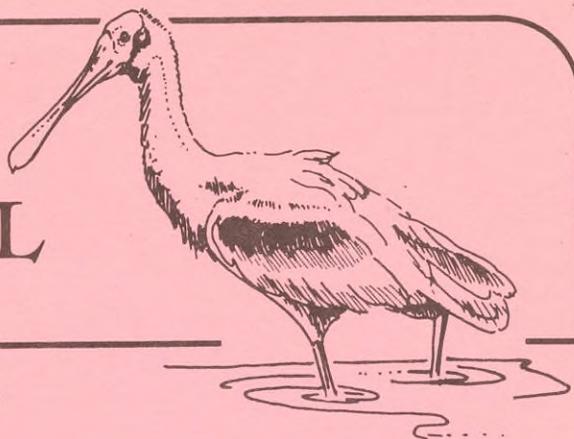


The SPOONBILL



Published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club
Houston, Texas B. C. Robison, *editor*

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Coming Events

- Sunday
February 3 Deadline for Spoonbill articles, announcements, etc. and Clearing House.
- Thursday
February 7 OG meeting at Bayou Manor at 7:30 p.m. Randy Pinkston will present the program. Details to be announced.
- Saturday
February 9 OG field trip led by David Marrack. Meet at 7:45 am on the I-45 northbound feeder road on the north side of Hwy. 830 (take exit for Hwy. 830, Panorama Village). This location is 4 miles north of the exit for Hwy. 336 in Conroe. Allow 75 to 90 minutes from Houston to the meeting location. We will continue north to Willis, then west to the Lewis Power Plant cooling ponds (waterfowl), then on to woods and scrub (sparrows/woodland birds). Expect wet ground and mosquitoes. Bring lunch.
- Tuesday
February 12 John Werler, Director of the Houston Zoo, will be the guest speaker at the ONC meeting, held at the Garden Center in Hermann Park at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Werler's talk will introduce ONC members and their guests to the Houston Zoo, the changing role of zoos in general and their ecological importance to society.

SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT

The Buffalo Bayou Coalition will be offering a series of seminars concerning various aspects of Buffalo Bayou. They will be held on 4 consecutive Thursdays in February (7, 14, 21 and 28) and will deal with topics such as drainage, water quality, habitat preservation and recreational use of the bayou. Place: American General Tower, Meeting Rooms A and B; 2727 Allen Parkway.

More information is available at the Citizen's Environmental Coalition, 523-3431.

1984 SPRING CREEK CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT by Mike Austin

The fourth annual Spring Creek Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, December 15th. Thirty-four observers covered the count circle which encompasses river bottom woodlands, pine woodland, agricultural areas and suburban subdivisions in southern Montgomery and northern Harris Counties. Although birding conditions on count day were sub-optimal (warm and windy), 88 species and one exotic were seen, comprising the second highest species total for the count. Total number of individual birds was comparable to 1982, another warm, windy day with an excellent wild food crop.

Best species are Green-backed Heron followed closely by White-eyed Vireo and a pair of nesting Monk Parakeets. Eleven new species were seen for the count. Besides those above, these were: Greater White-fronted Goose, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, Cooper's Hawk, Lesser Yellowlegs and Rufous-sided Towhee. Species with unusually high numbers were Snow Goose, Northern Cardinal, Brown-headed Cowbird and Vesper Sparrow. Common Grackles were unusually scarce. Surprising misses were Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

Noel's Niche

Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

.....Ten Years Ago This Month
From January, 1975 Spoonbill:

"HE WILL BE MISSED

"Clayton Gilman, an active and long-time member of ONC, died last month, after a short illness. A man of wide ranging interests, he was ever agreeable to share his knowledge with anyone who asked. He was known to many as the leader of the bus trips made by ONC in recent years. And when he was on a field trip, he always 'brought up the rear' to be sure no one got left or lost. Clayton's love of botany and birds made the readers of THE SPOONBILL richer over the years through his advice on attracting birds to the yard by plantings. Following are some of his ideas on 'Nature's bird feeders', which he had sent to THE SPOONBILL several weeks before his death.

'Trees are for the birds! Well, not all of them, but two come to mind that particularly fit that description. Of all trees grown, it seems to me that the red mulberry (*Morus Rubra*) attracts more birds of more species than any other tree. Not only is it favored by those birds which delight in the fruit, but the fruit and leaves being also attractants of insects of many kinds, the insect-eating birds find a well-laden lunch table. Incidentally, mulberry pie is mighty good fare for humans.

'Another favorite of seed-eating birds is the hackberry (*Celtis Occidentalis*) which is especially attractive to cardinal, phoebe, cedar waxwing, mockingbird, bluebird and brown thrasher. The hackberry is an interesting tree in appearance and, having small leaves, does not require as much housekeeping as some other ornamentals.'

.....Twenty Years Ago This Month
From January, 1965 Spoonbill:

"NESTING BROWN PELICANS"
by Charlotte Johnson

"On the boat, The Whooping Crane, out of Sea-Gun Marina, I met Reagan Lee, warden for the National Audubon Society at Aransas Wildlife Refuge. He said that in 1963, 12 mature Brown Pelicans appeared on 2nd Chain Islands. 6 fledged. In 1964, 20 adults nested on 2nd Chain Islands and 35 eggs hatched and all 35 fledged. He feels that in a few years we may have a large colony of the Brown Pelicans nesting on 2nd Chain Islands. They start laying about March 16th and leave in August."

.....Thirty Years Ago This Month
From January/February 1955 Spoonbill:

"ORNITHOLOGY GROUP REPORTS -

Christmas Count - January 2, 1955

"From the standpoint of total species recorded, the Houston count this year was the most successful on record: 146 different kinds of birds were observed by 40 sharp-eyed birders - 3 more species than last year's 143. Thus for the third year in a row a new species record has been established for the Houston area.

