



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME VII No. 9

JANUARY 1959

 *When Ludlow Griscom moved to New York City in *
 *1901, he birded in Central Park and kept add- *
 *ing to his list of species seen. Someone, no- *
 *ticing his interest, took him to a meeting of *
 *the Linnaean Society. When he showed his note *
 *books to the learned naturalist- they were *
 *doubtful: this boy of 16 claimed to have seen *
 *more bird species in Central Park than were *
 *supposed to be there! He took them there to *
 *see for themselves and the skeptical natural- *
 *ists found that the boy was right! *
 * So let that be a lesson to you - there *
 *are so too anis and black rails and golden ea- *
 *gles and surf scoters in the Houston vicinity. *

PUBLISHED BY THE ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB, HOUSTON, TEXAS

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

- January 18 Ornithology Group field trip led by Norma Oates. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Forest Park West Cemetery (Dairy Ashford Road at Westheimer) on the north side of Westheimer. We hope to see the sandhill cranes, in fact it is practically guaranteed!
- January 24 Outdoor Nature Club field trip to the Texas State Forest at Conroe. Led by Charles Aves.
- February 5 Regular bi-monthly meeting of the Ornithology Group. As expected, we can no longer use our regular meeting place; so this meeting will be held in the home of the Henry Hoffmans (443 Hollow Drive, in Woodland Hollow, which intersects Memorial Drive at the 12600 block) In order to facilitate your finding the house, and it isn't easy, we will meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Lewis and Coker parking lot at Westheimer close to Chimney Rock Road. At 7:45 P.M. sharp the group will be guided to the meeting. Please come on time as it will be less painful than finding the place by yourself at night.
- February 10 Regular monthly meeting of the Outdoor Nature Club. Mr. Charles H. Keifner will speak on "Nature and the landscape."
- February 13 Audubon Screen Tour by G. Harrison Orians. The subject: "Great Smoky sky-land"

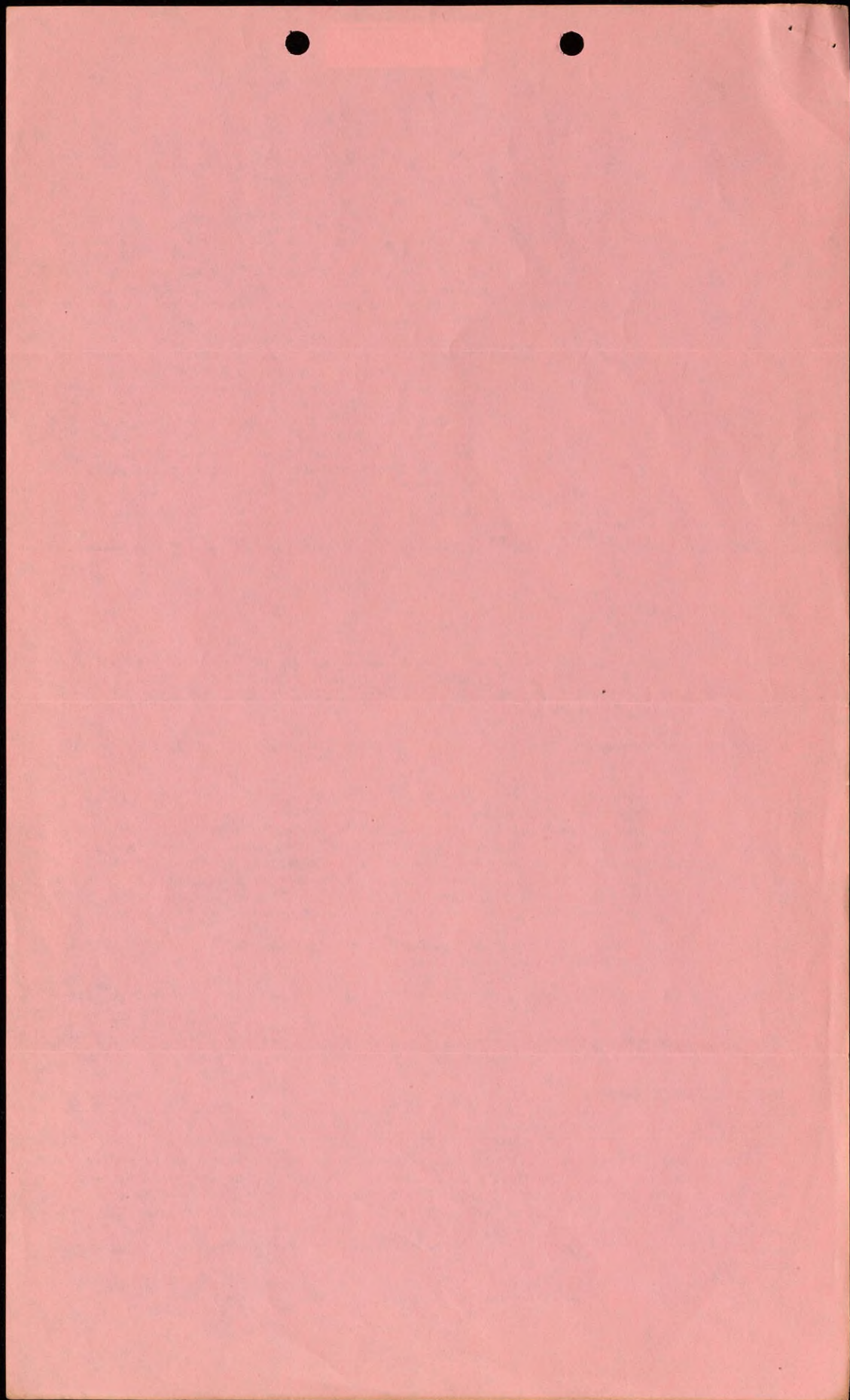
ORNITHOLOGY GROUP REPORTS

1958 HOUSTON CHRISTMAS COUNT --- Compiled by Clayton Gilman

With the exception of a small slide to the east, the area covered this year coincided with the 1957 count. The entire area shows much additional construction since last year, but our nearly normal rainfall helped to offset the reduction in workable area.

We are again happy to welcome Mr. McKay to the Christmas count, and again his party listed the greatest number of species (118) closely followed by the section under Mrs. Snyder's leadership (116 species) both of which exceed the highest species count for any one party in the past.

