three Rivers. Call Choke Canyon Bass Inn 512/786-3521, Staghorn Inn 512/786-3541, or Choke Canyon State Park 512/786-3538, all in the Choke Canyon Reservoir area at Three Rivers, Texas. Call Bob Honig, 669-6369, or Dwight Peake, 409/740-4621, with your questions. If you find the motels in Three Rivers booked up, call Bob. He has information on other motels.

MONDAY, APRIL 4: OG MEETING. 7:00 P.M. Harris County Bayland Community Center. Ted Eubanks will present a program entitled "The Economic Impact of Birding on High Island." Learning Corner is at 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13: OG WEEKDAY FIELD TRIP to High Island. Meet at Boy Scout Woods at 8:00 a.m. We will look for migrants at both sanctuaries and explore the property Amoco is donating to Houston Audubon. Bring lunch, waterproof shoes and mosquito repellent. Winnie Burkett, 992-5640.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16: OG FIELD TRIP TO GALVESTON ISLAND. This trip will be led by Ted Eubanks, a noted area bird expert. This all-day trip will begin at 7 a.m. and will be limited to the first 25 people who sign up. To make arrangements for this field trip, call Dwight Peake at (409) 740-4621 to sign-up and obtain information on the itinerary.

NEWS BRIEFS

.....**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 1994 OG MEETING:** The OG held a joint meeting with Houston Audubon Society (HAS) at the Houston Zoo's Brown Auditorium, thus no Learning Corner was held. Gary Woods opened the meeting for HAS. HAS High Island patches for admission to the sanctuaries are available for \$15.00 through Houston Audubon. Designed by Gail Luckner, each patch depicts a Chestnut-sided Warbler. Ellen Red announced HAS meetings and trips (see the HAS Naturalist for listings). OG Chairman David Bradford summarized upcoming meetings and trips and OG Field Trip Chairman Dwight Peake announced field trips and returned to David Bradford a pillow David had left behind while searching for the Collared Forest Falcon at Bentsen State Park! The evening's speaker was Pete Dunne, Director of the Natural History Information for the New Jersey Audubon Society. Pete related a fascinating and highly entertaining tale of an encounter with what may have been a species that has escaped documentation since the beginnings of American ornithology. **Maggie Dinse**

.....**ALWAYS WANTED TO BIRD SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA?** OG member John Erikson is planning a trip June 1-15 (or to fit your schedule). Starting in the Chiricahua Mountains, John will try to cover all the best birding areas, including all the famous canyons and try to find as many species indigenous to S.E. Arizona as possible. Call John at (409) 826-4158 for more information

.....**TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE BIRDING TOURS THIS SPRING:** Bird the Guadalupe Delta Wildlife

Management Area (WMA) on April 16, Mad Island WMA April 23 and Peach Point WMA April 30. Call Brent Ortego at (512) 576-0022 for information. Texas Conservation Passport is required for these TPWD tours.

.....**A NORTH CAROLINA PELAGIC TRIP** is being planned by Dwight Peake for August 13-15. A group of local birders will travel to Cape Hatteras for this trip led by expert pelagic leader, Bryan Patterson, who has added this extra trip to his schedule. Call Dwight (409) 740-4621 if you're interested in seeing Wilson's and Least Storm-Petrel, White-tailed Tropicbird, and Cory's and Greater Shearwater, among many others.

.....**SAN BERNARD CHRISTMAS COUNT, 1993:** We had good birding weather this year for our 32 participants, and we kept two airboats, one tunnel boat and one marsh buggy operating all day. The final tally was 177 species, the second highest in the count's nine-year history. Several very good species observed were Harris' Hawk, White-winged Scoter, Marbled Godwit, Stilt Sandpiper, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Whip-poor-will, Bewick's Wren, Northern Waterthrush, Yellow Warbler, Harris' Sparrow and thirty-two Piping Plovers. This was also the highest count of individuals for 38 species including: Olivaceous Cormorant (33); Osprey (16); Mottled Duck (204); White-tailed Hawk (8); Sandhill Crane (665); Western Sandpiper (4035); Least Sandpiper (273); and Solitary Vireo (21). Unfortunately we missed a few regulars like Ring-necked Duck, Bobwhite Quail, Cooper's Hawk, Cedar Waxwing and Fox Sparrow. Many areas within the count circle were not

covered. With a few more observers I believe this count could rival some of the more popular counts along the coast. Next year come on down to San Bernard and bring friends! **Rick Speer (409) 849-7771**

.....**CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL** has established the Parker-Gentry Fund to receive contributions from persons who want to memorialize Ted Parker and Al Gentry. This fund will be used to carry on the work of the Rapid Assessment team, to publish a volume of papers on neotropical birds in Ted's memory and to work to establish a park in the Andes in their memory. Ted and Al worked for Conservation International as members of the Rapid Assessment Team. If you want to support this effort, please send a contribution to Conservation International, 1015 18th Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036. Note on your check that this is for the Parker-Gentry Fund.

.....**I'VE SEEN HIM AGAIN!** If some of you readers remember previous articles about "my" Bullock's Oriole, you know that I was blessed for four winters by the presence of a beautiful male at my hummingbird feeders, sometimes joined by a female for a month or two. The winter of 92-93 found only the female coming to the yard, for a 7-foot board fence had replaced the cyclone fence-photinia hedge in which he used to lurk. However, Gretchen Mueller, who lives about one and a half miles from my Bellaire house, had him visit her from January 1 to April 12, 1993.***I moved from Bellaire last June, thinking I would never see "my" bird again, but Gretchen called last fall to say the bird had appeared September 29

NEWS BRIEFS

(the earliest ever), but was not settling in. For several months she heard him occasionally and caught glimpses of him, but it wasn't until January of this year that he finally moved in and began appearing regularly. The first trip I made to her house to re-feast my eyes...he didn't appear! But the second time I visited, I waited only about 20 minutes for him to flash in to the feeder and spend quite a bit of time examining the goodies in a nearby shrub. My waiting time was well spent for I spotted Gretchen's first Pine Siskin of this year in her yard. How's that for a nice "thank you" for her permission to watch my beautiful bird once again?***Nearly every winter this oriole spent in my yard he would first appear in Gretchen's yard, staying a day or two, or a week or so, before coming to my feeders and settling in for the winter. Perhaps it is foolish for us to have such a strong feeling that this is the same bird returning all these years, but...it is pleasant little foolishness!

