



The Spoonbill

A Publication of the Ornithology Group (OG)
of the Houston Outdoor Nature Club

February 2004

Vol. 52 No. 2

February Meeting

Monday, February 2, 2004
7:00 p.m.
Bayland Community Center
6400 Bissonnet

Learning Corner – 6:30 p.m.:
Identifying Owls in the Houston Area
--by Rob Thacker and David Potet

Program:
Armand Bayou Nature Center
--by George Regmund

George Regmund will present information about Armand Bayou Nature Center, a 2500 acre nature preserve and outdoor education facility located in southeast Harris County. He will cover the formation of the preserve, the preservation of the property, and the habitats and wildlife (particularly bird life) found there. ABNC contains three major ecosystem types and George will discuss how these areas are being managed.

George grew up in Corpus Christi, Texas, spending much time on Padre Island. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and joined the staff of Armand Bayou Nature Center in 1976. He worked there as Staff Naturalist, Senior Naturalist and Director through 2003. George has led birding and natural history field trips to many areas in Texas, as well as to southeastern Arizona, Maine, Hawaii, Costa Rica, Trinidad, New Brunswick, Baja California and the Yucatan. He now directs Skimmer Nature Tours, a natural history tour company.

Other Events

February 13 – 16, 2004
7th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

Developed & managed by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon, the GBBC will help researchers understand the status of birds all over North America. Participants simply keep track of birds they see on any or all of the count days, then log their sightings into the BirdSource database at www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

February 22, 2004
OG Field Trip to Attwater NWR
Leader: David Bradford (see p. 4)

March 1, 2004
OG March Meeting (Bayland Community Ctr.)
Program: Calvin Blakeley, on The Outdoor Nature Club's Little Thicket Preserve

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Minutes of the January 5, 2004 meeting Bayland Community Center; attendance 57

1. For the Learning Corner at 6:30 p.m., Dr. Keith McKnight presented a hunter's perspective on duck identification. Clues are wingbeat, overall shape, tail shape, flight path, wing coloration, flock size, and (hopefully) sound. For those who did not receive the handouts, additional copies will be available at the February meeting.
2. Kathy Farr called the business meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
3. By show of hands, most members present had participated in at least one Christmas Bird Count. Bill Saulmon participated in the greatest number of CBCs with six counts.
4. Bird sightings included Black-chinned Hummingbird, Greater Roadrunner, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Burrowing Owl, Yellow-throated Warbler, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Vermilion Flycatcher, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, and Monk Parakeets. Common Nighthawks have been heard.
5. Minutes of the December 1, 2003, meeting were approved as printed in "The Spoonbill".
6. Great Backyard Bird Count will be Feb. 13 - 16, 2004. Count birds anywhere in North America. Details at www.birdsource.org/gbbc
7. Newsletter submissions should be made to Al Shultz at kashultz@earthlink.net no later than Jan. 10, 2004.
8. Pat Pease requested that "The Spoonbill" be consulted for correct dues amounts. Remittance should be made as soon as possible.
9. Andy Scott brought a dozen of the new books purchased for the library. The full catalog is available on the group website. Bill Saulmon announced that Ron Weeks would be leading the Jan. 17 field trip to San Bernard NWR. Kathy Farr and Skip Almony will lead mid-week field trip to the Katy Prairie on Jan. 21. The Quarterly Trip will be to Rockport, Jan. 31 - Feb. 1. Feb. 22 there will be a field trip to Attwater NWR.
10. Skip Almony brought an update on Featherfest in Galveston, Apr. 1-4, 2004. Complete information and registration is online at www.galvestonfeatherfest.com. The Ornithology Group will have a booth, and there will be seminars and at least 20 field trips offered.
11. David Marrack asked whether there was interest in his arranging a field trip the end of Jan. or early Feb. to the Stringfellow Ranch near Peach Point.
12. Bob Honig announced an open tour of Katy Prairie Conservancy properties Sat., Jan. 24 from 3:30 until dark. While there is no charge, reservations should be made by calling 713.523.6135.
13. Dr. Keith McKnight, Regional Biologist for Ducks Unlimited (www.ducks.org) for the last five years, was introduced by Kathy Farr. Ducks Unlimited focuses on habitat enhancement, restoration and preservation. Dr. McKnight presented a history of national legislative acts from 1903 to 2000 that affect wildlife conservation. Ducks Unlimited has identified Texas as one of five top priority areas, with focus on the Gulf Coast, Northeast Texas, and the Playa Lakes (Panhandle) regions. The future of wildlife conservation lies in two acts that have never been fully passed (support wildlife-friendly legislation!), in conservation stamps and licenses, with habitat conservation organizations, and with your success in passing on your passion for wildlife and the environment to as many young people as possible.
14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.
-- Bernice Hotman