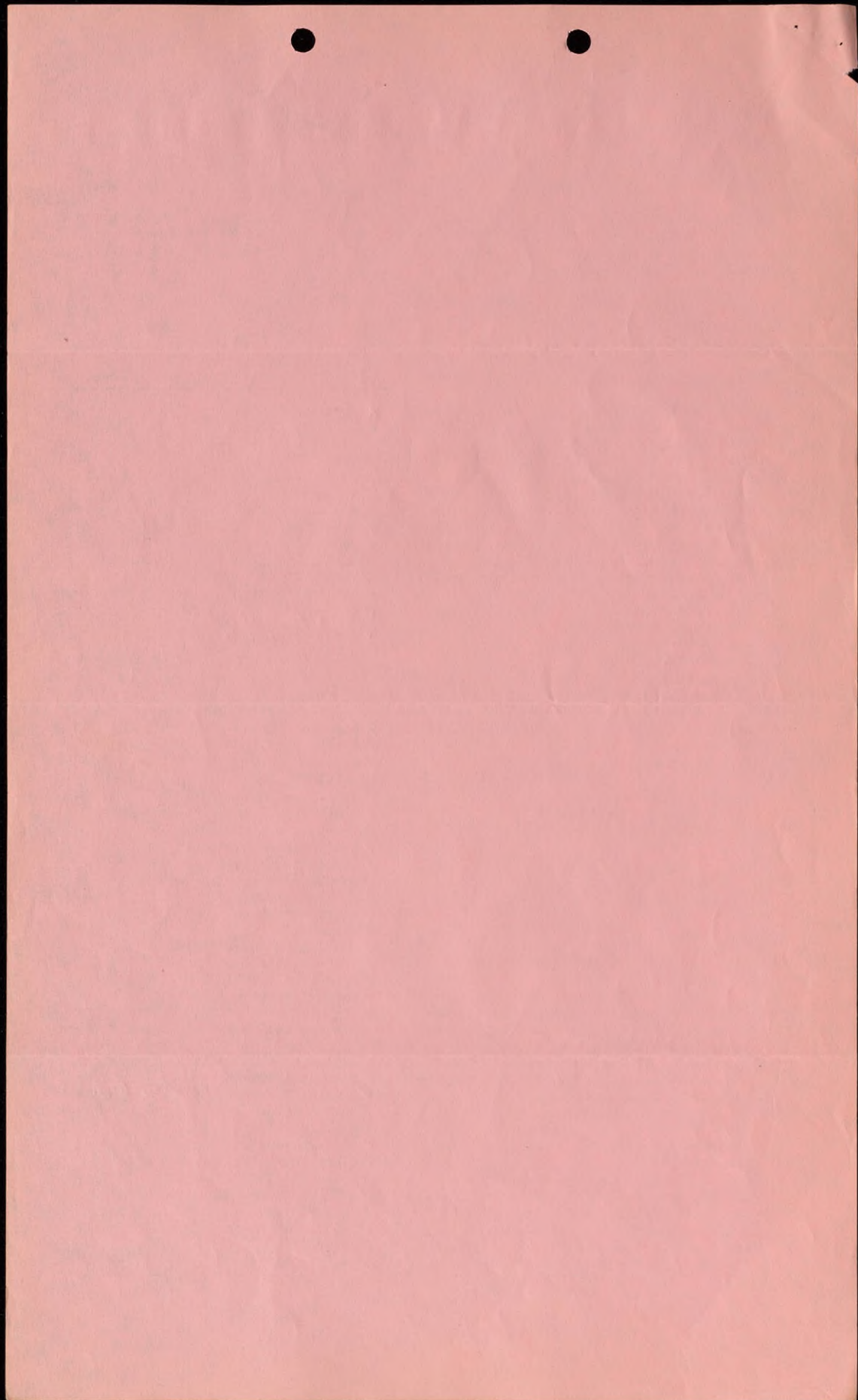
We were honored to have Mr. and Mrs. Lamar Hilton of New Jersey, who made a special effort for the second consecutive year to be with us during the count.



Your attention is called to certain species listed under exclusives: Say's phoebe, surf scoter, smooth-billed ani, black rail. We are wondering if these species are extending their range or are simply accidentals. It will be interesting to note if they are found in next year's count.

24th HOUSTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT--DECEMBER 21, 1958
(Clayton Gilman)

Party No.	Observers (Leader underlined)	Total Species	Total Individ.	Exclusives (Capitalized if new for Houston count)
1	<u>L. A. M. Barnette</u> Mrs. L.A.M. Barnette Sid Barnette Joe M. Heiser, Jr.	60	9,545	× common grackle ✓ Krider's hawk
2	<u>Mrs. Eva Gilman</u> Clayton Gilman Ella Wolfer Lt. Eugene Rowell	56	6,419	✓ white-eyed vireo ✓ sandhill crane ✓ white ibis ✓ LEAST TERN
3	<u>Mrs. Norma Oates</u> Jimmy Murray Mrs. Edna Miner Mrs. Jerry Baker Ruth Moorman Sue Harris Thelma Smith Katrina Thompson	74	53,275	✓ purple finch ✓ spotted towhee ✓ <i>Harris's sparrow</i> ✓ <i>Common tern</i>
4	<u>Archie K. McKay</u> Vic Emanuel, Jr. Carl H. Aiken, III *Broke their own previous high record of species: 105	118*	42,195	× anhinga ✓ baldpate ✓ gadwall ✓ mottled duck ✓ shoveller ✓ black duck ✓ vermilion flycatcher ✓ semipalmated sandpiper ✓ green-winged teal ✓ parula warbler ✓ SAT'S PHOEBE ✓ great horned owl ✓ palm warbler ✓ SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER ✓ roseate spoonbill ✓ Bonaparte's gull ✓ Harris' sparrow
5	<u>Steve Williams</u> Lawrence Tabony	75	4,977	✓ Ring-necked duck
6	<u>Mrs. Linda Snyder</u> <u>Dr. Ernest P. Edwards</u> Mrs. Ernest P. Edwards Leota Stillwell Josephine Wilkin Paul Cornell Ronald Fowler Clinton Snyder Trevor Ben Feltner Dudley Deaver the Lamar Hiltons the Henry Hoffmans	116	21,768	✓ American bittern ✓ black skimmer ✓ lark sparrow ✓ solitary vireo ✓ red-breasted nuthatch ✓ olivaceous cormorant ✓ screech owl ✓ yellow-crowned night heron ✓ SURF SCOTER ✓ SMOOTH-BILLED ANI ✓ barn owl ✓ prairie falcon <i>✓ cooper, bsn.</i>



Party no.	Observers (Leader underlined)	Total Species	Total Individual	Exclusives (Capitalized if new for Houston Count)
6 con.	Mrs. Ernest P. Edwards the Jerry Stricklings John O'Neill Ralph Peterson Douglas Stine	116	21,768	✓ red-shafted flicker ✓ sora rail <i>Chapman</i> ✓ Virginia rail ✓ BLACK RAIL ✓ peregrine falcon
Total	40	154	138,179	43

Total-1957	32	154	58,111	42
Total-1956	35	133	23,832	39

In addition to the above, and within the count period, Mrs. Snyder reported red-headed woodpecker, woodcock, eared grebe, ground dove, white-tailed hawk.