Margaret Jones

.....THE SPOONBILL STAFF STILL NEEDS A VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH MAILING THE NEWSLETTER: Patrick Baum, who has prepared The Spoonbill for mailing for four years, is retiring in May 1994. He has generously volunteered to train a new volunteer to share these duties with Mrs. Gregg Mueller. Preparing The Spoonbill for mailing takes only a couple of hours and one trip to the post office. Because we have more than one person helping out, you would not be required to do the mailing every month. For more information about time involved or what special arrangements can be made, please call Gregg (497-8566) or Patrick (523-0190) or Judy Boyce (668-5359).

.....SAT., JAN. 8 OG FIELD TRIP TO WEST HARRIS & WALLER COUNTIES: The weather was great and the birds were fair. Long before the trip began, phone calls were being made--there was a Henslow's Sparrow near John Erikson's property. Early in the morning we had glimpses of Harris' Sparrow and extended views of LeConte's, Savannah, Vesper and White-crowned Sparrow. Later we watched four adult Bald Eagles in a flooded field off Porter Road. Our trip total was eight Bald Eagles. It was interesting to see four Black-shouldered Kites on the trip. Even though we did not find a Ferruginous Hawk, we enjoyed a White-tailed. Libby Price's phone calls paid off in a big way. She convinced John to lead the group in the afternoon to look for Henslow's Sparrow. After much walking, running, mumbling and false alarms, we viewed a beautiful Henslow's for at least six minutes. Thanks John, our day was complete! David Bradford

.....SUN., JAN. 9 OG "BEGINNERS" TRIP TO WEST HARRIS & WALLER COUNTIES: Since this trip did not focus on finding many birds we did not pursue the Henslow's sparrow. This group was content spending two hours learning identification marks for the very easy to view Savannah, Vesper, White-crowned, Field and LeConte's Sparrows, the cooperative Common Snipe, Northern Flicker, Barn Owl and Red-tailed Hawks, which allowed participants to learn even more field marks. Unfortunately, the wealth of Bald Eagles seen the day before did not materialize today, but most of the group enjoyed great views of one eagle. Later in the day, as the sky continued to cloud, we had great looks at a

Solitary Sandpiper and Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs. It was at this time, P.D. Hulce picked a Ross' Goose out of a flock of Snows flying overhead. Dennis Woodward saw eleven lifer birds and enjoyed the Barn Owls and Solitary Sandpiper the most. A special thanks is extended to Richard Uzar and P.D. Hulce for assisting on this beginners field trip. Having advanced birders help on a trip like this makes my job easier and better meets the needs of so many beginners. David Bradford

.....SAT., DEC. 11 "YOUTH" FIELD TRIP. Twelve young birders, ranging in age from 10-18, observed over fifty species of birds during their half-day field trip to Galveston Island State Park and Sportsman's Road. The beach provided opportunities to compare gull, tern and shorebird species, and freshwater ponds offered a selection of ducks with Osprey, Black-shouldered Kite and Red-tailed Hawks sparring for supremacy overhead. Sportsman's Road yield Clapper Rail, a fine assortment of herons, Roseate Spoonbills and Hooded Merganser. The number of participants marked a threefold gain in attendance over our first trip in October! Thanks to all OG members for helping get the word out and a special thanks to those bringing young birders to the trips. David Voselka

Won't you all please welcome these new members to the Ornithology Group: James Calaway, Douglas Cain, Jennifer Sun, Marion Dickson and Judith Moorad of Houston, Billie Clary of Pasadena and Peter Whiting of Cypress.

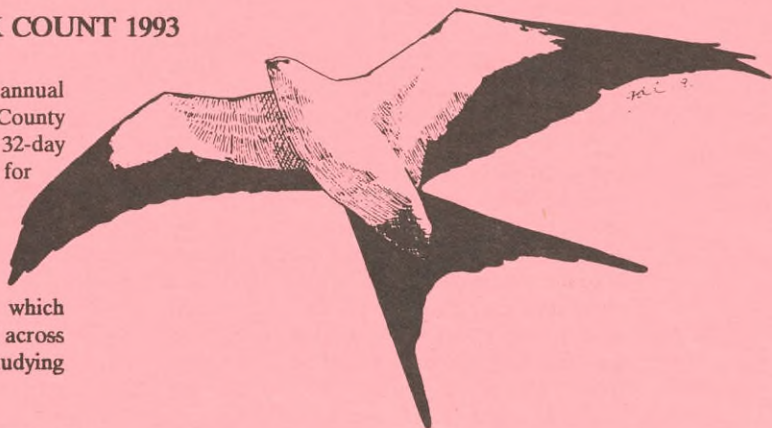
SMITH POINT HAWK COUNT 1993

Seven dedicated volunteer leaders at the third annual fall hawk count at Smith Point in Chambers County logged 136 hours of observation time over a 32-day period, tabulating 14,911 raptors of 17 species for an average of 110 hawks per hour. This total was down dramatically from 245 hawks per hour in 1992. As in past years, our data have been submitted to the Hawk Migration Association of North America, which compiles data from hawk counts in Texas and across the U.S., making it available for researchers studying raptor migration and population trends.

Broad-winged Hawk migration over the count station this fall was considered a disappointment by the leaders, and this species represented over 90 percent of the total decline in our raptor numbers. On an average-per-hour basis, Broad-winged's were down 61 percent versus 1992. Reports received from observers in the Liberty, Dayton and Crosby areas seem to indicate that the birds may have taken a more inland route this year, and this is supported by data from other hawk watches. Counts at various coastal locations in Texas also showed a decrease in Broad-winged numbers, with a concurrent increase in the interior, and a similar trend was noted throughout eastern North America. Many factors, including weather, may be responsible for the alteration in the migration pattern of Broad-winged's this year.

Mississippi Kites were also down slightly, but we attribute this decline in our later start date in 1993. This species generally completes the bulk of its migration through the Upper Texas coast prior to 16 September, the date our count began. On average, remaining raptor species generally held steady. Accipiters rose slightly, from an average of 12 per hour in 1992 to 14 per hour in 1993. Merlin sightings about doubled on both actual and average-per-hour bases. In all, 34 Merlins and 20 Peregrine Falcons were spotted from the count station this year. As in 1992, we counted five American Swallow-tailed Kites, though this year one delighted more than 50 birders as it glided and soared over the count station for nearly two hours. A single Bald Eagle appeared on 6 October.

