



THE SPOONBILL

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

RARE AND UNUSUAL BIRD NEWS

Austin birders had a rare visitor in their area the third week of September, when a Red Phalarope, plus two Northern Phalaropes, among a group of Wilson's Phalaropes, were discovered in a sewage pond east of the city. Several of our members were fortunate in being able to view these birds, one member being so lucky as to be in Austin on business at that time!

Closer to home, a flamingo was reported that was losing its color among birds of other species; it is not known if it is an escapee. As of this writing, only four people have seen it, all on Sept. 30th, and no rare bird alert was sounded, so the remainder of us got the news by word of mouth and have so far been unsuccessful in seeing it, but for one couple who saw what could very well be the elusive bird, but it went into the clouds, and escaped positive identification by them. To try to find the flamingo, go west on IH 10 to Highway 6, turning right on 6, then, upon reaching Katy-Hockley Road, turn right onto it. Go down it until you get to House & Hahl Road, and turn right onto it. Almost immediately you will see the levee of the 1st pond. Look into both the first and second ponds; you will need a stool of some kind to see over the levee, or you'll have to get on the top of your hot car! When all else fails, it may be in the sky above you. If you don't see the flamingo, you will be rewarded with innumerable Wood Storks, White Pelicans, Avocets, and ducks. If the water looks dark, it is just because there are so many birds on it!

WINTER TRIP TO RANCHO DEL CIELO:

The Gorgas Science Society announces a continuation of the popular winter trips to Rancho del Cielo in America's northernmost tropical cloud forest.

The rancho, biological field station for Texas Southmost College, is located at about the 3800-foot level on the Sierra de Guatemala of southwestern Tamaulipas. Guests are housed in station buildings, fed extremely well, and explore the forest with Mrs. J. O. E. (Barbara) Warburton, staff biologist, and other experienced naturalists. This is a rare opportunity to know the wilds of Mexico without the problems which beset tourists. A one-day trip by vehicle will be made to the rugged pine-oak zone at higher elevations. Cooking, driving, etc., are performed by students of Gorgas Science Society as a contribution to maintenance of the station project.

Weather in January is usually mild and dry. As deciduous trees are partially defoliated, birders find it an excellent time to study a variety of tropical birds as well as wintering species from the eastern and western United States. Some Mexican bird species to be expected in the forest at this time are: Rufescent Tinamou, Crested Guan, Singing Quail, Military Macaw, Squirrel Cuckoo, Mottled Owl, Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, Red-billed Azurecrown, Amethyst-throated Hummingbird, Mountain Trogon, Blue-crowned Motmot, three species of woodcreepers, Blue Mockingbird, Brown-backed Solitaire, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Golden-

browed Warbler, Blue-hooded Euphonia, Flame-colored Tanager, Hooded Grosbeak, Black-headed Siskin, Rufous-capped Brush-finch, etc. The Audubon Christmas Bird Count made in the Gomez Farias area on January 1, 1973, tied for the twelfth highest position, with 175 species, among the 1013 counts published in American Birds. We have the potential for doing much better. (Participation in this one-day event is optional.)

College vehicles will meet the guests in the village of Gomez Farias around noon on Sunday, December 30, for the trip up the mountain, and will return them to Gomez Farias around noon on Saturday, January 5.

Cost of the Mexico adventure is \$150. per person; this includes all expenses while in the care of the college staff. Guests must provide their own transportation to and from Gomez Farias. Participants will be encouraged to meet the trip leader in Brownsville, Texas, on the morning of December 30 and proceed to Gomez Farias in a group. The leader will assist those wishing to share rides, as driver or passenger, if advised beforehand.

Applications are limited to 18 (9 men, 9 women.) They will be accepted in order of receipt. For further details, reservations, etc., address all correspondence to the trip leader: Fred S. Webster, Jr., 4926 Strass Drive, Austin, Texas 78731. His phone # is (512) 451-1669.

DEADLINE PROBLEMS

We are having trouble receiving Clearing House news in time to be printed. As we have noted before, the Clearing House editor must receive the news by the end of the first week of the month. With the mail service as erratic as most of us are aware, this means your observations should be mailed as soon as the month ends.

And may we respectfully suggest that more of our members remember the Clearing House when birding. Only with a wider circle of contribution can the Clearing House be really meaningful. To be a contributor does not necessarily mean keeping an exact count of every bird seen during the month if this is not your "thing." (Meticulous record-keeping is not a habit with most of us.) But we know several of us who keep a "birding diary" in which we jot down sightings in our yard or on a birding jaunt that we feel worthy of note, so we have a record from which to choose. Perhaps a memo pad kept with your bird book and binoculars would serve to remind you to share your sightings with your fellow members. And remember a "birding diary" (consider a regular diary or a year's engagement book) can be fun and a source of reference for you.