Mr. McKay listed common gallinule, rusty blackbird, grasshopper sparrow, fox sparrow, golden-crowned kinglet, bald eagle, chuck-wills-widow, Bullock's oriole, LeConte's sparrow. All of the above being additional species.

Editor's note: Next issue we will give you a listing of all birds seen, and such additional information as was sent in to the Audubon Society.

Editor's plaintive note: We missed Armand Yramategui's champagne personality (and know how) on this count. And we still feel the need of Noel Pettin-gell's dash and knowledge of previous records.

and her whine! Ronald Fowler will be moving to Abilene in February and he will be missed !!! Maybe this is the place to say that he has been of inestimable help to your editor. Thanks, boy!

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The Christmas Count at the LAGUNA ATASCOSA WILDLIFE REFUGE was 164. This is an unofficial count and subject to adjustment.

CLEARING HOUSE

December 31, 1958 John O'Neill and Carl Aiken reported 20 PRAIRIE CHICKENS and many LAPLAND LONGSPURS on Fondren Road.

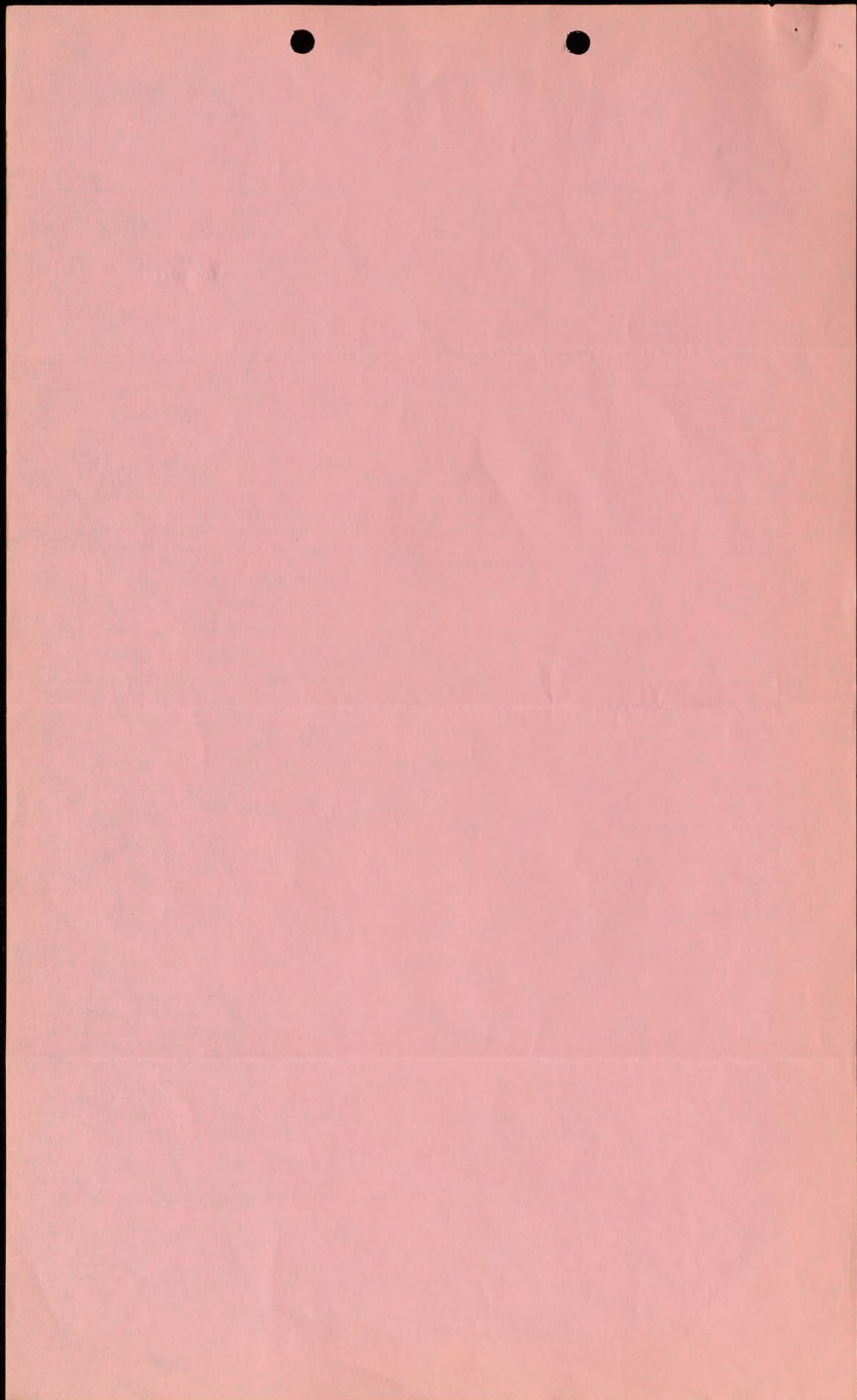
December 13, 1958 Seen by Dudley Deaver on a trip to the Horseshoe Bend area east of Galena Park: 9 cardinals, 25 chickadees, 2 crows, 17 mourning doves, 2 blue-gray gnatcatchers, 12 adult and 1 immature goldfinch, 11 blue jays, 13 ruby-crowned kinglets, pair yellow-bellied sapsucker, only 3 English sparrows (hooray) 7 song sparrows, 3 brown thrashers, 1 hermit thrush, 27 tufted titmouse (titmice? he says?) 21 pine warblers, 1 downy woodpecker, 1 red-bellied woodpecker, 1 Carolina wren, 1 BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER (this one looked like a female, but Pough says the males sometime resemble the female in Fall so I guess it was the same one seen by Feltner and I last week and the week before. This was the first time I got a good look at the throat).