Beyond the statistics, most gratifying is the increased interest in raptors among area birders as evidenced by the numbers of visitors at the count station this year. Between 16 September 17 October,



seven organized field trips and over 150 individuals visited the site. Many of these folks witnessed raptor migration for the first time and were both awed and intrigued by the spectacle of hundreds of Broad-winged and dozens of accipiters. And watching a Merlin harass a sharpie and seeing a Peregrine Falcon pursue terns over the bay are "all in a day's work" at the count station. In addition to tallying raptors, our leaders provide assistance in raptor identification for birders not yet familiar with these magnificent creatures.

The future looks bright for Smith Point Hawk Count. John Economidy of the Hawk Migration Association of North America calls our count "first rate" and lists it as one of the top hawk watches in Texas. OG sponsorship will enable us to purchase permanent signs and publish a brochure, as well as help defray photocopying and postable costs, making the organizer's job just a bit easier. Terry Turney, TPWD superintendent of Abshier Wildlife Management Area where our count station is located, says that a 12' observation tower may be completed at the site by hawk count time in 1994. And the addition of the port-a-can provided by TPWD is certainly appreciated by leaders and visitors alike!

Our hard working, devoted volunteer leaders spent many long hours at the count station, sometimes during inclement weather or when the raptors just weren't flying, and they deserve a special thanks. Leaders this year were Gail Luckner, Winnie Burkett, Buddy Hollis, Dawn and Ross Carrie, Dwight Peake, John Whittle and Marilyn Crane. We hope to see them all--and you--back at the count station in 1994.

Gail Diane Luckner

NOEL'S NICHE LOOKING BACK

by Noel Pettingell

30 YEARS AGO/FROM FEBRUARY 1964 SPOONBILL

"A Challenge to Conservationists--Richard Pough" Pulling the Attwater's Prairie-Chicken Back from the Brink of Extinction

"Some 3,428 acres of prairie...occupied by several hundred...prairie chickens, is now under option to conservation interests. The total cost of the land will be \$364,000, which is less than many an art museum has paid for a single painting in recent years. Is that which the Lord produced less worthy of preservation than a painting from the hand of man?" [The Attwater Prairie-Chicken National Wildlife Refuge was established on July 1, 1972 as a result of purchases made by The Nature Conservancy of Texas and the World Wildlife fund. As of June, 1983, the refuge encompassed a total of 8,000 acres. Prairie chicken population in this area numbered some 25 birds in 1965, 125 in 1975 and 180-200 in the spring of 1983. The original Texas population of one million birds was reduced to less than 1,000 by 1965, increased to an estimated 2,400 by 1975 and declined to approximately 1,300 in 1983...]

DRAMA-BRAZOS BEND CBC-AMERICAN BIRDS

by Lynne Aldrich and Peter Gottschling

What, you may well ask, do drama, the Brazos Bend CBC, and American Birds magazine have in common? The Brazos Bend Christmas count held the day after Christmas this year was truly drama in ornithological terms. A near record shattering number of participants (56) saw the second highest number of species (47) and the **lowest number of individuals** (72,388) since the inception of this count in 1985. This trend in declining individuals is a drama being played out on the fields of many Christmas Counts as well as at the migrant traps along the Gulf Coast.

Another drama being played out concerns American Birds, published by the National Audubon Society (NAS), is the ornithological journal which publishes the information gathered in Christmas Bird Counts. It is also one of the major ornithological publications in the nation and as such is the **only** journal which tracks, season by season, the history of bird distribution. It is unprecedented in articles providing professional expertise in field identification by major ornithologists and bird watchers in this nation. It is unprecedented in the dissemination of scientific and research information and studies. And it provides a venue to bird watchers and scientists alike in early detection of ornithological activity. Unfortunately NAS is now threatening that journal with extinction and with that threat the extinction of ornithological history.

The spring issue of American Birds will be its last. NAS, under the leadership of Peter Berle, has made this decision. This is one of many moves away from ornithology and birdwatching undertaken since Mr. Berle assumed the presidency. National membership in Audubon has declined dramatically during his tenure. This decline affects dramatically membership in chapters across the nation and takes place at the very time studies show a dramatic **increase** in birdwatchers across the nation.

The Brazos Bend Christmas Count had several major ornithological discoveries. Masked Duck for the second straight year; an unprecedented Golden-fronted Woodpecker; both Curve-billed and Long-billed Thrashers; and a Baird's Sandpiper. All these well documented birds, along with the 142 other species seen in their declining numbers, are important to ornithological history. Ornithology **requires** access to publication. For the major (only) ornithology and birdwatching group in the nation to cease to support those endeavors is unconscionable. Is the National Audubon Society under the direction of Peter Berle out of touch? I think we are being shown it is. If you want to help get him back in touch write directly to Peter Berle and any (all) members of the NAS Board. And, if you want to participate in a great Christmas Count (Brazos Bend of course), set aside **Saturday, December 31, 1994**. Then attend one of the best countdown dinners and parties in the area!

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT POTPOURRI

1993-1994

by P.D. Hulce

For some unknown reason, I am totally addicted to Christmas Bird counts, and in response to absolutely no inquiries whatsoever, I would like to share some of the highlights I experienced this season while participating in ten different counts on the Upper Texas Coast.

The Mad Island Marsh CBC, a new count this year, organized by Brent Ortego, was to be my first and possibly most exciting count of the season. A total of only 34 observers recorded 197 different species on this new count, which could easily put it among the top ten counts in the country. Birding the town of Matagorda in the morning, I spotted my first of two Rufous Hummingbirds for the day, not at someone's feeders, but working a nice patch of scrub by the levee. Birding at lunchtime with area leader Richard Uzar on a great piece of private property, we picked out a Least Grebe on a pond filled with ducks and other water birds. About two hours later, within a ten-minute time period, John Erikson and I had a Vermilion Flycatcher, an adult Purple Gallinule, and two fantastic Tundra Swans. Pretty good for a day's birding!