"The Screech Owl was recorded by members of the Pettingell party in George Williams' section near the San Jacinto Monument. At least 4 individuals were called to within flashlight range by means of a recording of the bird's call which was played on a portable phonograph."

FREEPORT HAS BIG COUNT by Jim Morgan

On Sunday, December 16, one hundred and seventy-one participants recorded 222 species of birds on the 28th annual Freeport Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

The count verified the trends of the fall season. Many lingering migrants were found, most likely due to the very mild weather which persisted well into the count period. In addition, wintering species of waterfowl and passerines were generally in good numbers. The Freeport count also confirmed that the lack of western vagrants this past fall was not due to poor coverage by area birders. Instead, one must conclude that there was no real influx of western vagrants on the UTC this fall.

The "bird of the count" was the only western species recorded. Two Black-throated Gray Warblers were found, the first by Ron and Marcia Braun in the Stubblefield Lake area and the second bird was observed by Victor Emanuel, Fred Collins and Kurt Huffman in the Jones Creek area. This species had never been recorded before on the Freeport CBC. Another new bird for the count was Monk Parakeet, an introduced species that has been nesting on the UTC for some years now. One other excellent find was a Fulvous Whistling-Duck, a bird that had not been seen on the Freeport count in more than 14 years; the bird was found by Don and Ruthie Melton. Almost all observers in Area 3 got to view this bird through scopes and Mike Austin's Questar.

Other top finds included Least Grebe, Masked Booby, three White-tailed Hawks, three Caracaras, six Black-necked Stilts, three Whimbrels, three Stilt Sandpipers, three White-winged Doves, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Western Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Barn Swallow,

and seventeen species of warblers topped by Tennessee Warbler, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, four Black-throated Green Warblers, Prairie Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler and, of course, the two Black-throated Gray Warblers. Among the lingering migrants were the equally good finds of Summer Tanager, three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and two Blue Grosbeaks. Most of these good birds were seen by multiple observers (even separate parties), including some of the top birders on the count.

The Freeport CBC was successful again this year because of the efforts and dedication of so many people. All 171 participants are to be thanked for their efforts. Special thanks must go out to the eleven area leaders who recruit so much help and organize their teams to cover the count circle in near optimum fashion. Also, special thanks goes out to those fine birders who come so far each year to help on the count. Among them are Bill Graber from Beaumont, Kelly Bryan and Tony Gallucci from Conroe and Lake Livingston, and Greg Lasley, Chuck Sexton and Kurt Huffman from Austin. These top-notch birders add so much to the count and truly make Freeport a "Texas effort" to keep the nation's top count right where it belongs - on the UTC! Last, but not least, my co-compilers join me in thanking the Houston Audubon Society for sponsoring the count, and the Dow Chemical Company for hosting our count-down dinner and giving us permission to enter the many properties they own within the count circle. We are also grateful to the other property owners within the count circle who so graciously allow us access to their land each year. Y'all took part in Freeport's count of 222 species in 1984! Thanks.

A NEW YEAR'S APPRECIATION by B.C. Robison

As we begin a new year, I think it is a good time to pause and express appreciation to the many people who worked so hard and faithfully to produce The Spoonbill over this past year.

So, many thanks to...

Noel Pettingell and Jim Morgan for their regular and enthusiastic contributions. Noel's "Looking Back" feature and Jim's frequent accounts of birding trips and Christmas counts always make great reading.

Steve Williams, for his efforts in producing "The Outer Circle". We hope he does well with this fine feature in the publication of the Piney Woods Wildlife Society.

To David Dauphin and Ron Braun for serving as Clearing House editor. I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that the Clearing House, as an ongoing record of UTC bird populations, is the most significant aspect of The Spoonbill. May they always find birds in the field in taxonomic order.

To typists Wanda Smith and Barbara Darr. Barbara does the Clearing House and Wanda does all the rest. Both of them can take a jumble of handwritten scrawl and make it presentable to the public.

To the Feltners, of, er, uh, Seattle. To Ben, for his invaluable advice on birding and just about every other topic; to Linda, for her superb art work; to both, for their good friendship. They are both deeply missed by all. I hereby appoint their Doberman, Merlin, the Official Dog of the OG.

To Peggy Milstead, for her tireless work in taking care of the mailing labels for each Spoonbill. Also, she is great about handling other tasks on short notice when the need arises. Remember, Peggy, the editor is as close as your nearest telephone.

To Yetta Chapman, who, in my humble estimation, performs the most crucial task of all - taking the Spoonbills to the post office (that job is much more involved than it sounds). The editor's intolerance of bureaucratic inertia is so great that, if it weren't for Yetta, The Spoonbill would probably be published somewhere in the TDC.

And to Beth Hudson and Connie Schimbor for their tremendous help on the Mailing Committee.

Last, but certainly not least, a special thanks to Libby Price for providing a Selectric typewriter each month. This enables us to produce an even better publication, both in reading and in appearance.

Many thanks to all for an outstanding job!

Minutes of the
Ornithology Group Meeting
December 6, 1984

The meeting was brought to order at 7:37 p.m. by Chairman Don Richardson. Peter Vennema gave the treasurer's report with an ending balance of \$5,650.98. Ron Braun, Clearing House compiler, thanked everyone for their good responses and also stated if anyone had any Spoonbills with a pre-1975 publication date to contact him. Don reported Steve Williams has decided to move his "Outer Circle" report to the Piney Woods publication. Gene Heitzman invited all to the ONC meeting Tuesday Dec. 11 for the annual Christmas party. He also stated the January meeting will have Dr. Frank Fisher speaking on our wintering bird populations and the Texas wetlands. Don thanked those who put the roster together for a job well done.