December 24 Pileated woodpecker in Memorial area

December 27 6 bobwhite in Hoffman's yard. Also first pine warbler on feeders.

December 28 John O'Neill reported seeing a large group of greater scaup in Rockport. Mrs. Ruth Kirschner and John O'Neill saw 3 PRAIRIE CHICKENS AND LAPLAND LONGSPUR on Fondren Road.

January 1, 1959 The Stricklings report seeing 5 marsh hawks, 2 caracara, 1 ROUGH-LEGGED hawk, and 300 American pipits on the Fondren Road area. Hoffmans report the usual plus golden-crowned kinglet, brown creeper, t at least a thousand robins, chipping, field and lark sparrows.



January 2 This smart aleck note came to us from the Stricklings:
Dear Bugly (that's Louise Hoffman)-

I know that no one, with the possible exception of Cheaty (Henry Hoffman) will believe us but my ever loving wife, Nancy Jane, saw a RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD in our yard today, January 2, 1959 at 10:30 a.m. It was verified by our niece Melanie, age 13½, who is very bright for her age -

Signed,

You know who -

January 4 Observed by Norma Oates, Lecta Stillwell and the Hoffmans on Memorial, Dairy Ashford, and Fondren Roads. The usual plus Brewer's, red-winged and cowbirds, bluebirds, bobwhite, brown creeper, gnatcatchers, Cooper's hawk, about 25 marsh hawks in one field, several slate colored junco, horned lark, 200 plus LAPLAND LONGSPUR, 2 PRAIRIE CHICKEN, 8 phoebe, 100 plus robins, vesper sparrows, hermit thrush, myrtle, orange-crowned and pine warblers.

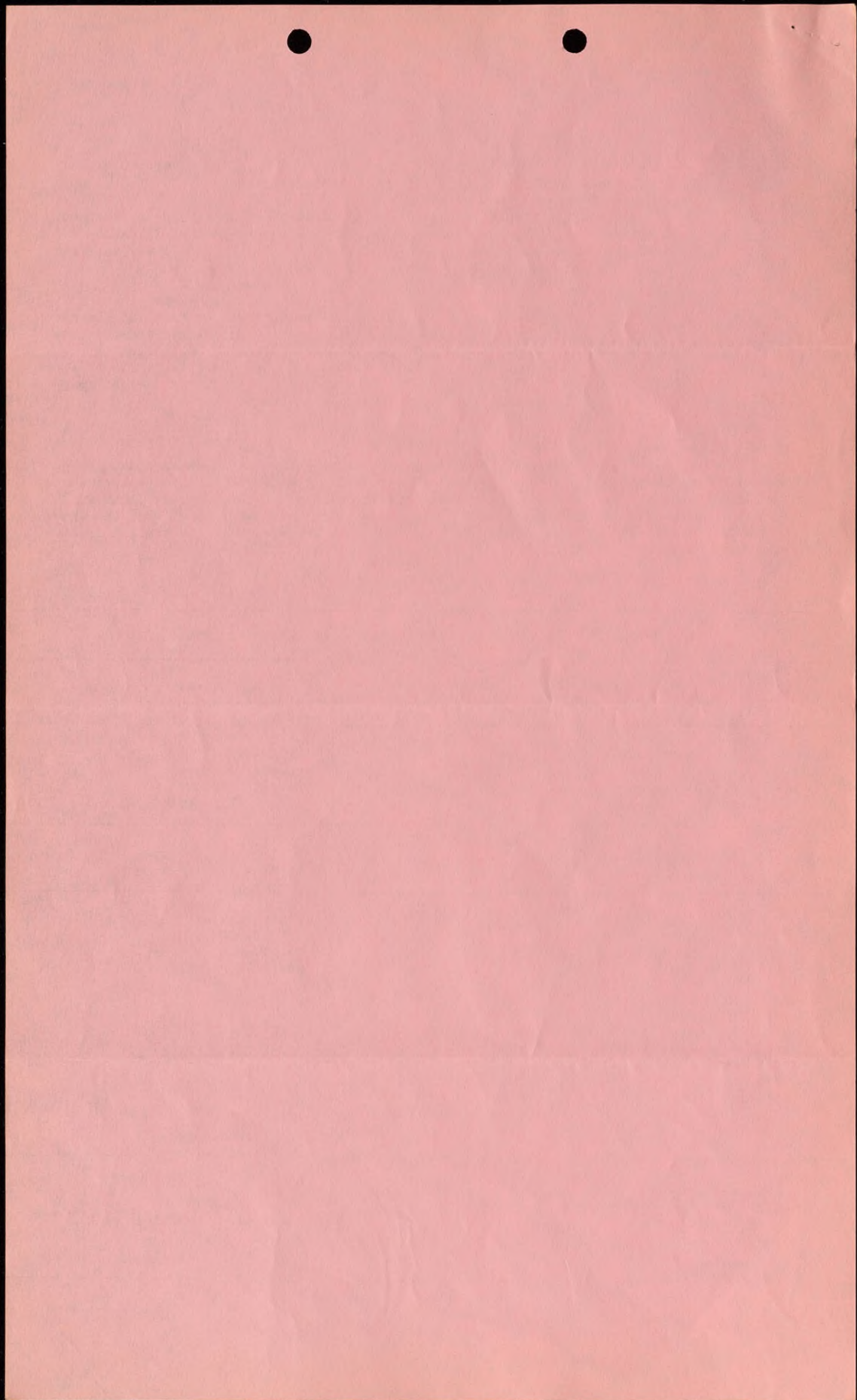
LET'S COMPARE OBSERVATIONS:

Does it seem to you that this year the myrtle warblers are rather scarce and the pine warblers abundant - just the reverse of last year? That white-throated sparrows are very numerous this year? That the birds are already putting on their spring plumage, bright as a new penny? That robins are going to be thick this year? That when the winter birds (especially chipping sparrows) come in to the feeders, that the English sparrows make themselves scarce?