Birding the south side of Baytown the next day on the Houston count, I added two species to my personal Houston CBC list, a Bewick's Wren and four House Finch, as well as three Harris' Sparrow and a Horned Grebe.

Freeport on Sunday made three counts in a row, where I saw White-tailed Hawk, a very cooperative Peregrine Falcon, Horned Larks, a count exclusive Stilt Sandpiper and the Henslow's Sparrow originally located by Mark Scheuerman and Rob Van Zandt after a two-hour search of the infamous "sparrow field." This is the same field where I saw my life Henslow's on the 1977 Freeport CBC.

Tuesday was the San Bernard CBC, where I usually bird the ten-mile stretch of beach north of Sargent to the San Bernard River. The refuge provides a 4-wheel drive vehicle and driver, if I don't manage to show up in one, but this year, their last one was down for repairs, so they sent us out in their 4-wheel drive fire truck, a CBC first for me and a strange sight to the few fishermen on the Sargent beach that day. Good birds for the day included a White-winged Scoter, 28 Piping Plover and one Snowy, more Horned Larks, and in the afternoon, a count exclusive Harris' Sparrow at a more inland location. Also, I can't forget to mention refuge manager, Ron Bisbee's, famous gumbo at the countdown dinner.

On the Attwater count the next morning, it rained until ten that morning and two of our best spots went virtually "unbirded," although we did manage to find Fox and Harris' Sparrow. Our third stop of the day was a wonderful piece of private property, the Fitzgerald Ranch, which we refer to as the "long walk," about a six mile jaunt. For the first time we missed the Bald Eagles that we usually see out there, but we added two species to my cumulative Attwater Area Seven list--a Vermilion Flycatcher and an exceptionally entertaining Winter Wren.

In contrast to Attwater, the weather for the Brazos Bend CBC the day after Christmas was beautiful. Our group birds the Smithers Lake Power Plant in the morning and three of their environmental personnel came with us this day. Two of our first birds of the day were an adult Bald Eagle that flew very low right over our heads and an Osprey that was observed on and off all morning. This was the first time that I had ever seen either of these species at this location. The best bird of the day for me, however, was the Ash-throated Flycatcher, seen in practically the same bush for the third year in a row! Several Greater Scaup rounded off the day nicely!

The beautiful weather continued the next day for the Galveston count, and in the morning I enjoyed a leisurely boat ride in West Bay to Deer Island, where we tallied 23 American Oystercatchers. Afternoon birding on Pelican Island was a little slow, but we did manage to locate a very cooperative Groove-billed Ani. I was a little tired and did not attend the countdown dinner that evening--the only one I've missed on ten counts.

On Tuesday, the bad weather returned for the Old River CBC, and we planned to be out on a boat for the entire day. In contrast to last year, the inland waterways did not produce many passerines at all, so we headed out for Trinity Bay and the mudflats, which had been rather birdless last year. Today, the mud flats were covered with over 5000 shorebirds, ducks abounded, and we had 13 count exclusives

including Brown Pelicans, Reddish Egrets, Least and Western Sandpipers and Dunlin. On our way back at three o'clock, it rained hard, but it was still a great day.

I think that New Year's Day in west Harris County, for the Cypress Creek CBC, has to be the best way to start the new year. The count circle was moved about six miles to the west this year, so I was quite excited about the areas I would be working. Birding in the dark, our first four birds were Killdeer, Snow Goose, Great Horned Owl and Short-eared Owl. During the day, we managed to locate a Ferruginous Hawk and one of my favorite birds, a Rufous-sided Towhee. We also saw the Couch's/Tropical Kingbird and Solitary Sandpiper discovered by other participants that day.

The Buffalo Bayou CBC, on January 2nd, would be my final count for the season. We spent the entire day walking inside the Barker-Cullen Reservoir Park. The morning was extremely foggy and that may have enable us to walk up quite close to a group of about 100 beautiful Wood Ducks, a fantastic experience this close to Houston. We also saw a number of Common Ground-Doves, some American Wigeon, a Spotted Sandpiper, and a Royal Tern a long way from any salt water. Our three groups of two people each recorded a total of 82 species that day, seen entirely within the reservoir/park.

I finished the Christmas count season with a cumulative list of 174 species and a total of 1,404 miles driven. And yes--I'm going to try to do it again next year on even more counts--if possible.

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TREASURER, Mike Gremillion, 665-8502
3304 Rice Bl. Houston 77005

FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN, Dwight Peake
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SEND CLEARING HOUSE BIRD SIGHTINGS
TO: Clearing House, Ornithology Group
P. O. Box 271374, Houston, 77277.

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OG MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION, dues,
subscriptions and address changes.
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Houston, 77095, 859-8817.

TEXAS RARE BIRD ALERT TAPE
Houston Audubon Society, 992-2757.

CLEARING HOUSE

JANUARY, 1994

Editors: Phyllis and Tony Frank

A total of 198 species were reported. Golden-fronted Woodpecker is probably the highlight of the month. Other remarkable sightings include a duck species, a raptor and a sparrow. Read below for details.

Many thanks to everyone who submitted reports and documentation. Reports for next month are due by March 3rd, but early reports are welcomed. Readers are reminded that all decisions regarding checklist status are made by the checklist committee. Publication of a rarity does not imply acceptance of the record by the editors or the committee. The CH format remains the same this month. The listing uses the following format: bird name, early late dates, reports/total and summary by county or detailed listing. The format of the county summary is as follows: county designation - number of reports/number of birds. The detailed listing format is as follows: county-(number of birds) day, observer code. Very rare birds are underlined. Birds with no previous record on date or vagrant status appear in bold. Birds new to the checklist are capitalized and underlined. Please remember to submit notes on all those good birds. And with all the reminders completed - on to the birds.