About the Ornithology Group

The Ornithology Group (OG) is a division of the Outdoor Nature Club (ONC), a non-profit organization dedicated to greater knowledge about the environment and wildlife of the Upper Texas Coast. The OG is a club of individuals interested in all aspects of birding, including bird identification, listing bird sightings, competing in birding events, and preserving bird habitat. Some members study bird behavior, biology, distribution and migration, while others just enjoy watching birds. The organization is designed to accommodate these diverse birding interests. Monthly meetings and field trips provide an opportunity to interact with and learn from experts in local and international birding.

Chair:	Kathy Farr	713-939-9375
Vice-Chair:	Michael Williams	713-228-9064
Secretary:	Bernice Hotman	713-782-7889
Treasurer:	Iris Poteet	281-492-2659
Clearinghouse:	David Sarkozi	713-520-5906

Spoonbill: Al Shultz 281-829-0970
Email: kashultz@earthlink.net

Membership information: *see back cover*

Highlights of Area Christmas Bird Counts

The **Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge CBC**, sponsored by the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, was held on Wednesday, 17 December 2004. We started the day at below freezing temperatures (31°F) and had a daytime high of 65°F with clear skies and calm winds throughout the day-- perfect CBC weather! Fifty-five participants counted 169 species for a total of 1,161,502 individual birds! This count circle is located near Eagle Lake and really captures a diversity of birds, including eastern and western species, as well as temperate and tropical birds. Highlights of the count include Least Grebe (5), Green Heron (1), Common Goldeneye (6), Ferruginous Hawk (2), American Woodcock (2), Greater Roadrunner (2), Short-eared Owl (5), Red-headed Woodpecker (3), Ladder-backed Woodpecker (2), Least Flycatcher (1), Yellow-throated Vireo (1), Lark Sparrow (18), Harris' Sparrow (13), and Baltimore Oriole (1). One Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was reported during the count week. We also had impressive numbers of Attwater's Greater Prairie Chickens (38), Bald Eagles (22), and blackbirds. Jeff Mundy, describing a mixed

blackbird flock he conservatively estimated at 150,000 individuals, commented that it "was absolutely staggering to witness....absolutely stunning.... stretching from horizon to horizon and lasting for 10 minutes. It gave me an impression of how people used to describe the Passenger Pigeon flocks."

Many thanks to all of our participants- and for those of you who couldn't make it this year, we hope you'll join us next year. We thank USFWS/ Attwater PC NWR for their participation, cooperation and permission to let us access non-public areas for the count. A very special thanks to our area leaders: Tom Taroni, Richard Uzar, Ken Sztraky, Jeff Mundy, Ray Heitmann, Brent Ortego, Marilyn Crane, and Cecilia Riley. - *Sumita Prasad*

The 19th annual **San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge CBC** was held on Friday, December 19, 2003. In the end, we had a total of 196 species on count day. This is the second highest total ever for the count, falling just short of the 199 species we had last year; we have had 190 species now for the last four years. This year's total looks especially good in light of lower than average counts from Freeport (206 species) and Mad Island (232 species) this year.