* * * * *

SECOND ANNUAL FREEPORT CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS -- DECEMBER 28, 1958
(Vic Emanuel)

| Party No. | Observers
(Leader underlined) | Total Species | Exclusives
*Capitalized species will be in
boldface type in Audubon Field Notes |
|-----------|---|---------------|---|
| 1 | <u>Carl H. Aiken</u>
Vic Emanuel
Steve Williams
Ronald Fowler
Robert Simpson | 91 | pine warbler
GREEN HERON
purple finch
barred owl
long-billed marsh wren
short-billed marsh wren |
| 2 | <u>Mr. Clayton Gilman</u>
Mrs. Clayton Gilman | 51 | bald eagle
Henslow's sparrow
vesper sparrow |
| 3 | <u>Mrs. J. A. Snyder</u>
Mr. J. A. Snyder
Clinton Snyder
Drew Snyder
the E. R. Wrights
Mrs. William Brooks | 89 | piping plover
INDIGO BUNTING
DICKCISSEL
FRANKLIN'S GULL
common loon
shoveler
canvasback
green-winged teal
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK
avocet
bobwhite
Sprague's pipit
dunlin
least sandpiper
tree swallow |
| 4 | <u>Josephine Wilkin</u>
Trevor Feltner
Dudley Deaver | 86 | rusty blackbird
REDDISH EGRET
vermillion flycatcher
ringed plover
ruddy turnstone
red head duck |



1958 FREEPORT CHRISTMAS CENSUS--DECEMBER 28, 1958--COMPILED BY VIC EMANUEL

In many ways this years Freeport count was a great improvement over last years impromptu count. For instance, there were 17 observers in four parties this year as compared with five observers in two parties last year; and the count total was 121 species up considerably from last years 104 species. Also, this year we got in touch with some of the Freeport birders who helped us on the count. But some basic problems remained unchanged. First of all, we still don't know the area well enough to break it up into specific sections; we need to get permission from landowners to cover more of the area and we still face the problem of the lack of roads which prevent us from covering much of the area. Despite these problems, we were able to have a pretty good count this year. Mr. and Mrs. Gilman covered the northwestern part of the circle around the Angleton Gun Club, Josephine Wilkin, Trevor Feltner and Dudley Deaver covered the western part of the area including Lake Jackson. The Snyders covered the central section along highway 283 from just south of Angleton to Freeport. Steve Williams, Ronald Fowler, Robert Simpson, Carl Aiken and I covered the eastern part of the circle including the Hospins Mound Road. All parties except the Gilmans met at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Dr. and Mrs. E. R. Wright in Freeport. From this meeting point we split up with the Wilkin party and our party going to Surfside, and the Snyders, Mrs. Brooks, and the Wrights going to Bryan Beach.

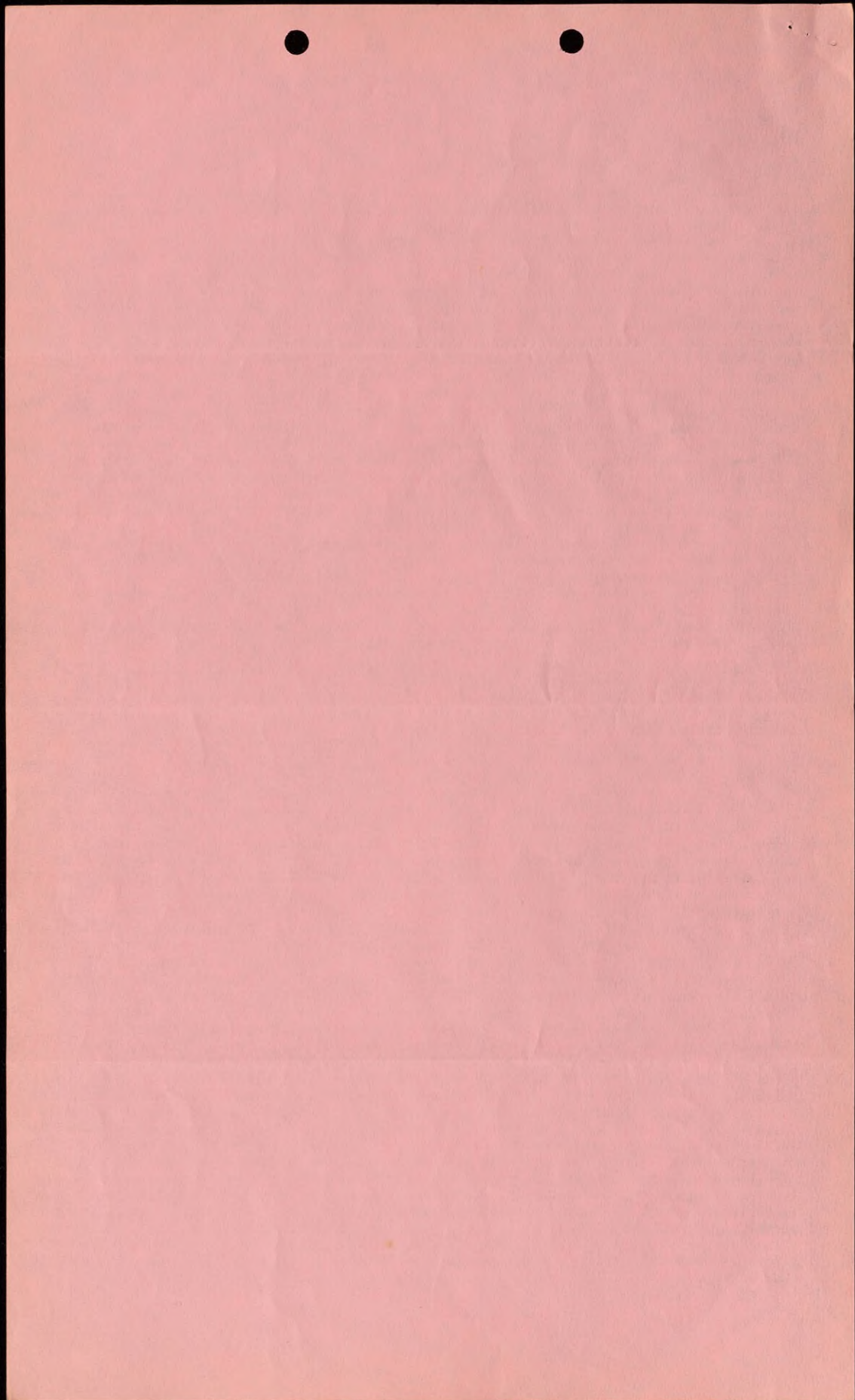
It was 7:15 a.m. before we had good light and by 4:30 p.m. visibility was very poor. We found some rarities but some species which we expected were missing (such as eared grebe, red-breasted merganser, mallard, ruddy duck, field sparrow, white crowned sparrow solitary vireo, yellow-crowned night heron, caracara, white-fronted goose, rufous-sided towhee).