Loon, Common 30-31 2/23 CH-(1)31,G; GA-(22)30,G
 Grebe, Pied-bill 1-31 13/90 U-2/18 CH-2/19 FB-1/25
 GA-2/5 HA-5/20 JE-1/3
 Grebe, Horned 30-30 1/2 GA-(2)30,G
 Grebe, Eared 30-30 1/1 GA-(1)30,G
 Pelican, Amer Wht 1-30 8/624 U-1/60 GA-2/348 HA-2/126
 WA-3/90
 Pelican, Brown 8-31 4/53 U-1/20 CH-1/2 GA-2/31
 Corm, Dbl-crested 2-31 11/198 U-4/69 CH-1/7 FB-1/35
 GA-2/56 HA-3/31
 Corm, Neotropic 8-31 5/57 U-2/27 CH-1/4 GA-2/26
 Anhinga 15-30 2/3 U-(2)15,PS; JE-(1)30,JW
 Bittern, American 2-15 4/4 U-(1)8,X; U-(1)15,PS;
 HA-BR(1)2,PB; HA-(1)2,BBC
 Heron, Great Blue 1-31 14/173 U-6/77 CH-2/15 GA-2/12
 HA-4/69
 Egret, Great 1-31 16/252 U-6/85 CH-2/54 GA-2/11
 HA-5/89 JE-1/13
 Egret, Snowy 1-31 11/189 U-3/26 CH-2/58 GA-2/42
 HA-3/52 JE-1/11
 Heron, Little Blu 8-31 5/15 U-2/8 CH-2/6 GA-1/1
 Heron, Tricolored 8-31 7/13 U-2/7 CH-1/2 GA-2/2
 HA-1/1 JE-1/1
 Egret, Reddish 30-30 1/3 GA-(3)30,G
 Egret, Cattle 2-31 10/103 U-4/12 CH-2/4 HA-4/87
 Nt-Heron, Blk-crn 9-30 5/57 U-3/35 GA-1/1 HA-1/21
 Nt-Heron, Yel-crn 2-8 2/6 U-(1)8,X; HA-(5)2,BBC
 Ibis, White 1-31 11/746 U-6/366 CH-2/243
 GA-1/6 HA-2/131
 Ibis, White-faced 1-31 7/327 U-4/85 CH-2/232 JE-1/10
 Spoonbill, Roseat 8-31 5/21 U-1/6 CH-2/10 GA-1/1 JE-1/4
 Whtl-Duck, Blk-bd 2-29 5/152 U-2/100 HA-2/12 WA-1/40
 Goose, Gr Wht-frn 1-31 10/13092 U-6/3800 CH-2/9281 HA-2/11
 Goose, Snow 1-31 12/62257 U-6/41000 CH-2/18930
 HA-3/1077 JE-1/1250
 (Goose, Blue) 2-2 1/99 HA-(99)2,BBC
 Goose, Ross' 1-31 8/81 U-4/27 CH-2/8 WA-2/46
 Goose, Canada 8-31 6/1455 U-4/705 CH-2/750
 goose, sp. 2-2 1/15 HA-1/15
 Duck, Wood 2-2 2/244 HA-BR(100)2,PB; HA-(144)2,BBC
 Teal, Green-wing 1-31 13/6792 U-7/5680 CH-2/832
 GA-2/210 HA-2/70
 Duck, Mottled 1-31 12/212 U-6/68 CH-2/37 GA-1/2
 HA-2/30 JE-1/75
 Duck, BlckXMald 2-2 1/1 HA-(1)2,A

Mallard 1-30 8/58 U-4/12 GA-1/12 HA-3/34
 Pintail, Northern 1-31 8/1959 U-7/1907 CH-1/52
 Teal, Blue-winged 2-31 10/153 U-4/57 CH-2/78 GA-1/4
 HA-2/10 JE-1/4
 Teal, Cinnamon 8-15 2/3 U-(2)8,X; FB-BB(1)15,PS
 Shoveler, Northrn 1-31 14/3034 U-7/1840 CH-2/964
 GA-2/200 HA-2/20 JE-1/10
 Gadwall 1-31 10/758 U-6/653 CH-2/67 GA-2/38
 Wigeon, American 2-31 11/294 U-4/167 CH-2/15 GA-2/103
 HA-2/8 JE-1/1
 Canvasback 8-15 2/12 U-(4)8,X; U-(8)15,PS
 Duck, Ring-necked 1-29 6/129 U-6/129
 Scaup, Greater 8-8 1/1 CH-AW(1)8,X
 Scaup, Lesser 30-30 2/5002 GA-2/5002
 Goldeneye, Common 30-30 2/23 GA-(22)30,G; HA-(1)30,G
 Bufflehead 30-30 1/17 GA-(17)30,G
 Merganser, Hooded 8-8 1/9 GA-(9)8,X
 Merganser, Red-br 8-31 6/65 U-1/50 CH-1/1 GA-3/8 HA-1/6
 Duck, Ruddy 1-30 3/326 U-2/51 GA-1/275
 Duck, Masked 15-15 1/1 FB-BB(1)15,PS
 Vulture, Black 1-31 10/144 U-5/29 CH-1/6 HA-4/109
 Vulture, Turkey 1-31 16/436 U-6/210 CH-2/19 GA-3/30
 HA-4/176 JE-1/1
 Osprey 8-31 5/5 U-1/1 CH-1/1 GA-2/2 HA-1/1
 Kite, Blk-shouldr 1-31 11/41 U-4/16 CH-2/11 GA-2/11
 HA-2/2 JE-1/1
 Eagle, Bald 9-29 3/7 U-2/6 WA-1/1
 Harrier, Northern 1-31 14/125 U-6/78 CH-2/15 GA-2/11
 HA-3/20 JE-1/1
 Hawk, Sharp-shin 2-31 9/23 U-3/4 CH-1/2 GA-1/1 HA-4/16
 Hawk, Cooper's 1-31 7/18 U-3/7 CH-1/1 HA-2/9 JE-1/1
 accipiter, sp. 2-2 1/2 HA-1/2
 Hawk, Red-shouldr 1-31 11/73 U-6/16 CH-1/5 HA-4/52
 Hawk, White-taild 9-15 2/4 U-(1)9,PO; HA-(3)15,NP
 Hawk, Red-tailed 1-31 13/391 U-5/190 CH-2/81 GA-2/20
 HA-4/100
 (Hawk, Harlan's) 2-2 1/2 HA-(2)2,BBC
 (Hawk, Krider's) 9-9 1/1 U-(1)9,PO
 Hawk, Ferruginous 1-29 2/3 U-(2)29,PH; HA-(1)1,PF
 buteo, sp. 2-2 1/1 HA-1/1
 Eagle, Golden 8-8 1/1 CH-AW(1)8,X
 Caracara, Crested 1-29 5/7 U-4/6 HA-1/1
 Kestrel, American 1-31 15/381 U-6/208 CH-2/41 GA-2/46
 HA-4/83 JE-1/3
 Merlin 2-30 2/2 GA-(1)30,JW; HA-(1)2,BBC
 Falcon, Peregrine 30-30 1/1 CH-(1)30,JW
 falcon, sp. 2-2 1/1 HA-1/1
 Bobwhite, Northrn 1-29 5/57 U-3/22 HA-2/35
 Rail, Clapper 31-31 1/2 CH-(2)31,G
 Rail, King 15-29 2/2 FB-BB(1)15,PS; HA-(1)29,PH
 Moorhen, Common 8-31 5/329 U-1/30 CH-2/231 FB-1/65 GA-
 1/3
 Coot, American 2-31 8/1082 U-4/890 CH-2/155
 GA-1/36 HA-1/1
 Crane, Sandhill 1-29 6/978 U-3/213 HA-3/765
 Plover, Blk-belli 8-30 3/58 U-1/1 GA-2/57
 Plover, Snowy 8-8 1/1 U-(1)8,X
 Plover, Piping 8-30 3/97 U-(6)8,X; GA-BF(90)30,JW;
 GA-(1)30,G
 Killdeer 1-31 13/981 U-6/700 CH-2/34 GA-1/27
 HA-4/220
 Oystercatcher, Am 30-30 2/3 GA-(1)30,JW; GA-(2)30,G
 Stilt, Black-neck 30-30 1/12 GA-(12)30,JW
 Avocet, American 8-30 2/2310 U-(250)8,X; GA-(2060)30,JW
 Yellowlegs, Great 1-31 11/185 U-6/34 CH-1/2 GA-1/3 HA-
 3/146
 Yellowlegs, Less 1-29 6/51 U-6/51
 Sandppr, Solitary 1-15 3/1 HA-3/1
 Willet 8-31 6/306 U-1/50 CH-2/12 GA-2/241 HA-
 1/3
 Sandppr, Spotted 2-31 4/6 CH-1/1 HA-3/5
 Whimbrel 30-30 1/1 GA-BF(1)30,JW
 Curlew, Long-bill 1-30 4/121 U-3/87 GA-1/34
 Godwit, Marbled 30-30 1/25 GA-(25)30,JW
 Turnstone, Ruddy 8-30 3/27 U-1/10 GA-2/17
 Knot, Red 8-8 1/2 U-(2)8,X