Three birds new to the count were reported: Franklin's Gull, Fish Crow and Willow Flycatcher. Other good birds included Brown-crested Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat and a tanager species (likely Western). New high counts were tallied for Anhinga (44), Great Egret (380), Ring-necked Duck (181), Bufflehead (35), Common Goldeneye (7), Clapper Rail (22), Virginia Rail (36), Sora (39), Black-chinned Hummingbird (3), Pileated Woodpecker (48), Ash-throated Flycatcher (11), Tree Swallow (192), American Crow (1720), Carolina Chickadee (576), Sprague's Pipit (12), Orange-crowned Warbler (176), Common Yellowthroat (308) and Henslow's Sparrow (2). The 77 American Robins was a record low. We also had below average numbers of Brown Thrashers and Hermit Thrushes as you may have noticed during the count. Birds missed entirely included Canvasback, Peregrine Falcon, American Oystercatcher, Sandwich Tern and Cedar Waxwing.

We would like to thank ConocoPhillips for again paying for the meal, and Ron Bisbee and the San Bernard/Mid-Coast staff for setting up for and cooking the meal and providing vehicular assistance throughout the count. We hope to see you all again next year. --*Ron Weeks, Jennifer Wilson*

The **Houston CBC** was held on December 20, 2003 with very good weather and 53 observers; 160 species were recorded and 45,821 birds were counted. The number of species was down from the 5-year average by 1 (161 is the 5-year average, last year was 170 species). Notable species were: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (first record for the count), Solitary Sandpiper (3rd count record), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (8th record), and Yellow-breasted Chat (11th record). Four Peregrine Falcons were recorded, the second highest count in the count's history (5 was the high in 1998). Bald Eagle was reported for the 3rd year in a row and 7th out of 8 years. I would like to thank everyone who came out for a great count. --*David Sarkozi*

Fourteen folks were able to participate on the **Trinity River CBC** on December 28, 2003. The weathermen were wrong again and the weather was just fine. A total of 93 species were observed, up from the count low of 80 species seen in 2002. We still have trouble reaching the century mark as a few of the regulars were not seen. As in 2002, we were unable to locate a Henslow's Sparrow. We picked up one new bird, the Great Horned Owl. Hope to see all of you next year. Preliminary date is Dec 26. We have traditionally held the count the first Sunday after Christmas. Because Christmas comes on a Saturday in 2004, this may pose a problem. Let me know your thoughts. --*Stuart Marcus*

The **CYTX CBC**, known as the **Cypress Creek/Katy Prairie CBC**, 1 January 2004 edition was a notable success. We had 59 observers who found 137 species and counted 210,315 birds. John Erickson reported the only new species for the count, a Glossy Ibis. However, some exciting birds included Greater Roadrunner, Couch's Kingbird (2 parties), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (2 parties), 2 *Myiarchus* flycatchers (reported as Great-crested but Brown-crested was not ruled out), Ash-throated Flycatcher (2 parties) and an Audubon's Warbler. Some interesting results were 10 Sora rails (we've never had more than 2 and have only had the species on a handful of counts), White-tailed Hawk by 6 of 8 parties, only 2 Bald Eagles, 2 Peregrines, 179 Northern Bobwhite (reported by every party), 7 Vermilion Flycatchers by 4 parties, and 8 Lark Sparrows. Several ducks and waterbirds, Hermit Thrush, and Winter Wren were reported by only one party. We missed Golden-crowned Kinglet and Brown Creeper, which most counts missed this year, but this count rarely misses Golden Crowned Kinglet and usually gets Brown Creeper. Geese numbers were again low, with only 40,000 present on count day but a new high of 663 Ross's Geese. Sandhill Cranes numbers were low as well with only 424 reported. --*Fred Collins*