ANOTHER SOURCE OF COLLECTOR PRINTS

We have received word from Texan House Inc., P. O. Box 9812, Austin, Texas 78766, that they have just issued two fine collector prints of Nancy McGowan's wildlife paintings. Nancy was a popular illustrator for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine for several years. If you are interested in these, or possibly any other items, you might contact them. Your editor has not seen the prints or dealt with the company before, but I am sure they will furnish references upon request.

PHEASANT HYBRIDS RELEASED IN JEFFERSON CO. - from The Texas Parks & Wildlife News

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department biologists are now working to expand pheasant populations in the state with releases of hybrid ring-neck/Iranian blackneck pheasants in Jefferson County.

Some 325 young birds have been released in three different sites in the coastal county under the supervision of Jimmy May of the department's Management and Research Station in Tyler.

Birds released were from 4 to 6 weeks old to determine how young pheasants will fare in the wild with little protection. The release sites are widely separated with different age birds at each site so

follow-up checks can be made.

The Jefferson County releases are an extension of work which May started in 1968 in Liberty County and later in Chambers County. Reports from landowners in the two counties are favorable and indicate some reproduction by the hybrid pheasants. Pheasant populations are believed to be stable in the two areas.

"Hybrid pheasants can take advantage of previously unused habitat on the coast," said May. "The birds can survive in open areas using only heavy grass for cover, whereas bobwhite quail need brush for shelter."

OG FIELD TRIP - by Marion Taylor

On Sept. 29th, 34 members and visitors met at the east end of the Galveston seawall for an unusually good day of birding under the able leadership of Steve Williams. An early morning find was a peregrine falcon on the road to the south jetty, but the rarest "prize" of all was a young reddish egret, white phase. To quote Peterson's "Birds of Texas", (page 17) "Young birds less than two years old have all-black bills and dark olive legs, making recognition more uncertain."

Among the many water birds, we saw all of the herons and egrets listed for this area, and also all of the terns.

On Bolivar Peninsula we birded on a side road, where we picked up barn and barred owls, blue grosbeaks, blue-gray gnatcatchers, black-crowned and yellow-crowned night herons, and others.

After lunch we proceeded to the Dump road, the Sun Oil Co., and then High Island. When the "caravan" stopped along the road to look at a purple martin, they got a bonus in seeing a wood stork also. Flycatchers were numerous. Ten species of warblers were counted, - black-and-white, Tennessee, magnolia, Blackburnian, chestnut-sided, bay-breasted and Canada, as well as an ovenbird, Louisiana waterthrush and American redstart. A white-tailed kite seen in the late afternoon brought the total count to 125.

CLEARING HOUSE, SEPTEMBER, 1973

Grebe, Eared:	(3)22, High Island, Chambers Co., A	<u>TREEDUCK, BLACK-BELLIED:</u>	(1) August 29, West Harris Co.,
Grebe, Pied-billed:	(6)22, High Island, Chambers Co., A		(1) Sept. 3, near Manor Lake, FC -
Cormorant, Double-crested:	(5)28, Cove, AKM		see notes
Cormorant, Olivaceous:	(5)28, Cove, AKM; (14)9, Bolivar, B.	Treeduck, Fulvous:	(30)22, Chambers Co., A; (250) Aug.
Heron, Green:	(1)6, 28, (3)12, Cove, AKM		29, (6) Sept. 8, West Harris Co., FC
Heron, Cattle:	(40)7, (300)22, Anahuac Refuge,	Pintail:	(300)8, West Harris Co., FC
	B, MF	Teal, Blue-winged:	(10)22, Chambers Co., A; (1500)8,
Heron, Reddish:	(15)7, (46)9, Bolivar, B; (1-White	Shoveler, Northern:	West Harris Co., FC
	phase)29, South Jetty, SW et al		(2)22, Chambers Co., A
Nightheron, Yellow-crowned:	(4)23, High Island, L&IG; (1)28,	Vulture, Black:	(6)9, Bear Creek Park, (2)28,
	Cove, AKM		Ed White Park, P&MJ
Stork, Wood:	(373)22, Anahuac Refuge, BF&MF;	Hawk, Sharp-shinned:	(1)28, High Island, P&MJ; (4)22,
	(63)21, Warren Lake, PJ; (13)2,		Chambers Co., A; (1)23, Chambers
	(82)8, West Harris Co., FC	Hawk, Broad-winged:	Co., L&IG
Ibis, White-faced:	(19)22, Chambers Co., A; (32)23,		(2)7, (3)9, High Island, B; (1)28,
	Chambers Co., L&IG; (2)8, West		High Island, (3)9, Bear Creek Park,
	Harris Co., FC	Hawk, Swainson's:	P&MJ; (6)22, Chambers Co., A
Ibis, White:	(20)22, Chambers Co., A		(2)9, Bear Creek Park, P&MJ
Spoonbill, Roseate:	(12)7, (26)9, Bolivar, B; (15)8, West	Hawk, Marsh:	(1)28, Gilchrist, P&MJ;
	Harris Co., FC; (40p)28, Cove, AKM		(1)18, Cove, AKM
		Falcon, Peregrine:	(1)29, South Jetty, Galveston, SW
			et al