Nevertheless, 121 is a good count (it may be third in the state!) and I think we can do even better next year with more preparation.

ARLIE MCKAY REPORTS FROM THE COVE

We are a little behind in the rent with Mr. McKay's reports; but hope to have room to give them all to you this time.

NOVEMBER: I did not spend any full day birding, but these are my biggest days: November 1, 84 species; 8th, 99 species; 16th, 80 species, 30th, 89 species; and the high day, November 7, 69 species including two lifers! Common loon 7th, 2 on 8th, 1 on 9th and 16th, 4 11/22, 6 11/27. Horned grebe: 4 11/8, 7 11/9 and 30th. Eared grebe: 8-22nd, 7-27th, 2-30th. Pied-billed grebe: 2 to 19 on 7 days. White pelican: there seem to be more than ever before. Brown pelican: none. Anhinga: 2-15th, 1-30th. Cattle egret: with my cattle every day (12 to 20) and a small flock in the A. B. Lawrence ranch 11/30. Reddish egret: 1 stayed until 11/16. American bittern: 1 11/8. White-faced ibis: 30 plus 11/16, 1-29th. White ibis: peak-700 plus 11/23. Spoonbill: to 11/23 (19) Tree duck: 3 were reported killed 11/8. White-fronted goose: 30 plus 11/27. Mallard: 300 plus 11/30. Mottled duck: peak-4 on 11.22. Gadwall: peak 100 plus 11/30. Baldpate: peak 1000 plus or minus 11/30. Pintail: peak-200 plus 11/30. Green-winged teal: peak-10,000 11/30 blue-winged teal: peak-40 plus 11/15. Shoveler: 17 plus 11/15. Wood duck: 1-11/23. Red head: 1-8th and 30th. Canvasback: 4-4th, 6-22nd, 46-30th. Lesser scaup: peak-12,000-11/22 (Veteran hunter's guide, Homer Harman, reported the most on Lost Lake in 25 years, November 4 or 5th) Immense numbers were reported on Lake Suprise and Galveston Bay in third week of November. Ring-necked duck: 2-8th, 1-17th. American goldeneye: 2-27th, 14-30th. Bufflehead: 2-30th. Ruddy duck: 2-30th. Hooded merganser: 2-9th, 11-27th, 2-30th. Red-breasted merganser: 10-22nd, 40-27th, 2-30th. Sharp-shinned hawk: 1, first, 27th. Cooper's hawk: 1, first, 8th, 2-27th. Red-tailed hawk: peaks 10 (one black)-22nd, 7 (another black) 30th. Marsh hawk: peak-11-16th. Caracara: 1-7th, 8th. Peregrine falcon: 1-15th. Sparrow hawk: peak of 20-8th, 1 or 2 on 3 days. Common gallinule: 2-22nd. Coot: peak of 200 -30th. Semipalmated plover: 2 to 8 on 5 days. Black-bellied plover: 2 to 16 on 9 days. Turnstone: 5-27th, 1-30th. Snipe: 1 to 9 on 4 days. Long-billed curlew: 19-22nd, 18-27th. Spotted sandpiper: peak of 3 or 4-27th. Willet: up to 18 on 9 days. Greater yellowlegs unusually common, 30 as late as 11/30. Lesser yellowlegs: less common to 11/23. Both yellowlegs: peak of 350-8th. Dowitchers: peaks-100-8th, 300-30th. Herring gull: 1 to 3 from 11/7. FRANKLIN'S GULL: peak of 300-7th, last 20 -22nd. Bonaparte's gull: 1, first, 7th. Gull-billed tern: 1, first, 8th. GROUND DOVE: 1, first, 15th, 1-30th, a flock of about 15 (Damon McKay) 9th. GROOVE-BILLED ANI: 3-16th. Screech owl: scarce-one on 2nd, 23d. Barred owl: scarce. 2-2nd, 1-8th, 15th. Horned owl: 1 to 2 on 4 days. BURROWING OWL: on