On 3 January 2004, approximately 120 participants in the **Buffalo Bayou CBC** observed 123 species (all numbers still unofficial as of this writing). This year's species count is the third highest in the 27-year count history. (Last year, the Buffalo Bayou CBC was the most popular in Texas with a count record high 136 participants, and observed a count record high 132 species.) This is the only count in Houston, and it annually records an impressive diversity of species in an urban setting. The large areas of open space on the east (Memorial Park) and especially the west (Barker and Addicks Reservoirs) sides of the count circle provide outstanding habitat, while the sections of the circle between the West Loop and Highway 6 continue to lose green space. Species of note include Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, American Woodcock, Monk Parakeet, Scissor-tailed and Vermilion Flycatchers, Gray Catbird, Winter Wren, Eastern Towhee, and Rusty Blackbird. White-winged Doves were reported in their highest numbers ever for this count, indicating that their Houston numbers are still increasing. Do the numbers of Neotropic Cormorants, also observed in their highest numbers ever for this CBC, represent a trend as well, or just a mild winter? Notable misses include Golden-crowned Kinglet and Brown Creeper. The Creeper was seen during Count Week, as were Black-and-white Warbler, Ovenbird, and Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco. Many thanks to Don Greene of Whitewater Experience who provided a canoe to survey

Buffalo Bayou and has offered to provide multiple canoes for future counts; and to the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center which has hosted our morning organizational meeting for many years and is now hosting our web site (<http://www.houstonnaturecenter.org/cbc/txbfintro.htm>) as well. -- Bob Honig

FIELD TRIPS

For more information on any of the field trips below, contact field trip coordinator Bill Saulmon at 281-537-6924 or at dean1960@aol.com.

January 31 - Feb. 1, 2004 Field Trip to the Rockport Area

Drive on your own or carpool to Rockport (about 190 miles SW of Houston) where we'll stay Friday (Jan. 30) & Saturday (Jan 31) nights at the Holiday Inn Express and then return home on Sunday afternoon (Feb. 1) in time for the Super Bowl. Our agenda will include birding the hot spots at Port Aransas, Rockport, and a boat trip to get close up views of the Whooping Cranes at Aransas NWR. Kathy Farr and Bill Saulmon will lead the trip.

February 22, 2004 (SUNDAY) Field Trip to Attwater NWR

Please note our monthly field trip in February will be on a Sunday. David Bradford will be our guest leader to Attwater NWR in search of wintering waterfowl, raptors, sparrows, etc. Meet at the refuge headquarters at 8:00. To get there from Houston travel west on I-10 to Sealy and turn South on highway 36 for about a mile to FM 3103. Turn right (West) on FM 3103 and after about 8 miles, look for the Attwater NWR sign on the right marking the entrance road. Follow the entrance road to the refuge headquarters/office.

March Trip: Our field trip in March will be to the ONC's very own Little Thicket Sanctuary. Look for details in next month's Spoonbill.

CRANES

"The cranes are the greatest of the flying birds and, to my mind, the most stirring, not less so because the horn notes of their voices, like clarion calls out of the farthest skies, summon our attention to our own swift passage on this precious earth. Perhaps more than any other living creatures, they evoke the retreating wilderness, the vanishing horizons of clean water, earth, and air upon which their species – and ours, too, though we learn it very late – must ultimately depend for survival."

-- Peter Matthiessen, *The Birds of Heaven*, 2001, North Point Press, p. 4

Winter is crane-watching season in Texas. Sandhill Cranes are scattered across the coastal prairies, and Whooping Cranes are wintering on the salt marshes just over a hundred miles southwest of Houston. These two species are symbolic of the peril and potential recovery of our wildlife. Seeing the Whooping Cranes at Aransas, whose numbers have risen nearly tenfold in the past few decades, gives us hope that some conservation efforts have measurable benefits. And who isn't thrilled by the distant calls of Sandhills over the grasslands during the cooler months?