Interesting bird sightings included Eagles near Attwater; on the Peregrine tour to the Valley a Blue Bunting, Gray Hawk, Lesser Black-Backed Gull and Red-Crowned Parrots were seen. There may be a possible Caracara around Spencer Hwy.

The general announcements for the evening were as follows: Stennie Meadours announced that it looks good for a sanctuary at Bolivar Flats and that there would probably be another hearing; Mary Ann Chapman on behalf of Peregrine Tours donated \$200.00 to the OG and also handed out the itinerary for the OG trip to Florida in May; Don stated the 3rd quarter Exxon USA magazine has an article and photography by John Tveten; Barbara Levisay advised the Chickadee at the Audubon Sanctuary now sells 1985 non-game stamps and decals and also invited everyone to HAS open house December 12; Ellen Red invited us all to help plant trees at Galveston Island S.P. on January 26; Noel Pettingell stated "The Eyes of Texas" show featuring the HAS High Island Sanctuary and the Yucatan Vireo was very well done; Bart Tooker invited everyone to pick up a flyer for the upcoming HAS Birdathon in April; Jim Morgan invited everyone to turn out for the Freeport CBC staking in the last 14 years this count has come in first 9 times and second 5 times; Randy Pinkston announced he needed an area leader for Area 8 of the Houston CBC; Bob Honig announced he and Doug Williams were compiling the Buffalo Bayou CBC; Bob also stated final directions to the field trip to Welder Wildlife Refuge will be in the January Spoonbill; George Wilson, Program Chairman, advised the January program will be given by Ted Eubanks on coastal birding.

Fred Collins then gave the evening's program on his trip to El Truinfo, Mexico.

Clearing House

DECEMBER, 1984

The Clearing House is a monthly record of bird sightings made on the Upper Texas Coast. How to read the CH: Location--(how many)date,observers. Common, widely distributed species on the UTC during the reported month are listed as follows: number of reports, (lowest - highest ; total number of individuals seen), e.g. 8 reports (1-40;82). Noteworthy sightings will be underlined, capitalized, or both, according to their status. All observations reported below must be accepted by the Checklist Committee before they can be included on the next checklist. Documentation is a must for consideration by the Committee. Birds with very rare, vagrant, accidental, or no status on the Checklist at the date of sighting require details. Sightings needing details but submitted without them will not be included in the regular Clearing House.

ABBREVIATION CODES

a.m. = all month	HLP = HL&P Cooling Ponds
BC = Brazoria Co.	Kemp = Kemper Park
BGP = Bear Creek Park	NWH = NW Houston
Bayt = Baytown	SB = San Bernard NWR
BBSP = Brazos Bend SP	SEH = SE. Houston
CC = Chambers Co.	SWH = SW. Houston
EG = E. Galveston	TCD = Texas City Dike
Fr = Friendswood	WH = W. Houston
G = Galveston	WGI = W. Galv. Is.
GC = Galveston Co.	WHC = W. Harris Co.
H = Houston	WOB = White Oak Bayou
HI = High Island	

Loon, Common: 4 reports (1-6;17)
Grebe, Pied-billed: 9 reports (2-15;69)
Grebe, Horned: HLP-(10)1, PWWS
Grebe, Eared: 5 reports (2-60;167)
Pelican, American White: 10 reports (1-300;783)
Cormorant, Double-crested: 10 reports (2-125;373)
Cormorant, Olivaceous: Bayt-(1)20, ER
Anhinga: CC/GC-(12)8,0; BBSP-(3)31, C
Heron, Great Blue: 9 reports (1-25;61)
Egret, Great: 8 reports (1-75;145)
Egret, Snowy: 8 reports (1-75;159)
Heron, Little Blue: 4 reports (1-10;22)
Heron, Tricolored: 6 reports (1-5;19)
Egret, Reddish: 6 reports (1-10;20)
Egret, Cattle: 10 reports (2-100;308)
Night-Heron, Black-crowned: HLP-(25)1, PWWS
Ibis, White: 6 reports (1-100;174)
Ibis, White-faced: WGI-(75)9, TVE; SB-(1)29, ER
Spoonbill, Roseate: CC/GC-(8)8,0
Whistling-Duck, Black-bellied: WHC-(30)9, LG;(20)27, LG;
BBSP-(12)31, C (Status changing, ed.)
Swallow, Tree: HLP-(67)1, PWWS
Goose, Greater White-fronted: 5 reports (1-3000;4251)
Goose, Snow: 10 reports (2-12000;28277)
(Goose, Blue): CC/GC-(2000)8,0
Goose, Ross': SB-(2)29, ER
Goose, Canada: WHC-(500)27, BEW; SB-(500)29, ER; BBSP-(3)31, C
Teal, Green-winged: CC/GC-(8)8,0; WHC-(50)9, LG; SB-(100)29, ER
Duck, Mottled: 5 reports (3-25;50)
Mallard: 7 reports (1-10;49)
Pintail, Northern: 5 reports (6-500;751)
Teal, Blue-winged: 5 reports (2-30;72)
Teal, Cinnamon: BBSP-(1)31, C
Shoveler, Northern: 7 reports (2-30;85)
Gadwall: 6 reports (2-140;191)
Wigeon, American: 7 reports (1-15;54)
Canvasback: CC/GC-(20)8,0; WHC-(6)9, LG; EG-(21)22, SW
Redhead: WHC-(10)9, LG; TCD-(9)15, BH
Duck, Ring-necked: WHC-(12)27, LG; BBSP-(50)31, C
Scaup, Greater: HLP-(7)1, PWWS
Scaup, Lesser: 8 reports (1-300;495)
Scaup, sp.: HLP-(50)1, PWWS; SB-(100)29, ER
Scoter, Black: EG-(6)22; HI-(1)23, W (Notes submitted, ed.)
Goldeneye, Common: HLP-(3)1, PWWS (females, ed.); GC/BC-(1)2, TE; WGI-(2)10, JJH
Bufflehead: HLP-(63)1, PWWS; TCD-(8)15, BH; WHC-(2)27, LG
Merganser, Red-breasted: HLP-(2)1, PWWS; EG-(150)22, SW