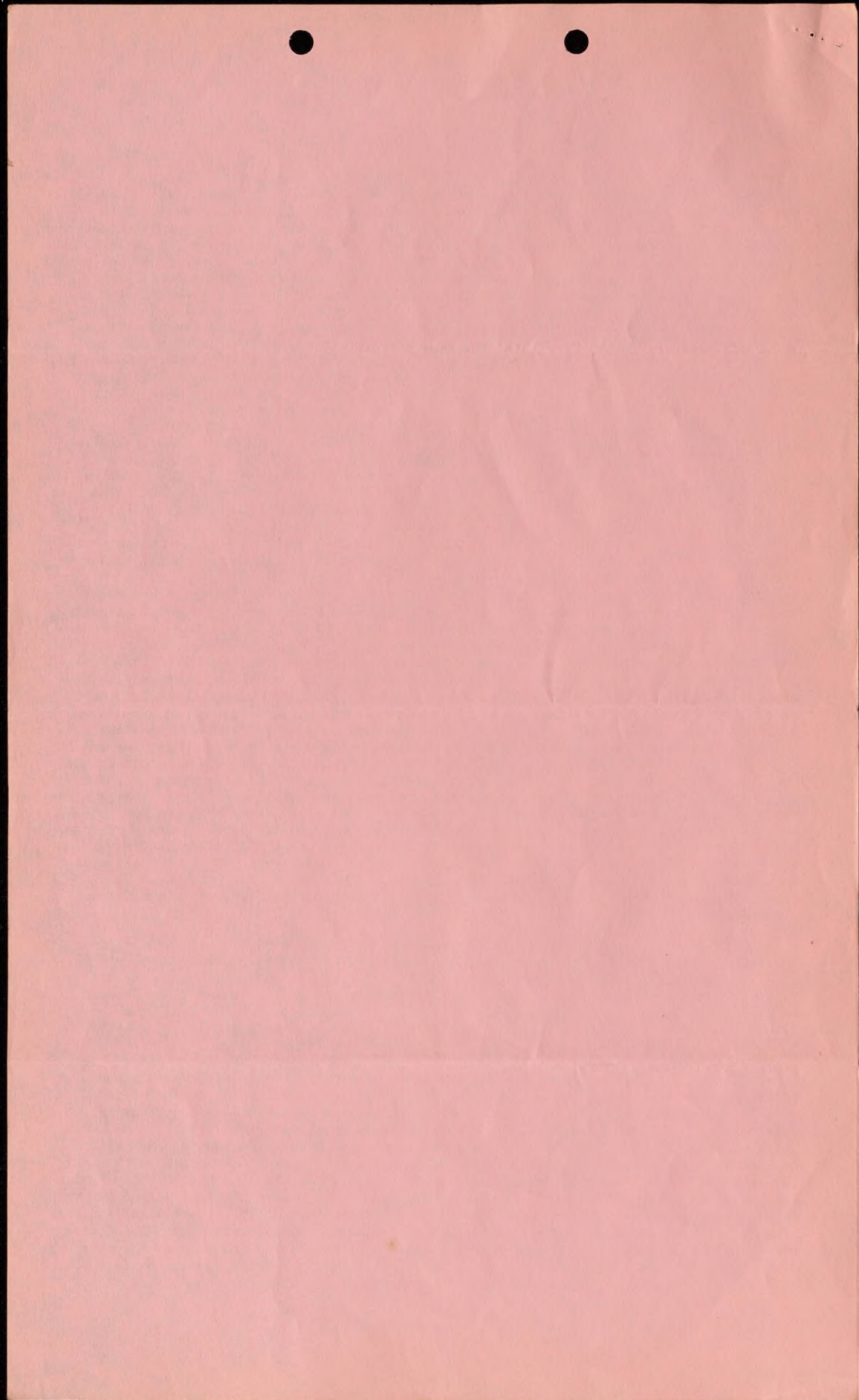


November 7, Mrs. Snyder showed me two, as many as I had found in twenty years of searching. Nighthawk: 1 from 10th to 16th, latest ever before was 11/8. Kingfisher: 1 to 4 on 12 days. Flicker: peak of 12-8th. Red-bellied woodpecker: 1 to 3 on 5 days. Sapsucker 1 to 2 on 7 days. Downy woodpecker: 1-27th. Scissor-tailed flycatcher: 1-2nd, 1-15th. Excepting two December records, the latest before was 11/7. Phoebe: peak of 8-7th. SAY'S PHOEBE; still here-22nd. Vermillion flycatcher: 1 to 7 on 10 days, 26 this Fall, very many to 14th, none 16th, common since. Rough-winged swallows: tens of thousands but uncommon after 15th. Barn swallow: a few to 9th, 1 to 3 since the 23rd are staying; latest departure date before was 11/21. FISH CROW: a flock of about 50 at highway 156 bridge over Cedar Bayou. CLARK'S NUTCRACKER: Mrs. Snyder and her boys found one on McKenney road about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of Harris County line on 11/7. She drove about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to get me and back. It was a little before sundown. Most birds had gone to roost, but not the nutcracker. Mrs. Snyder slowed her car and nonchalantly put out her arm for a left turn where there could be none. One finger stiffened quite nonchalantly as if to say "don't ever doubt my birding efficiency." There in less than 30 feet sat the extratropical bird I had ever seen, right where she had left it. It then began to put on a show of action and color pattern. It would drop to the ground for an item and back up on a post to examine it. This continued for some time as it moved down a fence about 200 feet from us. Despite the thrill of the show our attention was diverted to a passing caracara. The bird of the year, bird of a lifetime, refused to condescend to compete for attention with a filthy "buzzard hawk!" It drew the curtain forever for its kind in Chambers County, and took off, in the words of Mrs. Snyder, "for New Mexico." I watched it rise in westward flight to about 200 feet in the air, and until it had crossed Cedar Bayou; and, thanks to Mrs. Snyder, I alone have seen such a bird in Harris County.

Titmouse: very scarce, seen only 3 days. Chickadee: never so few before. House wren: a bird that was common in the 1930's now merely uncommon after a long period of scarcity. 1 to 4 on 6 days. Marsh wren: fewer than every before- 1 on 23rd and 27th. Sedge wren: 2-30th. Robin: none reported yet. Hermit thrush: 1-15th, the same 16th. Bluebird: 3 near Baytown-7th, absent here in November for only the second time (also in 1947) Water pipit: peak of 100-15th. Sprague's pipit: 1-16th, 22nd, 30th. Starling: not yet in large flocks. Solitary vireo: 1-15th. Warblers: Tennessee: 1-1th. Orange-crowned: 1, first, 23rd. Nashville: 3, first. Magnolia: 1-7th. Myrtle: 1-7th, 8th, 15th, no more, never before so few. AUDUBON WARBLER: 1-7th, my first seen from below, yellow throat and side patches, black streaks in good light - on Mays Island near highway 73 bridge over Trinity. PALM WARBLER: only 2, 1st to 30th. Yellowthroat: 3, first, 2-23rd. Brewer's blackbird: less than usual. Bronzed grackle: peak of 600-16th, except for a large flock near the Trinity, only 2-23rd. Rose-breasted grosbeak: 1-9th. Blue grosbeak: 1-1st. Indigo bunting: to 11/16. Dickcissel: 1-30th. Goldfinch: from 11/22. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: 3-8th. LeConte's sparrow: 1-16th, 3-30th. SHARP-TAILED SPARROW: 1-9th, 30th. Seaside sparrow 1 to 5 frequently. Vesper sparrow: 2, first, 1-8th, 9th. CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: 2, first, 1-8th. Field sparrow: from 11-8. HARRIS' SPARROW: 1-30th. White-crowned sparrow: about 60, first, still common. Song sparrow: 2, first, 8th, 1-30th. Pete Hargraves told me of WILD TURKEYS in San Jacinto woods near the old Hargrave place above highway 90.

DECEMBER: I listed 152 birds for December of which 139 were in the count period, but these 7 were outside the count area: anhinga: 2-21st, 1-21st. White ibis: 4- 25th, 28th. Cattle egret (frequent, several neighbors commenting on the strange appearance of white "cranes" with their cattle or on their lawns) Woodcock: 1-December 30th, the first since early January, 1956. Barn swallow: frequent, 4-13th, 3-25th, 2-28th, same individuals. Rough-winged swallow: two with barns, to 12/27, at least, latest ever before was 12/14. BEWICK'S WREN: December 27, same was seen earlier.