The Whooper and Sandhill are only two of the fifteen species of cranes worldwide, of which eleven are endangered or threatened. In describing the natural history and conservation of all these cranes in *The Birds of Heaven*, author Peter Matthiessen takes us into the field on Asian steppes, African savannahs and tropical Australian marshes. There are accounts of cranes and crane-watchers in poor Indian villages, and in the uneasy demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. There is a wealth of information on cranes—their taxonomy, social life, vocalizations, and migrations. The book is not a field guide, and is not for browsing. But a patient reader will be well rewarded, much as a patient birder is repaid for time spent looking and listening. Matthiessen is one of the outstanding writers and observers of our time, and his award-winning works are all the more notable for comprising both fiction and non-fiction. *The Birds of Heaven* is a worthy continuation of this effort and is, like many other of his writings, both scrupulous in reporting and impassioned in conservationism.

The story of the recovery of the Whooping Crane has a couple of new chapters. The Aransas flock now numbers at least 194 individuals, the most in a hundred years. And the following report, on the 2003 migration of additional captive-bred Whoopers from Wisconsin to Florida, gives hope for the re-establishment of a separate migratory population to further strengthen the viability of the species. -- Al Shultz

Assisted Migration

December 8, 2003 -- Sixteen whooping cranes following three ultralight aircraft reached their winter home today, completing a 1,225-mile migration from Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in central Wisconsin to Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge along Florida's central Gulf Coast. The Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership (WCEP), an international coalition of public and private organizations, is conducting this ultralight-led reintroduction project in an effort to return this highly imperiled species to its historic range in eastern North America.

These birds are the third generation of whooping cranes to make this unique assisted migration from Wisconsin to Florida. All but one of the 20 cranes from the ultralight-led migration classes of 2001 and 2002 have completed their own unassisted southward migrations. The whooping crane chicks that take part in the reintroduction project are hatched at the U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Md., where they are introduced to ultralight aircraft and raised in isolation from humans. To ensure the impressionable cranes remain wild, project biologists and pilots adhere to a strict no-talking rule, broadcast recorded crane calls and wear costumes designed to mask the human form whenever they are around the cranes. New classes of cranes are brought to Necedah NWR each June to begin a summer of conditioning behind the ultralights to prepare them for their first fall journey. Pilots guide the birds on gradually longer training flights at the refuge throughout the summer until the young cranes are deemed ready to follow the aircraft along the migration route.

Whooping cranes were on the verge of extinction in the 1940s, and today, only about 300 cranes live in the wild. Aside from the 20 Wisconsin-Florida birds, the only other migrating population of whooping cranes nests at the Wood Buffalo National Park in the Northwest Territories of Canada and winters at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the Texas Gulf Coast. A non-migrating flock of approximately 100 birds lives year-round in the central Florida Kissimmee region. The seven-state flyway from Wisconsin to Florida is part of the historic range of the whooping crane and this additional migrating population would be a significant step toward the eventual recovery of the species. Many other flyway states, provinces, private individuals and conservation groups support the partnership by donating resources, funding and personnel. More than 60 percent of the estimated \$1.8 million budget comes from private sources in the form of grants, donations and corporate sponsors.

(From a news release by the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership, a consortium of non-profit organizations and government agencies. Founding members are the International Crane Foundation, Operation Migration Inc., Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and National Wildlife Health Center, International Whooping Crane Recovery Team, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin.)

Chairman's Message

By Kathy Farr

Our January program brought up an interesting issue – how do birders join with hunters and conservation groups to contribute to the acquisition, restoration, and maintenance of important habitat sites for the birds we love to watch? There is no national or state program specifically targeting birders or non-hunted bird species to which we can contribute money.