Duck,Ruddy: 6 reports (5-30;389)
Vulture,Black: CC/GC-(2)8,0; SB-(2)29,ER
Vulture,Turkey: 5 reports (1-25;46)
Osprey: HLP-(1)1,PWWS; WGI-(1)9,TVE
Kite,Black-shouldered: 6 reports (1-3;12)
Eagle,Bald: WHC-(1)9,LG
Harrier,Northern: 12 reports (1-40;132)
Hawk,Sharp-shinned: WH-(1)8,H; H-(1)29,LG
Hawk,Red-shouldered: 7 reports (1-6;22)
Hawk,White-tailed: Fr-(1)27,MA (Resident area,ed)
Hawk,Red-tailed: 11 reports (1-40;154)
Kestrel,American: 13 reports (1-20;97)
Merlin: GC/BC-(1)2,TE; HI-(1)23,SW; WHC-(1)27,LG
Bobwhite,Northern: GC/BC-(5)2,TE
Rail,King: SB-(1)29,ER
Moorhen,Common: CC/GC-(50)8,0; BBSP-(15)31,C
Coot,American: 10 reports (20-500;2010)
Crane,Sandhill: 6 reports (2-75;232)
Plover,Black-bellied: 6 reports (2-150;207)
Plover,Snowy: CC/GC-(2)8,0; EG-(3)22,SW
Plover,Semipalmated: GC/BC-(10)2,TE; WGI-(15)9,TVE; EG-(4)22,SW
Plover,Piping:GC/BC-(15)2,TE; WGI-(15)9,TVE; EG-(2)22,SW
Killdeer: 8 reports (5-100;226)
Oystercatcher,American: GC/BC-(2)2,TE; CC/GC-(4)8,0; WGI-(1)9,TVE
Avocet,American: 4 reports (2-500;802)
Yellowlegs,Greater: GC/BC-(4)2,TE; WH-(14)8,H; WGI-(5)9,TVE

Yellowlegs,Lesser: GC/BC-(25)2,TE; CC/GC-(2)8,0; WGI-(10)9,TVE; (3)10,JJH
Williet: 5 reports (2-200;263)
Sandpiper,Spotted: HLP-(5)1,PWWS; GC/BC-(1)2,TE
Curlew,Long-billed: 5 reports (6-75;215)
Godwit,Marbled: GC/BC-(100)2,TE; WGI-(50)9,TVE
Turnstone,Ruddy: WGI-(25)1,JJH; GC/BC-(150)2,TE; WGI-(25)9,TVE
Knot,Red: WGI-(5)1,JJH; GC/BC-(250)2,TE; WGI-(25)9,TVE; EG-(1)22,SW
Sanderling: 6 reports (1-500;733)
Sandpiper,Western: GC/BC-(750)2,TE; WGI-(150)9,TVE; TCD-(5)15,BH
Sandpiper,Least: HLP-(5)1,PWWS; GC/BC-(25)2,TE; WGI-(25)9,TVE
SANDPIPER,PECTORAL: Smith Pt.-(1)23,SW (1st Dec record-see notes,ed.)
Dunlin: GC/BC-(1000)2,TE; WGI-(100)9,TVE; (1)10,JJH
Dowitcher,Short-billed: GC/BC-(100)2,TE; WGI-(25)9,TVE
Dowitcher,Long-billed: GC/BC-(1)2,TE
Snipe,Common: GC/BC-(1)2,TE; WGI-(2)9,TVE; EG-(7)22,SW
Woodcock,American: WH-(1)8,H; WGI-(1)9,TVE
Gull,Laughing: 8 reports (4-1500;3004)
Gull,Bonaparte's:WGI-(25)9,TVE; (10)15,JJH; TCD-(1)15,BH
Gull,Ring-billed: 8 reports (10-500;970)
Gull,Herring: 6 reports (1-200;297)
Tern,Gull-billed: WGI-(1)9,TVE
Tern,Caspian: 7 reports (1-100;138)
Tern,Royal: 4 reports (2-500;572)
Tern,Sandwich: GC/BC-(25)2,TE; CC/GC-(1)8,0; EG-(1)22,SW
Tern,Common: GC/BC-(100)2,TE
Tern,Forster's: 6 reports (1-300;539)
Skimmer,Black: GC/BC-(500)2,TE; WGI-(150)9,TVE
Dove,Rock: 7 reports (5-39;124)
Dove,White-winged: 4 reports (3-22;41)
Dove,Mourning: 6 reports (1-100;203)
Dove,Inca: 4 reports (2-40;90)
Barn-Owl,Common:GC/BC-(1)2,TE; NWH-(1)27,SW; BBSP-(1)31,C
Owl,Great Horned: WOB-(1)22,WC; Fr-(2)26,MA
Owl,Short-eared: GC/BC-(2)2,TE; EG-(2)22,SW
Nighthawk,Common: SEH-(10)9,RP (See notes,ed.)
Swift,Chimney: H-(1)1,6,NP (As in Nov.; downtown -see notes,ed.)
Kingfisher,Belted: 11 reports (1-15;45)
Woodpecker,Red-headed: Kemp-(2)8,JJH
Woodpecker,Red-bellied: WH-(2)8,H; BBSP-(20)31,C; SEH-(2)a.m.,RP
Sapsucker,Yellow-bellied: 5 reports (5 birds)
Woodpecker,Downy:WH-(2)8,H; BBSP-(4)31,C; SEH-(1)a.m.,RP
Flicker,Northern: 9 reports (1-5;17)
Phoebe,Eastern: 8 reports (1-10;26)
Flycatcher,Vermilion: GC/BC-(1)2,TE; WGI-(1)10,JJH
Kingbird,Western: EG-(1)22,G (See notes,ed.)
Lark,Horned: 4 reports (4-6;19)
Swallow,Northern Rough-winged: GC/BC-(10)2,TE