- Kestrel, American (Sparrow Hawk): Owl, Great Horned:
 (1)22, Anahuac Refuge, BF&MF; (1 or 2)29, Cove, AKM
 (1)21, Cove, AKM Owl, Barred:
 Rail, Clapper, (1)28, Ed White Park, P&MJ
 (1)22, Chambers Co., A; Chuck-Will's-Widow:
 (2)3, Galv-San Luis Pass, FC (1)9, High Island, B; (1)11, City
 Gallinule, Purple: Hall, FC
 (5 imm.)2, Manor Lake, FC Hummingbird, Ruby-throated:
 Gallinule, Common: (1)28, yard, (1)23, High Island,
 (12)22, Chambers Co., A L&IG; (1)6 days, (3)21, Cove, AKM
 Oystercatcher, American: Kingfisher, Belted:
 (13)7, (5)9, Bolivar, B (6)22, Chambers Co., A; (3)23,
 Plover, Semipalmated: Chambers Co., L&IG; (1)8, West
 (1)8, West Harris Co. ("the 2nd Harris Co., FC; (1)28, Cove, AKM
 one I've ever seen inland"), FC Woodpecker, Pileated:
 Plover, Piping: (1)2, yard, JR
 (20)7, 9, (62)22, Bolivar, B, MF Woodpecker, Red-bellied:
 Plover, Wilson's: (1)1, 5, Cove, AKM
 (25)9, Bolivar, B Kingbird, Eastern:
 Plover, Kildeer: (55)7, (25)9, (1)22, High Island, B,
 (100p)8, West Harris Co., FC MF; (3)22, Chambers Co., A; (5)3, Old
 Plover, Black-bellied: House, (2)8, West Harris Co., FC;
 (1)28, Cove, AKM (20p)6, (120p)8, Cove, AKM
 Turnstone, Ruddy: Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed:
 (35)9, Bolivar, B; (2)8, West (NC)22, Chambers Co., A; (3)23,
 Harris Co. ("1st I've seen in- Chambers Co., L&IG
 land"), FC Flycatcher, Great Crested:
 Curlew, Long-billed: (1)2, Bear Creek Park, (1)28, Ed
 (21)3, Galv-San Luis Pass, FC White Park, (1)28, High Island,
 Sandpiper, Spotted: P&MJ; (2)22, Chambers Co., A;
 (1)1, 12, Cove, AKM (2)23, Chambers Co., L&IG
 Willet: Phoebe, Eastern:
 (1)22, (2)28, Cove, AKM (1)22, Chambers Co., A
 Yellowlegs, Greater: Flycatcher, Empidonax sp.:
 (30)8, West Harris Co., FC (4)9, High Island, B; (2-3)22, High
 Sandpiper, Pectoral: Island, A; (2)23, High Island, L&IG
 (2)8, West Harris Co., FC Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied:
 Sandpiper, Least: (5)7, (4)9, High Island, B; (1)30,
 (1)28, Cove, AKM City Hall, BF, VE; (1)22, High
 Dowitcher, Short-billed: Island, A; (1)29, Bolivar, SW et al
 (8)9, (10)22, Bolivar, B, MF Wood Pewee, Eastern:
 Dowitcher, Long-billed: (1)13, yard, L&IG; (2)22, High
 (15)22, Bolivar, BF, MF Island, A; (4)23, High Island, L&IG
 Dowitcher, species: Flycatcher, Olive-sided:
 (6)3, Galv-San Luis Pass, FC (1)7, High Island, BF; (1)28, High
 Sandpiper, Western: Island, P&MJ; (3)3, Old House, FC
 (100p)8, West Harris Co., FC; Swallow, Tree:
 (1)28, Cove, AKM (50)9, High Island, B
 Godwit, Marbled: Martin, Purple:
 (3)9, Bolivar, B; (4)3, Galv-San (2)9, High Island, B
 Luis Pass, FC Wren, House:
 Tern, Common: (1)22, High Island, Chambers Co., A
 (1)7, (1500)22, Bolivar, BF, MF Thrasher, Brown:
 Tern, Royal: (2)22, High Island, BF, MF;
 (200)7, (2000)22, Bolivar, BF, MF; (1)23, High Island, L&IG
 (1)22, Chambers Co., A Robin:
 Tern, Sandwich: (3)24, Kempner Park, PJ
 (15)7, (40)9, Bolivar, B; Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray:
 (8p)1, (1)28, Cove, AKM (25)7, (2)22, High Island, BF, MF;
 Tern, Caspian: (15)22, High Island, A; (15)23, High
 (10)7, Bolivar, BF Island, L&IG; (2)3, Old House, FC
 Tern, Black: KINGLET, RUBY-CROWNED:
 (1000)22, Bolivar, BF, MF; (1)7, High Island, BF; (1)23, High
 (5p)1, (2)6, Cove, AKM Island, L&IG; (1)28, High Island,
 Dove, Ringed Turtle: P&MJ - see notes
 (10)2, Bellaire, (2)29, yard, P&MJ Vireo, White-eyed:
 Dove, Ground: (3)7, (2)22, High Island, BF, MF;
 (1)9, Galveston, B - see notes (5)28, High Island, (4)9, Bear Creek
 Dove, Inca: Park, P&MJ; (6)22, High Island, A
 (6)24, Kempner Park, PJ Vireo, Red-eyed:
 Cuckoo, Yellow-billed: (4)7, (1)22, High Island, BF, MF;
 (2)14-21, yard, P&MJ; (1)14, yard, (10)28, High Island,
 (1)14, 28, Cove, AKM P&MJ; (2)22, High Island, A; (2)23,
 Owl, Barn: High Island, L&IG
 (1)29, Bolivar, SW et al