However, there are several ways in which we can help pay our way. Buying a Texas conservation Bluebonnet license plate (<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/plate/>) contributes \$22 of the annual \$30 cost to Texas state parks. Buying an annual Texas State Parks Pass (<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/parkpass>) or a National Parks Pass (http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm) every year, rather than just paying a small entry fee per visit, puts money directly into the park system. Many of us belong to OG as well as at least one other birding organization, such as HAS or TOS. But have we made specific contributions to organizations that are in the business of acquiring land for habitat preservation? Yes, many of us

...continued p. 6

Texas Eleven Percenters An Idea Whose Time Has Come

Ted Eubanks has created a channel to funnel money into Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW), giving birders a separate conservation voice. The existing "Nongame & Endangered Species Conservation Fund" was originally created for proceeds of the Texas nongame stamp, which no longer exists. Ted proposes that birders contribute to this fund in 2004 as Texas "Eleven Percenters" (see Jan 6th TEXBIRDS post @ www.texbirds.org for full discussion).

Hunters and fisherfolk pay 11% in added taxes on hunting and fishing merchandise for conservation. Ted asks birders to pay the same 11% voluntarily on birding merchandise for bird and habitat conservation and to promote recreational birding in Texas. He has already sent in his personal (\$385) and company donations (3 x \$385=\$1100). The following is paraphrased from Ted's January 6th post, "Texas Eleven Percenters." Advantages to this approach are: (1) this is a strictly voluntary and self-assessed "tax"; (2) voluntary contribution demonstrates birders' commitment to bird and habitat conservation; (3) donating directly to an existing state fund avoids additional administrative ...p. 6

Chairman's Message (cont.)

have. What if every OG member gave up what we normally spend on one birding day, and spent that money directly on conservation? If we did this every year we would make a noticeable impact. We can buy a Duck Stamp (<http://duckstamps.fws.gov/stamps.htm>) as Dr. Keith McKnight suggested. Or we can donate to groups like The Katy Prairie Conservancy (www.katyprairie.org), The (Houston) Bayou Preservation Association (www.bayoupreservation.org), Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (www.gbco.org), The Nature Conservancy (www.nature.org), and The Trust for Public Lands (www.tpl.org), which are all operating in Houston and Texas to purchase, restore and maintain habitat for all of nature. How about if we donate to our parent group, the Outdoor Nature Club, for The Little Thicket?

What is clear is that we do need to make a bigger impact on conservation for the hobby/passion that occupies so much of our life energy. We birders spend so much money each year on equipment, books, travel, and lodging that our purchases are now visibly significant. We need to make a similar impact on habitat conservation. If we do not contribute in the currently available ways today, there is no assurance that there will be ways to recapture the resulting habitat losses tomorrow.

Eleven Percenters (cont.)

expenses; and (4) we can implement this program now. Ted is working with John Herron of TPW to create the nation's first 'Eleven Percenter' fund as a Texas model which he wants to export to the remaining states.

To recognize Texas Eleven Percenters for their contributions, Ted is helping TPW create a patch to be sent to contributors each year. Modeled after the High Island patch program, it will show a different Texas bird each year, with "TEXAS" at the top, the year at the bottom, and "11%" across the bird image.

This program is not meant to take away from other conservation efforts, but to create a separate conservation voice for the birding community. Birders, as a group, have no unified voice as yet. Therefore, our impact on conservation is not echoing our demand for the protection of birds and habitat to the powers that be. This program can give us that important voice. If every Texas birder sent in just \$20, the result would be in the low millions, and all of it slated for our beloved birds and their habitat.

To quote Ted, "We do not need to wait for political will or consensus. We simply need to devise a simple plan and implement it. My checks are in the mail. They are both marked as contributions from a Texas 'Eleven Percenter.' Join me."

Send checks to: Texas Parks & Wildlife, Attn: John Herron, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744. Make payable to the "TPW Nongame and Endangered Resources Conservation Fund," and mark as "Texas Eleven Percenter" contribution.