Sanderling	8-30	4/551	U-1/500	GA-2/50	HA-1/1	
Sandpr, Western	1-30	10/1887	U-6/1791	CH-1/20		
		GA-2/60	HA-1/16			
Sandpr, Least	1-29	6/224	U-6/224			
Dunlin	1-30	8/806	U-5/755	CH-1/5	GA-2/46	
Dowitcher, S-bill	30-30	1/2	GA-BF(2)30	JW		
Dowitcher, L-bill	1-30	8/1732	U-6/1637	CH-1/45	GA-1/50	
dowitcher, sp.	2-2	1/10	HA-1/10			
Snipe, Common	2-30	8/80	U-5/66	HA-2/8	JE-1/6	
Woodcock, Amer	2-29	2/2	HA-(1)2,BBC	WA-(1)29,PH		
Gull, Laughing	8-30	4/1350	U-1/400	GA-2/650	HA-1/300	
Gull, Bonaparte's	8-30	3/51	U-1/2	GA-2/49		
Gull, Ring-billed	2-31	9/1042	U-3/155	CH-1/4	GA-2/655	
		HA-3/228				
Gull, Herring	8-31	5/31	U-1/12	CH-2/2	GA-2/17	
gull, sp.	2-2	1/2	HA-1/2			
Tern, Caspian	2-31	5/9	U-1/2	CH-1/2	GA-1/1	HA-2/4
Tern, Royal	2-30	5/63	U-1/15	GA-2/46	HA-2/2	
Tern, Forster's	8-31	5/612	U-1/400	CH-1/6	GA-2/205	HA-
		1/1				
Skimmer, Black	30-30	1/200	GA-(200)30	JW		
Dove, Rock	1-30	14/1146	U-6/116	CH-1/20		
		GA-2/250	HA-4/715	JE-1/45		
Turtle-Dove, Ring	2-2	1/6	HA-(6)2,BBC			
Dove, White-wingd	2-2	1/45	HA-(45)2,BBC			
Dove, Mourning	1-31	15/989	U-6/234	CH-2/6	GA-2/2	
		HA-4/743	JE-1/4			
Dove, Inca	2-30	3/80	U-1/4	HA-2/76		
Ground-Dove, Comm	2-30	4/21	U-1/4	GA-1/1	HA-2/16	
Cockatiel	21-21	1/1	HA-(1)21,PM			
Parakeet, Monk	2-7	2/67	HA-(36)2,BBC	HA-(31)7,PM		
parrot, sp.	2-2	1/1	HA-(1)2,BBC			
Owl, Barn	1-9	3/4	U-2/3	HA-1/1		
Screech-Owl, East	2-2	1/5	HA-(5)2,BBC			
Owl, Great Horned	1-9	3/12	U-2/5	HA-1/7		
Owl, Barred	2-2	2/6	HA-BR(2)2,PB	HA-(4)2,BBC		
Owl, Short-eared	1-1	1/1	U-(1)1,PF			
Hummer, Blk-chind	1-1	1/1	HA-(1)1,X			
Hummer, Brd-taild	2-2	1/1	HA-(1)2,BBC			
Hummer, Rufous	2-2	1/8	HA-(8)2,BBC			
hummingbird, sp.	2-2	1/3	HA-1/3			
Kingfisher, Belted	1-31	13/60	U-4/10	CH-2/16	GA-1/8	
		HA-5/24	JE-1/2			
<u>WDPECKR, GLD-FRNT</u>	15-15	1/1	FB-BB(1)15,PS			
Wdpeckr, Red-head	2-2	1/1	HA-(1)2,BBC			
Wdpeckr, Red-bell	1-30	8/182	U-4/17	HA-4/165		
Sapsuck, Yel-bell	2-18	5/52	U-2/11	HA-3/41		
Wdpeckr, Downy	1-29	9/91	U-6/14	HA-3/77		
Wdpeckr, Hairy	2-2	1/2	HA-(2)2,BBC			
Flicker, Northern	1-30	9/128	U-6/46	HA-2/81	JE-1/1	
Wdpeckr, Pileated	2-18	3/14	U-2/4	HA-1/10		
Phoebe, Eastern	1-31	10/283	U-6/104	CH-2/19	HA-2/160	
Flycatcher, Vermiln	1-29	6/10	U-1/3	CH-1/1	HA-1/2	WA-3/4
Kingbird, Cch/Trp	1-18	2/2	WA-(1)1,PF	WA-(1)18,X		
Lark, Horned	30-30	1/5	GA-BF(5)30,JW			
Swallow, Tree	30-30	1/10	JE-(10)30,JW			
Jay, Blue	1-30	11/671	U-5/45	CH-1/2	GA-1/1	HA-4/623
Crow, American	1-31	14/716	U-6/90	CH-1/11	GA-1/3	
		HA-6/612				
Chickadee, Carol	1-29	9/344	U-6/48	HA-3/296		
Titmouse, Tufted	2-18	4/178	U-2/24	HA-2/154		
Nuthatch, Red-brs	2-2	1/2	HA-(2)2,BBC			
Creeper, Brown	2-2	1/2	HA-(2)2,BBC			
Wren, Carolina	1-30	7/168	U-4/19	HA-3/149		
Wren, Bewick's	18-18	1/1	WA-(1)18,X			
Wren, House	1-29	7/84	U-5/28	HA-2/56		
Wren, Winter	15-15	1/1	FB-BB(1)15,PS			
Wren, Sedge	2-15	3/53	HA-2/52	WA-1/1		
Wren, Marsh	2-31	4/8	U-2/6	CH-1/1	HA-1/1	
Kinglet, Gold-crn	2-2	1/70	HA-(70)2,BBC			
Kinglet, Ruby-crn	1-31	10/757	U-6/195	CH-1/1	HA-3/561	
Gnatcach, Blu-gra	1-15	6/60	U-4/8	HA-2/52		
Bluebird, Eastern	1-31	8/166	U-2/56	CH-1/1	HA-3/38	WA-2/71
Thrush, Hermit	1-18	6/29	U-4/12	HA-2/17		
Robin, American	1-29	8/2342	U-5/1227	HA-3/1115		
Catbird, Gray	8-8	1/7	CH-(7)8,X			
Mockingbird, N	1-31	15/605	U-6/193	CH-2/12	GA-2/17	