- Warbler, Black-and-White:
 (3)7, (1)9, (5)22, High Island, B, MF;
 (20p)28, High Island, P&MJ; (25)22,
 High Island, A; (20)23, High Island,
 L&IG; (1)11, 12, City Hall, FC;
 (1)28, Cove, AKM
- Warbler, Prothonotary:
 (2)22, High Island, A
- Warbler, Golden-winged:
 (2)9, High Island, B
- Warbler, Tennessee:
 (1)22, High Island, BF, MF
- Warbler, Nashville:
 (2)9, High Island, B
- Warbler, Northern Parula (Parula):
 (1)9, 22, High Island, B, MF;
 (1)11, City Hall, FC
- Warbler, Yellow:
 (3)7, High Island, BF; (1)28, High
 Island, P&MJ; (1)11, City Hall, FC
- Warbler, Magnolia:
 (1)30, City Hall, BF&VE; (1)23, High
 Island, L&IG; (1)29, Bolivar, SW et
 al
- WARBLER, BLACK-THROATED GRAY:
 (1)9, High Island, B-see notes
- Warbler, Blackburnian:
 (1)22, High Island, A; (2)29, High
 Island, SW et al
- Warbler, Yellow-throated:
 (1)7, High Island, BF
- Warbler, Chestnut-sided:
 (1)29, Sun Oil, SW et al
- Warbler, Bay-breasted:
 (2)29, High Island, SW et al
- Warbler, Pine:
 (2)28, Ed White Park, P&MJ
- Warbler, Ovenbird:
 (1)22, High Island, BF, MF
- Waterthrush, Northern:
 (1)9, High Island, B; (1)22, High
 Island, A
- Warbler, Kentucky:
 (1)22, High Island, BF, MF
- Warbler, Mourning:
 (2)7, High Island, (2)30, City Hall,
 BF; (1)12, City Hall, FC
- Yellowthroat, Common:
 (1)9, High Island, B; (1)30, City
 Hall, BF & VE
- Chat, Yellow-breasted:
 (1)30, City Hall, BF&VE; (1)22, High
 Island, A; (1)23, High Island, L&IG;
 (1)12, City Hall, FC
- Warbler, Hooded:
 (1)7, 9, High Island, B; (1)30, City
 Hall, VE&BF; (1)11, City Hall, FC
- Warbler, Wilson's:
 (3)7, (2)9, High Island, B; (1)28,
 High Island, P&MJ; (1)22, High
 Island, A; (1)3, Old House, FC
- Warbler, Canada:
 (1)7, (8)9, (3)22, High Island, B, MF;
 (5)22, High Island, A; (2)23, High
 Island, L&IG
- Redstart, American:
 (2)9, (3)22, High Island, B, MF;
 (8p)28, High Island, P&MJ; (4)22,
 High Island, A; (3)23, High Island,
 L&IG
- Oriole, Orchard:
 (1)28, Ed White Park, P&MJ;
 (1)22, High Island, A
- Oriole, Northern (Baltimore):
 (20)9, High Island, B; (1-2)15 days,
 yard, P&MJ; (8)11, (5)12, City Hall.
 FC; (1)28, Cove, AKM
- Tanager, Summer:
 (1)7, (10)9, High Island, B;
 (5)28, Ed White Park, P&MJ
- Bunting, Painted:
 (2)7, (1)22, High Island, BF, MF;
 (1)28, Ed White Park, (1)28, High
 Island, P&MJ; (2)22, High Island, A
- SPARROW, HENSLOW'S:
 (27)1, (9)8, (2)15, (5)23, (6)30,
 SE Houston, NP-see notes

CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----------|----------------------------|
| A | Laura & Irv Greenbaum, Margaret & Paul Jones | L&IG | Laura & Irv Greenbaum |
| B | Ben Feltner, Elric McHenry, Noel Pettingell | P&MJ | Paul & Margaret Jones |
| FC | Fred Collins | AKM | Archie K. McKay |
| VE | Victor Emanuel | NP | Noel Pettingell |
| BF | Ben Feltner | JR | Jeanne Rutherford |
| MF | Marie Feltner | SW et al | Steve Williams' Field Trip |

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

BLACK-BELLIED TREE DUCK: August 29, 1973-- 1 Black-bellied Tree Duck --it was the morning about 9:30-a clear day. The sun was at our (Kassie & my) backs. We were at the pond on the west side of the road at Stockdick and Porter Roads in West Harris County. As we drove up to the pond we saw a flock of about 25 Fulvous Tree Ducks were landing on the pond. With this flock was a treeduck which showed large areas of white on the upper wings--all coverts white. I knew then that it was a Black-bellied Treeduck but as luck should have it the flock lit directly in front of us. The black-belly showed well as the adult bird in excellent plumage faced up. Its gray cheeks and brilliant pink bill left the identification positive! It sat in front of us on the pond for about 30 seconds then flew off when the flock took off. We had observed the bird at 30 yds. with 8X40 Swift binoculars.(FC)

Brazos Club Lake-- $\frac{1}{2}$ mile before Manor Lake, Sept. 3, 1973--I was bass fishing with two friends on this private lake cluttered with dead

trees. The day was overcast and windy--the sunrise was not detectable but it was fairly light by 8:30-- $1\frac{1}{2}$ after sunrise. I heard treeducks --I searched the sky in the direction of the sound. Momentarily the duck appeared. We all saw it to be a treeduck by profile and sound--incredibly it was a Black-bellied Treeduck. The upper wings were all white--edged with black the cheeks were gray the bill--the bright pink characteristic of the species. The belly was not black completely--this bird was in a stage of post-breeding molt. The two rarest sightings I've made on the upper coast--the same species within so short a time period. However this species has attempted and succeeded in breeding in the central Brazos Valley for the past two seasons. It is not suprising that we should find these birds in our area after breeding.--Fred Collins

Ground Dove: Flushed from roadside, small size, reddish in wings in combination with rounded tail.--Ben Feltner

Golden-winged Warbler: 1 male, 1 female, diagnostic black striped head and throat patch in combination with yellow crown and wing-patch at 30' for 4 minutes.--Ben Feltner

BLACK-THROATED GRAY: 1 male. Black throat, striped flanks, light pearl-gray mantle and yellow eye pip all noted by all observers, 3 minutes at from 30'-80' with 8X40.--Ben Feltner

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET: Tiny at 10'. Eye-ring wing bars agitated mannerisms all noted.--Ben Feltner

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: All birds recorded on the 1st, 8th, and 15th were heard singing. No birds were singing on either the 23rd or 30th and when flushed most flew quite a distance before alighting. On each of the latter dates identification was confirmed by close leisurely examinations of perched adult birds during which time all diagnostic field marks were clearly noted through 8X40 binoculars in good light.--Noel Pettingell

BE A PART OF THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - by Sarah Gordon

The Christmas bird census is an important annual event in that it is a barometer for checking bird populations, indicating trends in the expansion or reduction of the range of a species and being part of a count which might be referred to many times in coming years as scientists study changing bird populations and plan steps to preserve species. Since changes in our area are extensive, it is our hope to have a most successful count this year so we might contribute to this nationwide endeavor. To accomplish this it will take a concerted effort on the part of the ONC members. The date is December 29th - so plan now to join one of the area groups and be a part of an interesting and worthwhile project. You will have fun, too! It's exciting to find unexpected species, to share observations with others, and to contribute to the cause of conservation.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING:

New Members:

Mr. Alfred Chandler, 1200 Bettles, Conroe, Tx. 77301
Mrs. Thomas F. Newkirk, 3071 Locke Lane, Houston, Tx. 77019
Mr. & Mrs. Richard F. Bruns, 542 Threlkeld St., Houston, Tx. 77005

New Subscribers:

Mr. R. L. Simmons, 2511 Marilee Lane #4, Houston, Tx. 77027
Mrs. William J. Cox, 433 Inwood Dr., Bridge City, Tx. 77611

Complimentary, Gifts, & Exchanges:

"The Scissortail", Lubbock Audubon Society, Sharon Menaul, Newsletter Editor, 2518 - 38th St., Lubbock, Tx. 79413
Michael W. Hoke, 2025 - 8th St., Pt. Neches, Tx. 77651

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING, ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, OCTOBER 4, 1973

The Chairman, Marilyn Crane, called the meeting to order at 7:35 P.M.

Motion was properly made, seconded, and carried that the reading of the Minutes of the August meeting be dispensed with, the Minutes having been printed in the SPOONBILL.