From The Spoonbill's Past

Compiled by Skip Almoney



THE SPOONBILL

Fifty Years Ago... O. G. FIELD TRIP -

March 7th. Because this field trip will take place early in March we are giving details in this issue. The trip planned for March 7th is a most important and interesting one as it will be a visit to the booming grounds of the Atwater Prairie Chicken. This is the best time of the year to observe and hear the Prairie Chicken cocks put on their full booming courtship display. We are very fortunate to be able to observe them so close to Houston. Only about 8000 of these Atwater Prairie Chickens now survive and these 8000 are found only in Coastal Texas. Since they seem to be on their way to extinction (unless strong conservation measures are taken) the present generation may be the last to see this amazing spectacle in Coastal Texas. MEETING PLACE: Sanders Drive Inn, at the intersection of the La Porte Road and the San Jacinto Monument Road. TIME: We must assemble at 5:00 AM as the booming lasts only about a half-hour, beginning just before dawn.

Clearing House – December 2003

by David Sarkozi -- david@sarkozi.net -- phone 713-412-4409

Very few reports for the month, although that is expected with the Christmas Bird Count Season. A total 114 species were reported from 390 reports. Observers reporting this month were : Al and Kathie Shultz, Bob Honig, Jaime Gonzalez, Kelly Walker, Kathy Reiser, Cliff Dancer, Richard Rulander, and Steven Gross. Species whose status is listed as Abundant to Uncommon on the Checklist are summarized