Jay,Blue: 7 reports (1-25;51)
Crow,American: 6 reports (3-30;93)
Chickadee,Carolina: 7 reports (1-25;54)
Titmouse,Tufted: 5 reports (1-25;46)
Creeper,Brown: 4 reports (1-2;6)
Wren,Carolina: 4 reports (1-10;18)
Wren,House: 4 reports (1-10;18)
Wren,Winter: WOB-(1)a.m.,WC
Wren,Sedge: HLP-(3)1,PWWS; WGI-(1)9,TVE
Wren,Marsh: EG-(1)22; HI-(1)23,SW
Kinglet,Golden-crowned: GC/BC-(2)2,TE; WGI-(10)9,TVE; HI-(1)23,SW; BBSP-(6)31,C; WOB-(2)a.m.,WC
Kinglet,Ruby-crowned: 11 reports (1-30;112)
Gnatcatcher,Blue-gray: 5 reports (1-5;16)
Bluebird,Eastern: 6 reports (1-20;41)
Thrush,Hermit: WGI-(1)8,JJH; (5)9,TVE
Robin,American: 8 reports (3-100;234)
Catbird,Gray: GC/BC-(4)2,TE; G-(2)8,JJH; WGI-(1)9,TVE
Mockingbird,Northern: 11 reports (1-35;94)
Thrasher,Brown: 8 reports (1-5;14)
Pipit,Water: 5 reports (1-40;65)
Pipit,Sprague's: TCD-(30)15,BH
Waxwing,Cedar: WGI-(10)9,TVE; SWH-(15)16,RP; Kemp-(20)22,SW; BCP-(15)27,BEW; SEH-(15)28,RP
Shrike,Loggerhead: 13 reports (1-15;60)
Starling,European: 9 reports (2-200;825)
Vireo,Solitary: WH-(1)8,H; WGI-(2)9,TVE; SEH-(1)9,RP; BBSP-(1)31,C
Warbler,Orange-crowned: 7 reports (1-15;49)
Warbler,Magnolia: GC-(1)2,TE (See notes,ed.)
Warbler,Yellow-rumped: 7 reports (1-25;95)
(Warbler,Audubon's): WH-(1)8,H (Notes subm.,ed.)
Warbler,Black-throated Green: BBSP-(1)31,C (See notes,ed.)
Warbler,Pine: SEH-(10)9-24,RP; BBSP-(2)31,C
Warbler,Prairie: GC-(1)2,TE (See notes,ed.)
Warbler,Palm: GC/BC-(3)2,TE; WGI-(2)9,TVE
Warbler,Bay-breasted: WGI-(1)9,TVE (See notes,ed.)
Warbler,Black-and-white: BBSP-(1)31,C
Redstart,American: WGI-(1)9,TVE (See notes,ed.)
Yellowthroat,Common: 5 reports (1-10;18)
Warbler,Wilson's: 4 reports (1-2;5)
Chat,Yellow-breasted: GC-(1)2,TE (See notes,ed.)
Cardinal,Northern: 9 reports (1-24;56)
Grosbeak,Rose-breasted: GC-(1)2,TE (See notes,ed.)
Grosbeak,Black-headed: SWH-(1)11,SW (Ad. male-notes subm.,ed.)
Towhee,Rufous-sided: EG-(1)22,G
Sparrow,Field: WGI-(2)9,TVE; BBSP-(1)31,C
Sparrow,Savannah: 11 reports (1-11;52)
Sparrow,Seaside: EG-(3)22,SW
Sparrow,Song: 6 reports (1-2;9)
Sparrow,Lincoln's: 4 reports (2-5;17)
Sparrow,Swamp: 5 reports (2-5;20)
Sparrow,White-throated: 7 reports (1-100;171)
Sparrow,White-crowned: WH-(5)8,H (Where are all the W-C's?,ed.)
Blackbird,Red-winged: 11 reports (1-400;1137)
Meadowlark,Eastern: 6 reports (1-150;208)
Meadowlark,Western: WH-(2)8,H (by voice,ed.)
Blackbird,Brewer's: WHC-(20)27,BEW
Grackle,Great-tailed: 7 reports (30-300;740)
Grackle,Boat-tailed: CC/GC-(40)8,0
Grackle,Common: 4 reports (4-200;304)
Cowbird,Brown-headed: 5 reports (20-300;540)
blackbird,sp.: SB-(500)29,ER; BBSP-(1000)31,C
Oriole,Northern: G-(1)15,17,JJH (See notes,ed.)
Goldfinch,American: 8 reports (2-150;264)
Sparrow,House: 8 reports (12-50;207)

The following reports, requiring details, were submitted without them:

Hawk,Swainson's: CC/GC-(1)8,0 (Very rare status)
Hawk,Ferruginous: BBSP-(1)31,C (Very rare status)
(Buteos having very rare status should always have details,ed)

CORRECTIONS: Last month's CL mistakenly attributed sightings to Doug Traeger instead of the person actually seeing & reporting them, i.e. Ed Rozenberg! Please correct your copy by marking ER (Ed Rozenberg) for all references to DT in the Nov. CL. My apologies to both individuals.