At the request of the Treasurer, the May 31 to July 31, 1973 report was corrected to reflect a balance on hand of \$516.78 instead of \$517.80. Approved as read was the Treasurer's Report August 1, 1973 through September 30, 1973. Receipts were \$173.61, disbursements \$90.75, balance on hand \$599.64

Guests and new members were introduced by Sarah Gordon and extended a warm welcome by both Sarah and our Chairman.

Leota Stilwell reported new additions to our library had been donated by Eva Gilman, Doris Massingill, Marion Taylor and Dirk Hagemeyer. The volume donated by Dirk, KENTUCKY BIRDS, A FINDING GUIDE, contains photographs by him and John Tveten. In addition to what is already in our library, Melba Drake reminded us that the bound volumes of THE SPOONBILL were also available for research and study.

Dr. Frank Hsu announced that he is still calling for donations to the slide library and hopes to have the catalogue ready by the first of the year.

Laura Greenbaum reported that Peterson's GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF MEXICO is now available.

Those interested in participating in the bird survey of Armand Bayou were requested to sign up with the Paul Nimmons. Paul reported that he is still working on the week-long field trip to Arizona.

Marilyn Crane announced the appointment of the Nominating Committee for the year 1974-75, consisting of Margaret Anderson, Chairman, Sue Buck and Marion Taylor, Members. The Committee will make its report at the December Meeting.

Marilyn reported receiving from the Parks & Wildlife Department a request for our participation in the Peregrine Falcon Survey. Dates open for the High Island Line were October 9, 10, 12, 22-26, and 30; Matagorda Island Line were October 23, 24, 30, and 31; Padre Island Line were October 17-19, 23, 24, 26, 30, and 31. Those interested in participating were asked to get in touch with Paul Nimmons.

Our Chairman reported that she had attended a fish-eating bird conference in Victoria August 25. The next ground survey of such birds will take place next May 25 - June 9. She suggested that we consider joining in with the Houston Audubon Society, who will be taking part in it.

Margaret Anderson reported that a Flamingo had been seen in West Harris County, and gave the details for locating the bird which had been sighted by a couple of members of the Group. Mention was made that the bird seemed to be losing its color.

Following an announcement concerning the recent death of Mrs. Edna Fielding, it was agreed that a suitable memorial would be a contribution to the Fireplace Fund of the Sanctuary Building. Monies collected at this meeting totalling \$45.75 were forwarded to the Memorials Chairman of Outdoor Nature Club for this purpose.

Those who could do so were asked by David Marrack to attend hearings on the dumping of chemicals and heavymetals in the Gulf, the meeting to be held at the Shamrock on October 24. Those who could not be present were requested to write to government officials, including the EPA, protesting this continued dumping.

Drs. Frank Hsu and Pat Sullivan then presented a program of their color slides of the birds of Africa. Dr. Hsu took the first half, which included views of tourist accommodations, points of interest

in the cities, pictures of the people and of the larger birds. Dr. Sullivan presented the second half of the program, which covered the smaller birds and was highlighted by a recording of a couple of bird calls.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M. Respectfully submitted, Louise Rogers

COMING EVENTS

- Tuesday
November 6 Regular Photography Group meeting - 7:30 P.M., Bayou Manor Auditorium. Since the September meeting was rained out because of the tropical storm, Mr. Fuad Saadeh's slide show, "A Close Look at Nature Through the Eye of the Macro Lens," is rescheduled for the November program.
- Wednesday
November 7 Audubon Wildlife Film - 8 P.M., Music Hall. "The Living Jungle," presented by Gregory McMillan, is Barro Colorado Island, a wildlife sanctuary located on Lake Gatun in the Panama Canal Zone.
- Saturday
November 17 Audubon Field Trip. Meet 8 A.M. at the Main Entrance to Palmetto State Park for a trip led by Fred Webster. As Palmetto is about 3 hours from Houston, you may want to stay in one of the good motels in Luling or Gonzales. Excellent pre-trip reading is Fred's chapter in OG's Good Birding Trips entitled "Fred Webster's Winter Nature Notes on Palmetto State Park." Bring lunch.
- Wednesday
November 28 ONC Nature and Wildlife film - 8 P.M., 3121 Buffalo Speedway. Mr. John Fowler will be your film guide to "Mexico's Sea of Cortez."
- Saturday
December 1 OG Field Trip. Arlie McKay will lead us to Chambers County and the Cove area. Meet at the roadside park on the north side of IH 10 just this side (west) of the Trinity River bridge at 8:00 A.M. Bring lunch and insect repellent.
- Tuesday
December 4 Regular Photography Group meeting - 7:30 P.M., Bayou Manor Auditorium. A slide show appropriate for the Christmas season, but not without a touch of humor, will be presented by Dr. Lysle Humphrey. His title is "Expedition to the East Pole," and the show is based on a tour to the Holy Land and other parts of the near East.
- Wednesday
December 5 Audubon Wildlife Film - 8 P.M., Music Hall. Mr. Walter Berlet will show "Hawaii-Paradise of the Pacific," working on the four major islands of Hawaii.
- Thursday
December 6 Regular OG Meeting - 7:30 P.M., Downtown Recreation Center. "Sights and Sounds of Colorado Through a Birder's Eye and Ear" will be presented, with slides by Marilyn Crane and the sounds recorded by Melba Drake.
- Saturday
December 8 Audubon Field Trip to Sheldon Reservoir and area, led by Bill Harwell. Details on the next SPOONBILL.
- Saturday
December 29 Christmas Bird Count. Contact one of the area leaders to be a part.