My list for the last quarter of 1958 is 219 species, and for the year: 263 species. This included three once common species represented by only: barn owl-March 30; brown pelican-March 2; rusty blackbird-December 20. It did not include the chesnut-sided warbler, a common spring migrant. The year produced three lifers all seen in one day, November 7: AUDUBON'S WARBLER, CLARK'S NUTCRACKER, and cattle egret, which by then was quite commonplace. My best days for December were the 7th with 76 species, 15th with 85 species, 20th with 84 species, 25th with 83 species, 27th with 83 species, 28th (half day) with 66 species, and 21st with 109 species. While the 21st was the only day a high score was the prime objective, I could not have done so well even if I had stayed out the whole day, without two pair of better eyes and better ears supplied by Carl Aiken and Vic Emanuel. I made a bad mistake by entering Fisher Road (to Swan marsh) with both cars on the Count day. I sent Carl to locate a flock of birds while Vic and I drove the cars out. He found them, but before Vic and I could join him, they were moving too fast to follow. Of them, we got the towhee and PARULA WARBLER, and winter wren, but missed the



ground dove, brown creeper, golden-crowned kinglet, white-eyed vireo, and the solitary vireo, all of which were no doubt present. An alone birder is at a great disadvantage when birds are moving fast even when knowing the short cuts through the briars to favorable observation points.

In the following, where one date is given it is the peak day. HORNED GREBE: 4-7th; pied-billed grebe: 18-20th; loon: 2-7th; cormorant: 1-15th, usually common; anhinga: 2-21st, 1-27th. White-fronted goose: 7-15th. Canada goose: 8 (one lesser)-20th, 39 plus one that appeared to be a white-front-21st, 43-24th. Snow and blue geese, thousands, but very few on the 21st. Spoonbill: an estimate of 43-27th. Black duck, my best find on the 21st, 4 or 6, no others in 1958. Mottled duck: 13-28th. Gadwall: about 15-28th. Baldpate: 1,000 off Chambers County Park-15th, the same for pintail. Green-winged teal: 25,000 in Red and Dutton Lakes area-14th. Blue-winged teal: frequently killed and more seen by hunters. This and last winter are the only times they have wintered here to my knowledge. Shoveler, more than usual. Redhead: 2 staked out. Canvasback: 250-21st, 25th. Lesser scaup: a boom year. Ring-necked duck, a few reported by hunters. American goldeneye: 16-7th. BARROW'S GOLDENEYE: one immature male-7th, a flock of American's, both male and female, lit with it. It had no face spot, but had black back marked with white rather than a white back marked with black. The shape of the head is different, also. Ruddy duck: 2-27th, 28th but only one seen on the 21st. Red-breasted merganser: 3-7th, unaccountably scarce. Hooded merganser: a good year, a few reported by hunters. Sharp-shinned hawk: 1 on each of 5 days. Cooper's hawk: 1 on 3 days, 2-27th. Red-tailed hawk 19-20th (2 dark ones) Eagle: 1-17th, 1-27th. Marsh hawk: 20-25th. Caracara: two seen attacking a turkey vulture on the 15th; after several passes the vulture disgorged and they swooped down for the second hand feast. The vulture was too low for them to catch it before it hit the ground. For this habit, they are often called buzzard hawks. Pigeon hawk: 1-14th. Sparrow hawk: 43-25th. King rail: 1-15th. Clapper rail: 1-14th. Common gallinule: 7-28th; by sound I can not tell one of the small rails from the others nor be sure it is not a king, or gallinule - but I do hear such strange rail voices! Semipalmated plover: 8-25th. TURNSTONE: 8-14th. Snipe: 100-13th.

Sandpipers: long-billed curlew: 12-7th, spotted: two staked out. Willet: 17-14th. Greater yellowlegs: 50-15th. Lesser yellowlegs: 500-15th. Dowitchers: 1,000-15th. Bonaparte's gull: 5-15th. Gull-billed tern: 1-21st - my second December record in 24 years, and that in a month where it would seem much less likely than on the bay shore. GROUND DOVE: 1-14th, 7-20th, 2-25th, 1-27th. GROOVED-BILL ANI: Vic found two-21st. Owls: none except the horned. CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: one on the 27th, my first winter record. It was distinguished by size, color, and alarm note. Red-bellied woodpecker: 1-7th, 13th. SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER: one staked out. SAY'S PHOEBE: one staked out Vermillion flycatcher: by the 15th, all three in my pastures were gone, but on May's island near Trinity bridge they were still there, 6-15th. Tree swallow: none on the 21st but 200-23rd. Brown creeper: 1-20th. CATBIRD: 2-14th and still there 27th. Robin: first one-21st, 8-25th, 7-27th. The 21st is latest first date ever. Hermit thrush: less than ever before, one or two. Bluebird: one or two-21st, never so scarce before. Golden-crowned kinglet: 1-20th and identification confirmed 27th. Water pipit: uncommon this year Sprague's pipit: 8-25th. Waxwing: none. Starling: not in great flocks until January 1. WHITE-EYED VIREO: 1-20th. Solitary vireo: only 1-25th, 27th. Warblers: Orange-crowned: 8-27th. PARULA: 1-21st, 27th. Myrtle: uncommon this December, 75-25th. Pine: first one 21st, never so late before, 10 or more at my house January 1. PALM: 1 staked out. Yellow throat: 1 to 3 on 6 days. BULLOCK'S ORIOLE: 1-27th, a female with yellow throat and breast, and white belly; my third record 12/24 and 27, 1940, January 12, 1958. Brewer's blackbird missed on the 21st, 100's -27th, not scarce on 20th and 25th. Common grackle: (now the uncommon grackle) only 2-4th. Purple finch: 1-25th. Sparrows: GRASSHOPPER: 1-20th, about 6-25th, 2-27th. LeConte's: about 12-27th. Vesper: 12-27th. Chipping: 1-7th. HARRIS: 4-14th. White-crowned: 70-20th. White-throated: an albino, faded out about 85% 25th. FOX: 1-20th. Song: 4-7th.

I think all of us who were fortunate enough to go to the Waelder Wildlife Refuge at the TOS meeting in November, still remember that day with a wonderful mellow glow. It was a perfect day, just exactly right. The weather was good, birds cooperative, and the Cottams and their staff completely charming and gracious.

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