Also in the Nov. CH, the Yellow-billed Cuckoo seen by Mike Austin was on Oct. 31th, not the 10th-30th of Nov. as listed. Please correct your copy.

CONTRIBUTORS - DECEMBER, 1984

MA=Mike Austin; C=party of BH,Doug Williams,Caroline Callery; PC=Penny Cureton; WC=Wesley Cureton; TE=Ted Eubanks; TVE=Ted & Virginia Eubanks; G=party of George Howe,Sam House; LG=Linda Graetz; H=party of BH,Doug Williams,Rob Thacker; JH=Jane&John Hamilton; BH=Bob Honig; J=party of JH,Martha Micks; PM=Peggy Milstead; O=party of Bob Oberfelder,Jane Weissman; NP=Noel Pettingell; PWWS=Pinney Woods Wildlife Soc. Fieldtrip; RP=Randy Pinkston; ER=Ed Rosenberg; W=party of SW,Dwight Payne; SW=Steve Williams; BEW=Bob&Edith Willman

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - DECEMBER, 1984

PECTORAL SANDPIPER: This bird was observed for 2 minutes from 100 feet in good light with a 25x scope. It had a short bill, yellowish-green legs (lighter than pectoral in Robbins' et al., Birds of North America), and a very sharp demarcation between the brownish of the chest and the snowy white underparts. In size, it was roughly halfway between that of a nearby Killdeer and Western Sandpiper. It had slight white lining on the back of the wings and a rump the same color as the back. There was no streaking or spotting on the sides. The chest and upperparts were the same color. --Steve Williams

Common Nighthawk: I first observed one, then a group of four, followed by another five, all flying southward at a height of 100+ meters over my neighborhood. On each individual I noted Mourning Dove-sized body with long, thin pointed wings each with white rectangular spot midway between wrist and tip, medium-length tail, overall grayish color. Naked eye and 10 x 50 binocs in excellent light. --Randy Pinkston

Chimney Swift: Last seen in vicinity of Cotton Exchange Bldg. chimney on Nov.30 at dusk; thus bird roosted there until at least Dec.1. Site was checked Dec.3rd and 10th but no swifts were seen in the vicinity. Latest ever recorded departure date in Houston was Dec.7, 1978. Three swifts were seen going to roost in U of H Downtown Bldg. chimney (One Main Plaza) on Dec.6 and were not present when site was next checked on Dec.16 (see Spoonbill, Dec. 1978 and Jan. 1979). --Noel Pettingell

Western Kingbird: George Howe and Sam House saw this bird from about 50 feet away, each with 8x binocs in good light for roughly 2 minutes inside the grounds of the US Coast Guard Station just east of Bolivar Ferry in Galveston. It had a greenish-gray back, ashy gray throat and upper chest, yellow underparts, and a dark tail. George observed a white outer feather on the right side of the tail and no white at the end. --Steve Williams

Magnolia Warbler: Small dendroica feeding in salt cedars on West Galveston Island; yellow rump, gray cheek, white eyeline and white tailspots are definitive. --Ted Eubanks

Black-throated Green Warbler: Yellow head with greenish cheek patch, top of head and back green. White belly with black streaks on sides. Black throat (but not solid jet black). Dark tail, light underside. Dark wings with white wingbars. Observed by Bob Honig, Doug Williams, Caroline Callery. --Bob Honig

Prairie Warbler: Small warbler feeding in salt cedars on Galveston Island; yellow below, green above, streaks on side, yellow eyeline, gray-green cheek mark, tail pumping action. --Ted & Virginia Eubanks

Bay-breasted Warbler: Fall male in salt cedars on Galveston Is.; yellowish head with dark streaking, two white wingbars, bay wash to sides of breast. --Ted & Virginia Eubanks

American Redstart: Feeding in Live Oak; HY male, yellow wing and tail patches, dark spots around throat. --TVE,George & Jane Clayton

Yellow-breasted Chat: Huge warbler feeding in salt cedars; greenish above, yellow breasted, white spectacles. --Ted Eubanks

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Large grosbeak feeding in grass at Old House on Galveston; dull white below (instead of buffy), and generous streaking on breast eliminates Black-headed. --Ted Eubanks

Northern Oriole: Seen about 25 ft away. Black hood, orange underparts and white wingbars. --Jane & John Hamilton

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS
(Totals not included in the Dec CH)