T.O.S. FALL MEETING is to be held in El Paso on November 22, 23, & 24. It will be a joint meeting with the New Mexico Ornithological Society, and should be great for birding, with 7 field trips planned. The headquarters is the Del Camino Motor Hotel, 5001 Alameda, El Paso, Tx. 79993. Advance registration fee for the meeting is \$3.00, which should be sent to Mrs. Clarence Shelfer, 3050-A Chandler, El Paso, Tx. 79904. There is also a post-fall meeting trip planned to Mexico (Chihuahua), leaving El Paso Nov. 25 and returning to El Paso on Dec. 2. The trip will also go to Los Mochis, El Fuerte, and to Farallon Rock. The cost of the Mexico trip, which includes everything but meals is \$134.50 per person, and checks should be sent to Koch Travel Service, P. O. Box 1052, Alpine, Tx. 79830. Non-members, as well as members, are welcome to both the meeting and the post-meeting trip.

PEREGRINE FALCON COUNT STARTED SEPT. 22 - from the Texas Parks & Wildlife News

With their binoculars at the ready, some 100 professional and non-professional volunteers began scanning the skies of the Texas coast Sept. 22 in expectation of the year's first migrating peregrine falcon. The visual count, which is scheduled to last until Oct. 31, is part of a Parks and Wildlife Department census of the Alaskan-Canadian subspecies of peregrine which winters in South America with a few wintering on the Texas Coast. This is the second year of the count which aims to monitor peregrine populations and learn more about their migrations. Heading up the count is Parks and Wildlife Department non-game biologist John Smith who last year enlisted the aid of 50 volunteer workers from 12 organizations. These organizations included the U.S. Air Force, the Audubon Society and affiliated groups, Texas Ornithological Society, Colorado College, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Welder Wildlife Refuge, Corpus Christi Museum of Natural History, Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The observers last year covered beaches on South Padre, Matagorda and Galveston Islands and sighted 123 peregrines. According to Smith, the peregrines rapidly migrate from their nesting grounds in Canada, Alaska and Greenland at the first nip of winter. "Temperatures drop below freezing while some eggs are still unhatched," said Smith. "The young birds leave their northland home so early that some of the immature falcons still have down on their heads when they arrive on the Texas coast." Smith also emphasized a distinction between this migrating subspecies of peregrine and the population of falcons which lives in the United States and is basically a non-migratory subspecies. "The United States population has experienced a severe decline in recent years due to pesticides," said Smith. "There are only a small number of these birds remaining and they are classified as endangered because of their low numbers."

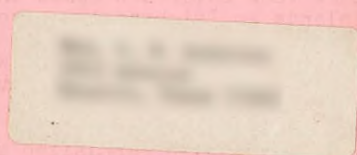
The Alaska-Canada peregrine which is being counted on the Texas Coast is also classified as endangered because of increasing pesticide levels but seems to be holding its own. Early fall is a good time to count these migrating peregrines, according to Smith, because they funnel down along the Gulf coast from the north instead of flying over water. "The falcons like to hunt over open terrain," said Smith, "and the Texas beaches are natural hunting grounds for the birds."

This issue of the News was dated 9/19/73, and continued, "Experienced birders and falconers are invited to participate in this survey. Interested persons should contact Smith at 512-475-6276 or write him at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, John H. Reagan Building, Austin, Texas 78701." As most of the dates have been taken, as noted in the Minutes, those who are interested, but could not join this year, might want to contact Mr. Smith about being notified in advance of the next year's count. Or you could ask Marilyn Crane to put you on a list to be contacted when she receives word.



OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB
 (ORNITHOLOGY GROUP)
 1746 WROXTON COURT
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NAMES FOR REFERENCE

- Chairman: Miss Marilyn Crane, 3601 Allen Parkway, #214
Houston, 77019 522-6393
- Treasurer: Miss Melba Drake, 1746 Wroxton Court,
Houston, 77005 522-8285
- Spoonbill: Mrs. Irving (Laura) Greenbaum, 5615 Portal Dr.,
Houston, 77035 721-1310
- Clearing-House: Mr. Dan Hardy, 10215 Chatterton,
Houston, 77043 468-2748
- Rare Bird Alert: Mrs. L.W. (Margaret) Anderson, 2913 Amherst,
Houston, 77005 668-6405

ANOTHER SET OF CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
AREA MAPS

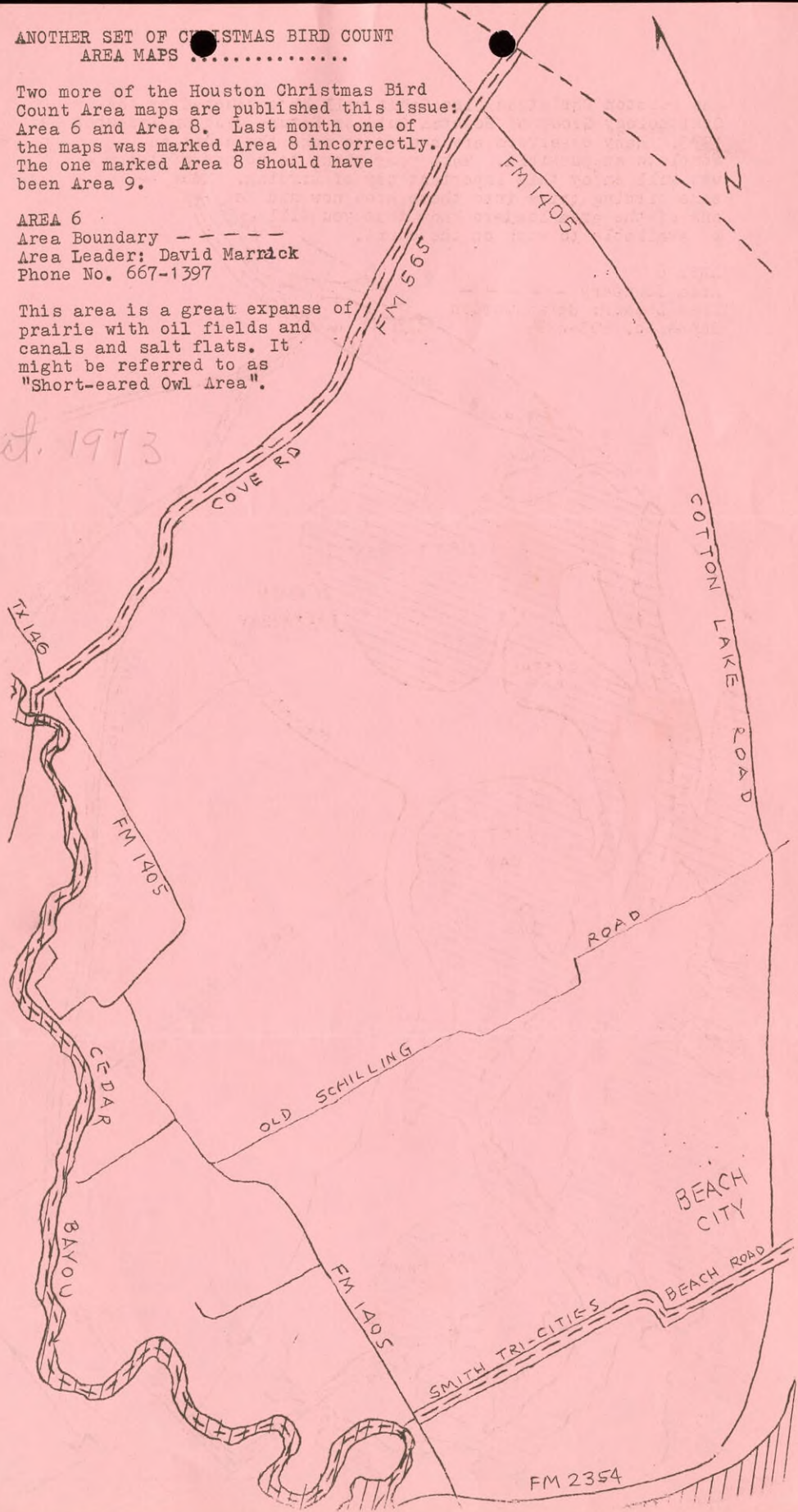
Two more of the Houston Christmas Bird
Count Area maps are published this issue:
Area 6 and Area 8. Last month one of
the maps was marked Area 8 incorrectly.
The one marked Area 8 should have
been Area 9.

AREA 6

Area Boundary - - - - -
Area Leader: David Marrick
Phone No. 667-1397

This area is a great expanse of
prairie with oil fields and
canals and salt flats. It
might be referred to as
"Short-eared Owl Area".

Oct. 1973



The Houston Christmas Bird Count will be conducted by the Ornithology Group of Houston Outdoor Nature Club on December 29, 1973. Many observers are needed to make the count as complete as possible. Make your plans to be one of those who will enjoy this important day of birding. Make some birding trips into these area now and let one of the area leaders know that you will be available to work on the count.

AREA 8

Area Boundary - - - - -

Area Leader: Sarah Gordon

Phone No. 523-8285