		HA-4/379	JE-1/4			
Thrasher, Brown	1-22	8/109	U-5/35	HA-3/74		
Pipit, American	1-30	8/325	U-5/40	GA-1/75	HA-2/210	
Pipit, Sprague's	2-2	2/2	HA-BR(1)2,PB	HA-(1)2,BBC		
Waxwing, Cedar	2-30	5/127	U-1/16	HA-3/106	WA-1/5	
Shrike, Loggerhed	1-31	15/385	U-6/118	CH-2/45	GA-2/39	
		HA-4/174	JE-1/9			
Starling, Euro	1-31	13/1042	U-6/760	CH-1/16		
		GA-2/193	HA-3/71	JE-1/2		
Vireo, White-eyed	2-8	2/2	CH-(1)8,X	HA-(1)2,BBC		
Vireo, Solitary	1-29	6/17	U-4/5	HA-1/11	WA-1/1	
Warb, Orange-crn	1-18	6/185	U-4/20	HA-2/165		
Warb, Yellow-rump	1-31	13/4163	U-6/740	CH-1/18		
		GA-2/5	HA-4/3400			
Warb, Pine	1-31	8/129	U-5/18	CH-1/1	HA-2/110	
Warb, Palm	2-8	2/2	CH-AW(1)8,X	HA-(1)2,BBC		
Warb, Blk-and-wht	2-2	1/1	HA-(1)2,BBC			
Yellowthroat, Com	1-31	6/23	U-4/18	CH-1/4	HA-1/1	
Warb, Wilson's	8-8	1/1	CH-(1)8,X			
Cardinal, Northrn	1-31	12/850	U-6/180	CH-2/2	HA-4/668	
Towhee, Rfus-side	1-18	4/7	U-1/1	HA-3/6		
(Towhee, Spotted)	8-8	1/1	CH-(1)8,X			
Sparrow, Chipping	1-18	3/47	U-2/25	HA-1/22		
Sparrow, Field	1-31	7/39	U-4/27	CH-1/1	HA-2/11	
Sparrow, Vesper	1-29	7/208	U-5/166	HA-2/42		
Sparrow, Lark	15-15	1/8	WA-(8)15,PS			
Sparrow, Savannah	1-31	12/1199	U-6/835	CH-2/52		
		GA-2/7	HA-2/305			
Sparrow, Henslows	8-29	2/8	WA-(3)8,DB	WA-(5)29,PH		
Sparrow, Le Conte	2-29	4/86	U-2/9	HA-2/77		
Sparrow, Shp-tail	8-30	2/11	U-(6)8,X	GA-BF(5)30,JW		
Sparrow, Seaside	8-30	2/7	U-(2)8,X	GA-BF(5)30,JW		
Sparrow, Fox	1-18	4/15	U-1/1	HA-2/12	WA-1/2	
Sparrow, Song	1-29	7/166	U-5/28	HA-2/138		
Sparrow, Lincolns	1-29	6/53	U-4/13	HA-2/40		
Sparrow, Swamp	1-31	7/165	U-4/41	CH-1/4	HA-2/120	
Sparrow, Wht-thrt	1-30	8/750	U-5/203	HA-3/547		
Sparrow, Wht-crn	1-30	8/291	U-5/49	HA-3/242		
Sparrow, Harris'	1-30	6/46	U-2/13	HA-4/33		
Longspur, Lapland	9-9	1/1	U-(1)9,PO			
Blackbird, Red-wg	1-31	12/14361	U-6/8000	CH-1/90		
		GA-1/9	HA-3/6212	JE-1/50		
Meadowlark, East	1-31	13/1180	U-6/830	CH-2/48		
		GA-2/87	HA-3/215			
meadowlark, sp.	2-2	1/110	HA-1/110			
Blackbird, Rusty	2-2	1/25	HA-(25)2,BBC			
Blackbird, Brewer	1-18	5/204	U-4/148	HA-1/56		
Grackle, Gr-tail	1-31	13/3990	U-6/351	CH-2/89		
		GA-2/176	HA-3/3374			
Grackle, Bt-tail	8-31	4/347	U-1/300	CH-2/22	GA-1/25	
Grackle, Common	1-30	10/20886	U-6/7050	HA-3/13796	JE-	1/40
Cowbird, Brn-head	1-30	10/1694	U-6/1490	GA-1/1		
		HA-3/203				
blackbird, sp.	2-2	1/545	HA-1/545			
Oriole, Northern	2-2	1/1	HA-(1)2,BBC			
Finch, House	2-3	2/13	HA-(2)2,BBC	HA-(11)3,G		
Goldfinch, Amer	1-30	9/1029	U-6/83	HA-3/946		
Sparrow, House	2-30	8/495	U-4/79	GA-1/3	HA-3/413	
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS: 181018						
<u>LIST OF OBSERVER CODES:</u> Mike Austin (A); Buffalo Bayou CBC (BBC); David Bradford (DB); Gail Luckner (G); John Whittle (JW); Noel Pettingell (NP); P. D. Hulce, Sandi Hoover, Peggy Boston, Don Ryan, A. K. Stoley (PB); Peggy & Bob Milstead (PBM); P. D. Hulce, Don Francis, John Erikson (PF); P. D. Hulce, Houston Audubon Field Trip (PH); Peggy Milstead (PM); P. D. Hulce, David Bradford, Richard Uzar, OG Field Trip (PO); P. D. Hulce, Mark Scheuerman (PS); P. D. Hulce (X)						
<u>LIST OF LOCATION CODES:</u> Anahuac NWR (AW); Brazos Bend St. Park (BB); Bolivar Flats (BF); Barker Reservoir (BR); High Island (HI); West Harris County (WHC)						