SPECIES	HCC SCCC*		FCC	ABCC	GCC		BCCC	CCCC
	12/15	12/16			12/20	12/22		
Loon,Red-thr						3		
Loon,Common	62		9	10	88			
Grebe,Least			1					
Grebe,Pd-billed	53	3	328	37	208	4	34	
Grebe,Horned	6		2	2	9			
Grebe,Eared	129		116	6	1530		8	
Goby,Masked			1					
Gannet,Northern			9		17			
Pelican,Am White	676		1359	247	1186		58	
Pelican,Brown					1			
Cormorant,D-cr.	4380		1138	154	1371	74	190	
Cormorant,Oilva.	69		8	13	51			
cormorant.sp.				30	100			
Anhinga	23		55					
Bittern,American			7					
Heron,Great Blue	256		601	49	233	11	77	
Egret,Great	192	2	657	73	311	5	193	
Egret,Snowy	195		404	23	215		4	
Heron,Little Bl.	16		37	2	15		2	
Heron,Tricolored	36		110	8	52		8	
Egret,Reddish			21		18			
Egret,Cattle	139	1	181	78	277	5	214	
Heron,Gn-backed	1	1	13		4			
Night-Heron,B-c	143		393	16	172	2	81	
Night-Heron,Y-c	2		42	1	60			
Ibis,White	1		1009		41			
Ibis,White-faced			2541		38		1	
Spoonbill,Ros.	2		83		10			
Whistling-D.,Full			1					17
Whistling-D.,G-b								
Goose,Gr Wh-F	169	7	794	256	109	39	13080	
Goose,Snow	1945	328	23964	385	398	887	339500	
(Goose,Blue)	328		9257	105	60	160		
Goose,Ross'	1		5		1	1	12	
Goose,Canada	55	2	160	15	15	7	5332	
Duck,Wood	11	6	173	4		79		
Teal,Gn-winged	182		965		275		30463	
Duck,Mottled	40		317	54	25	7	36	
Mallard	17	10	50	92	45	6	1054	
Pintail,Northern	449	11	1703		282		2081	
Teal,Blue-winged	83		516	1	32		2058	
Teal,Cinnamon			3				22	
Shoveler,N.	160		1544		225		1151	
Gadwall	265		1315	4	84		3080	
Wigeon,American	106		1647	24	150	1	513	
Canvasback	149		242		63		328	
Redhead			14		12		5	
Duck,Ring-necked	14		267	19	2		1	
Scaup,Greater	19		11		1		1	
Scaup,Lesser	4495		493	148	918	1	4039	
scaup.sp.		50	50		100			
Scoter,Black			6		19			
Scoter,Surf			6		8			
Scoter,Wh-winged			20		12			
scooter.sp.					44			
Goldeneye,Common	27		26	6	23			
Bufflehead	62		40		20		3	
Merganser,Hooded	4		16					
Merganser,Red-br	57		127	2	240			
Duck,Ruddy	275		499	6	621		1077	
Duck,sp.			320			45		
Vulture,Black	3	19	274	78		75	66	
Vulture,Turkey	44	46	314	319		110	127	
Osprey	7		6	15				
Kite,Black-sh.	4		23	5	3			
Eagle,Bald							13	
Harrier,Northern	83	3	219	33	72	31	206	
Hawk,Sharp-shin.	11	3	10	1		1	1	
Hawk,Cooper's	6	1	5	1	1	2	3	
Accipiter.sp.						1		
Hawk,Red-sh.	26	4	280	16	1	10	11	
Hawk,Wh-tailed			3					
Hawk,Red-tailed	157	19	239	30	38	86	377	
(Hawk,Harlan's)			2					
(Hawk,Krider's)			1				1	
Hawk,Ferruginous					1		1	
Hawk,R-legged	1			1				
Buteo.sp.			5					
Caracara,Crested			3				5	