Pied-billed Grebe birds=10 reports=3
Brown Pelican birds=12 reports=1
Anhinga birds=1 reports=1
Great Blue Heron birds=23 reports=10
Great Egret birds=28 reports=9
Snowy Egret birds=17 reports=6
Little Blue Heron birds=3 reports=2
Tricolored Heron birds=3 reports=3
Cattle Egret birds=56 reports=4
Green Heron 12/17 Waller (Katy Prairie, Waller & Harris) 12 Kathy Reiser, Cliff Dancer
White Ibis birds=37 reports=4
White-faced Ibis birds=55 reports=5
Roseate Spoonbill birds=15 reports=1
Black Vulture birds=8 reports=2
Turkey Vulture birds=81 reports=9
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck birds=12 reports=1
Greater White-fronted Goose birds=581 reports=5
Snow Goose birds=11,050 reports=7
Ross's Goose birds=1 reports=1
Canada Goose birds=20 reports=1
Gadwall birds=4 reports=1
American Wigeon birds=2 reports=1
Mallard birds=2 reports=1
Blue-winged Teal birds=8 reports=2
Northern Shoveler birds=162 reports=5
Northern Pintail birds=1,064 reports=4
Green-winged Teal birds=26 reports=3
Osprey birds=5 reports=4
Bald Eagle birds=2 reports=2
Northern Harrier birds=26 reports=7
Sharp-shinned Hawk birds=1 reports=1
Cooper's Hawk birds=3 reports=2
Red-shouldered Hawk birds=5 reports=4
White-tailed Hawk birds=1 reports=1
Red-tailed Hawk birds=56 reports=9
Crested Caracara birds=40 reports=7
American Kestrel birds=26 reports=8
Northern Bobwhite birds=6 reports=1
Common Moorhen birds=62 reports=3
American Coot birds=40 reports=3
Sandhill Crane birds=224 reports=3
Killdeer birds=182 reports=11
Greater Yellowlegs birds=20 reports=5
Lesser Yellowlegs birds=57 reports=4
Solitary Sandpiper 12/7 Waller (FM362, Morrison, Hebert Rds.) 1 Al & Kathie Shultz
Willet birds=2 reports=1
Long-billed Curlew birds=35 reports=3
Least Sandpiper birds=154 reports=5
dowitcher sp. birds=30 reports=1
Long-billed Dowitcher birds=94 reports=3
Wilson's Snipe birds=50 reports=1
Laughing Gull birds=12 reports=1
Ring-billed Gull birds=36 reports=2
Herring Gull birds=2 reports=1
Lesser Black-backed Gull 12/14 Brazoria (Quintana jetty - Freeport CBC) 2 Steven Gross
Forster's Tern birds=2 reports=1
Rock Dove birds=266 reports=3
Eurasian Collared-Dove birds=5 reports=1
White-winged Dove birds=25 reports=1
Mourning Dove birds=105 reports=10
Inca Dove birds=28 reports=3
Monk Parakeet 12/20 Harris (W Loop-BuffSpdwy + Braes Bayou) 1 Bob Honig
Great Horned Owl birds=2 reports=1
Barred Owl birds=1 reports=1
hummingbird sp. birds=1 reports=1
Buff-bellied Hummingbird 12/4 Harris(Clear Lake City) 1 Richard Rulander, 12/16 Harris(Clear Lake City, Pinebrook Community Park) 1 Richard Rulander, 12/19 Harris(Clear Lake City - Pinebrook Comm. Park) 1 Richard Rulander, 12/24 Harris(Clear Lake City- Pinebrook Comm Park) 1 Richard Rulander
Rufous Hummingbird birds=3 reports=3
Belted Kingfisher birds=1 reports=1
Red-bellied Woodpecker birds=11 reports=5
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker birds=3 reports=1
Downy Woodpecker birds=5 reports=2
Pileated Woodpecker birds=2 reports=2
Eastern Phoebe birds=25 reports=7
Vermilion Flycatcher birds=1 reports=1
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher 12/7 Harris(FM529 at Katy-Hockley Cutoff) 1 Al & Kathie Shultz
Loggerhead Shrike birds=55 reports=8
Blue Jay birds=16 reports=4
American Crow birds=53 reports=9
Tree Swallow 12/21 Brazoria(Brazoria NWR) 4 Kathy Reiser, Cliff Dancer
Carolina Chickadee birds=17 reports=7
Tufted Titmouse birds=23 reports=2
Carolina Wren birds=11 reports=4
Sedge Wren birds=1 reports=1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet birds=16 reports=7
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher birds=4 reports=3
Eastern Bluebird birds=16 reports=2
American Robin birds=1 reports=1
Northern Mockingbird birds=30 reports=8
European Starling birds=677 reports=8
American Pipit birds=33 reports=5
Sprague's Pipit birds=3 reports=1
Orange-crowned Warbler birds=14 reports=3
Yellow-rumped Warbler birds=38 reports=6
Pine Warbler birds=3 reports=2
Palm Warbler birds=1 reports=1
Common Yellowthroat birds=3 reports=2
Vesper Sparrow birds=8 reports=2
Savannah Sparrow birds=184 reports=8
Song Sparrow birds=14 reports=4
Swamp Sparrow birds=2 reports=2
White-throated Sparrow birds=12 reports=3
White-crowned Sparrow birds=22 reports=2
sparrow sp. birds=1 reports=1
Northern Cardinal birds=55 reports=6
Red-winged Blackbird birds=3,442 reports=6
Eastern Meadowlark birds=175 reports=7
Brewer's Blackbird birds=62 reports=2
Common Grackle birds=250 reports=3
Boat-tailed Grackle birds=2 reports=1
Great-tailed Grackle birds=157 reports=6
Brown-headed Cowbird birds=1,825 reports=5
House Finch birds=10 reports=1
American Goldfinch birds=8 reports=4
House Sparrow birds=55 reports=3

Outdoor Nature Club
Ornithology Group
P.O. Box 270894
Houston TX 77277-0894

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TO START OR RENEW A MEMBERSHIP:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Family</i>
ONC Annual Dues:	\$ 8.00	\$ 15.00
OG Annual Dues:	\$ 14.00	\$ 19.00
Total:	\$ 22.00	\$ 34.00

Send dues to:
Outdoor Nature Club
PO Box 270894
Houston TX 77277-0894

** Membership dues are
now payable for 2004 –
have you paid yours?*

Save these dates !
April 1-4, 2004

Galveston's Featherfest

Check the Featherfest Website
<http://www.galvestonfeatherfest.com/>