LIST OF COUNTY CODES: Brazoria (BR); Chambers (CH); Fort Bend (FB); Galveston (GA); Harris (HA); Jefferson (JE); Upper Texas Coast (U); Waller (WA)

Masked Duck - P.D. Hulce January 15, 1994

2/3 size of Ruddy Duck. Golden-buff head with black crown, black eye stripe and horizontal black stripe across cheek. Dark bill., Golden body heavily marked with black. Bright white speculum. Brazos Bend St. Park.

Golden Eagle - P.D. Hulce January 8, 1994

Seen soaring overhead with Turkey Vultures, 25% or more larger than Turkey Vultures. Very long, very broad wings. Very well spaced primaries, about 5 primary feathers spread out like fingers on a hand. Very large, well defined white patch at base of primaries, above and below, about even with the bend of the wing. Generally dark brown, but with light buffy or golden wash on back of head, nape and crown. Tail had a very slight central point, similar to tail of White-tailed Eagle. All white tail had a definite wide, dark terminal band, top and bottom. This terminal band was a little narrower in the center of the tail than on the sides. Head did not seem to project out as long as Bald Eagle. Bird showed none of the blotching or irregular white mottling that immature Bald Eagle would show. Soared with wings very slightly uptilted. Very languid, relaxed soaring. Very big bird, very impressive at first sight. At one point, harassed by Red-tailed Hawk, which was about 1/2 its size. Yellow-golden legs that stood out on either side of undertail coverts. Wings tucked in just a little bit at base. Recognizable even at a great distance due to white wing spots and dark banded white tail. Seen at Anahuac NWR.

Solitary Sandpiper - P.D. Hulce January 1, 1994

Tringa-type sandpiper, slightly smaller than Lesser Yellowlegs. Dull greenish legs. Distinct white eye ring, with small white line above loreal area. Dark medium length bill. Dark back with fine white spots, also on scapulars and wings. Whitish underparts. Tail distinctive with wide dark center, crossed by 3-4 dark bands.

Whimbrel - John Whittle January 30, 1994

Observed near Long-billed Curlews feeding and in flight. Typical Curlew shape, significantly smaller than the Long-billed Curlews. While the body was smaller, the

shorter legs were especially noticeable. The upper parts were dark brown with extensive very pale buff markings- especially fringes of and notches in feathers. Underparts were a very pale buff. The markings were much coarser than those of the Long-billed Curlews. The head showed a very sharply defined dark, essentially black, eye line from the base of the bill to the nape. The edges of this eye-line behind the eye were remarkably sharply defined. The area just below the eye and continuing a very short distance behind the eye into the eyelid was pure white. The supercilium was pale with a sharp demarcation with the very dark crown. When the bird flew, the upperwings were dark brown with white markings and solid dark primary coverts. The underwing was whitish. The upperwings of the Long-billed Curlews showed cinnamon on the secondaries and inner primaries. The bill was shorter and stouter than that of Long-billed Curlew and decurved at about 2/3 of its length/ The basal 1/3 of lower mandible was pinkish. The rest of the bill was medium gray.

Golden-fronted Woodpecker - P.D. Hulce January 15, 1994

Large Melanerpes Woodpecker, with superficial resemblance to Red-bellied Woodpecker. Head and under parts buffy-tan. Hind neck, forehead and belly golden-yellow. Center of crown also buffy tan indicating a female bird. All central tail feathers solid black, above and below. Bright black and white barred back with black bars slightly thicker than white bars. Call louder and slightly harsher than the several Red-bellied Woodpeckers in same area at same time. Horseshoe Lakes trail at Brazos Bend. Photographed.

Couch's Tropical Kingbird - P. D. Hulce January 1, 1994

50% larger than Vermillion Flycatcher. Light gray crown, grayish-olive back. Dark tail. Light throat. Light gray breast. Bright lemon yellow lower breast and belly. Fairly thick black bill. Dark wings. Tail slightly notched. Did not bob tail as a Phoebe. Also reported on January 18, 1994.

ADDITIONAL JANUARY NOTES

Notes were submitted by Mike Austin on a hybrid Mallard Duck X Black Duck. Notes were submitted by David Bradford and P.D. Hulce for Henslow's Sparrow in Waller county.

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