Kestrel, American	176	4	383	48	74	25	217	Chickadee, Carol	225	32	1100	234	1	184	52
Merlin	1		1				1	Titmou, Tufted	128	16	730	51		178	44
Chicken, Gr Prair				4				Nuthatch, Red-br	1						
Bobwhite, N.	20		83	1		31	60	Nuthatch, Brown-h		2					
Rail, Yellow			2					Creep, Brown	10	1	36	1		10	8
Rail, Clapper	5		43	2	18			Wren, Carolina	50	23	179	72		45	22
Rail, King			9	1	3			Wren, Bewick's	1						2
Rail, Virginia			5					Wren, House	114	10	127	27	31	9	23
Sora	1		18		1			Wren, Winter	2	1	4	1			1
Moorhen, Common			132		4		1	Wren, Sedge	18	2	234	2	76	2	10
Coot, American	556		9011	149	714	3	152	Wren, Marsh	1	1	142	4	19	2	1
Crane, Sandhill			1546	3	2		75	Kinglet, Gld-cr.	11	7	113	1	2	37	40
Plover, Blk-bel.	1		169	4	685			Kinglet, Ruby-cr.	546	45	1429	318	231	310	176
Plover, Snowy			11		4			Gnatcatcher, Bl-g	48		465	8	29	52	24
Plover, Wilson's					1			Bluebird, Eastern	48	22	127	4		50	
Plover, Semipal.	1		52		50			Thrush, Hermit	40	2	115	17	2	9	24
Plover, Piping			28		64			Thrush, Wood			1				1
Killdeer	613	49	779	283	272	225	615	Robin, American	237	143	1139	618	242	359	1476
Oystercatcher, Am					44			Catbird, Gray	5	2	24	7	10	2	3
Stilt, Blk-necked			6		8			Mockingbird, N.	209	25	590	79	82	139	278
Avocet, American	6		149		3033			Thrasher, Brown	126	3	609	42	26	65	47
Yellowlegs, Gr	12		123	8	39	2	49	Pipit, Water	48		514	97	261	152	29
Yellowlegs, Less.		11	30	6	51	1	23	Pipit, Sprague's	4	39	40	1			1
Willet	156		251	19	434			Waxwing, Cedar	114		30	141	303	59	86
Sandpiper, Spot.	34		29	10	16	1	1	Shrike, Loggerh.	187		294	62	106	55	299
Whimbrel			3					Starling, Europ.	1355		824	918	1505	806	125
Curlew, L-billed			477	2	165	2		Vireo, White-eyed	2	1	2			3	
Godwit, Marbled			5		24			Vireo, Solitary	14	3	61	4		7	9
Turnstone, Ruddy	3		66	28	67			Warbler, Ten.	1		1				
Knot, Red			5		39			Warbler, Orange-c	130	7	351	37	44	64	44
Sanderling	142		703	23	1689			Warbler, Nashv.			2				
Sandpiper, West.	41		242		4745			Parula, Northern			1				
Sandpiper, Least	3		64	12	622	18	30	Warbler, Magnolia			1				
Dunlin			346	25	1325		51	Warbler, Y-rumped	639	85	647	496		140	191
peep, sp.			70		600			Warbler, B-th Gr			2				
Sandpiper, Stilt			3					Warbler, B-th Gt.			4				1
Dowitcher, S-bil.			11		178			Warbler, Y-thr.			1				
Dowitcher, L-bil.			45		4		185	Warbler, Pine	226	11	45	26		57	21
dowitcher, sp.	60		167		689			Warbler, Prairie			1	1			
Snipe, Common	4		193	17	21	3	13	Warbler, Palm	1		25		4	1	1
Woodcock, Am.	8	4	11	2	1			Warbler, Bay-br.			1				
Jaeger, Parasitic					1			Warbler, Blk-&wh			4		1	1	
Jaeger, sp.			1		1			Redstart, Am.			1				
Gull, Laughing	1193		2060	462	5145			WARBLER, PROTH.			1				1
Gull, Bonaparte's	4		178		113		1	Waterthrush, N.			1				
Gull, Ring-billed	2133		1063	245	1969	13	20	Yellowthroat, Com	10	2	474	12	84	5	8
Gull, Herring	59		123	15	266			Warbler, Wilson's	2		107	1	5	9	1
Gull, Gr Blk-back					1			Chat, Yellow-br.			3				
Kittiwake, Blk-lg			1					Tanager, Summer	1		1				
gull, sp.		3	12					Tanager, Scarlet	1		1				
Tern, Gull-billed	2		28		3			Cardinal, N.	410	136	990	162	38	173	233
Tern, Caspian	106		158	7	81			Grosbeak, Rose-br			3				
Tern, Royal	32		25	4	111			Grosbeak, Blue	1		2		2		
Tern, Sandwich					7			Bunting, Indigo	1		8		6		
Tern, Common	42		21	12	45			Towhee, Ruf-sided	20	1	28	3	4	7	21
Tern, Forster's	806		414	63	705			Sparrow, Chipping	161	86	41		20	11	8
Skimmer, Black	4		4		2200			Sparrow, Field	3	2	20	5	6	10	
Dove, Rock	591	11	226	65	677	118	117	Sparrow, Vesper	4	8	28		3	3	25
Turtle-Dove, Ring						2		Sparrow, Lark			6				
Dove, Wh-winged			3		49			Sparrow, Savannah	263	3	1111	41	134	11	345
Dove, Mourning	1197	35	781	234	227	185	448	Sparrow, Grasshop	1		4				
Dove, Inca	150		32	14	87	17	3	Sparrow, Le Con.	7		30	3	2	3	2
Ground-Dove, Com.				4	4		1	Sparrow, Sharp-t.	2		43		58		
Parakeet, Monk		2	1			6		Sparrow, Seaside	5		89		45		
Cuckoo, Y-billed				1				Sparrow, Fox	2		3				
Ani, Grv-billed	1		17	1	4		2	Sparrow, Song	18	6	53	6	5	3	14
Barn-Owl, Common	6		6	12	4	2	13	Sparrow, Lincoln	33		161	27	18	28	35
Screech-Owl, East	16		1	4	9	2		Sparrow, Swamp	43	4	435	43	107	5	11
Owl, Great Horned	10		22	1	3	10		Sparrow, White-th	1128	106	690	148	60	205	183
Owl, Barred	10	2	24	4		7	2	Sparrow, White-cr	6		16		30	15	48
Owl, Short-eared	1		7		2	1	2	Sparrow, Harris'	1		1		1		12
Whip-poor-will							1	Junco, Dark-eyed	16	2	3		2		
Hummingbird, Bu-b			2					sparrow, sp.			20				
Hummingbird, R-th			1					Longspur, Lapland							25
Hummingbird, B-ch			1					Blackbird, Red-w.	4494	181	9205	524	3055	255	3883
Hummingbird, Anna			2					Meadowlark, E.	184	5	922	232	41	67	481
HUMMINGBIRD, BR-T			1					meadowlark, sp.	40	54	215		139	25	
Hummingbird, Ruf	1		2				1	Blackbird, Rusty	7					100	6
hummingbird, sp.	2		2					Blackbird, Brewer		52	180		54	40	1131
Kingfisher, Belt.	53	7	119	25	39	17	7	Grackle, Great-t.	13		1299	34	520	469	1016
Woodpecker, Red-h	9		5	1	2			Grackle, Boat-t.	2		170		6		
Woodpecker, Red-b	65	15	225	45	2	120	23	Grackle, Common	4166	52	1974	396	816	295	143
Sapsucker, Y-bel.	31	1	128	13	9	29	9	Cowbird, Bronzed					20		
WOODPECKER, L-BAC			1					Cowbird, Brown-h	1484	54	1995	6	2025	420	8191
Woodpecker, Downy	12	8	99	18		80	24	blackbird, sp.	12500		10000	555	3450	148	
Woodpecker, Hairy	95	14	280	34	31	52	86	Oriole, Orchard				1			
Flicker, Northern	25	9	71	13	15	2	2	Siskin, Pine			1				
Woodpecker, Pile.			5					Goldfinch, Am.	525	29	1198	117	56	311	178
Empidonax, sp.								Sparrow, House	204	108	241	66	385	152	225
Phoebe, Eastern	92	12	497	33	32	43	56								
Flycatcher, Verm.	1		6		1		2	HCC		64,924					
Kingbird, Western	1		1		1			SCCC*		2,235					
Flycatcher, Sc-t			1					FCC		120,062					
Lark, Horned	1		16		20			ABCC		10,280					
Swallow, Tree	38							GCC		51,717					
Swallow, Barn			1				1	BBCC		8,478					
Jay, Blue	157	10	636	146	110	106	69	CCCC		427,652					
Crow, American	208	146	738	160		119	460								

HCC = Houston CC
SCCC* = Spring Creek CC
FCC = Freeport CC
ABCC = Armand Bayou CC
GCC = Galveston CC
BBCC = Buffalo Bayou CC
CCCC = Cypress Creek CC
*Harris Co. portion only

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