



THE SPOONBILL

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

Laura Greenbaum Resigns

It is with deep regret we announce the resignation of Laura Greenbaum as editor of THE SPOONBILL, a position she has held with distinction for nearly two years. As you know, our newsletter is published for just one purpose: to disseminate information and knowledge on birding, especially in this area. Laura has consistently maintained the high goals set by former editors in past years in keeping the contents restricted to the enjoyment of birding. We all join in thanking her for her long and devoted service.

Margaret Jones is the new editor of THE SPOONBILL. Articles about birding and birders should be sent to her at 4902 Fern St., Bellaire, Texas 77401. Her telephone number is 665-4197. Margaret has resigned as Vice-Chairman (Membership), and a new Vice-Chairman will be announced later.

As most of you remember, when the cost of printing mounted so high, a committee investigating alternatives, recommended: raising dues or curtailing the number of issues in a year. Neither of these solutions was wanted, so a mimeograph was borrowed, and the editors, (then David and Dorothy Leftkovits) started typing stencils instead of master sheets. Our growing bank balance testifies to the economy of this method, since the only cost to us is the paper, the mimeograph supplies, and postage. Therefore, an editor must assemble material for THE SPOONBILL, decide the contents, and edit it (a load materially lightened from other years since Dan Hardy does the Clearing House). In addition, the editor is responsible for a good clear stencil for the mimeograph. In these duties, Laura has set very high standards for the new editor to follow.

1974-75 ROSTER

The 1974-75 Rosters are being mailed now to the members of the OG. Both members and subscribers are listed, and if any subscriber would like to have a copy (there are some extra ones), please call or write Mrs. Richard Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston, Texas -- 723-8559.

MERCER PARK ARBORETUM

This newest Harris County Park was opened just this spring, having been acquired from Mr. & Mrs. Charles Mercer, who desired that their 14½ acre homesite be maintained as an arboretum and enjoyed by the public. It is open from 9 to 6 Monday through Friday, and 2 to 6 on Sunday. Volunteers are in attendance on Sundays to show people around and answer questions about the plants, shrubs, and flowers.

Also, people interested in various subjects have been called on to be there on Sundays to present a program, or give information, or just answer questions about their particular specialty. For instance, the OG was called on recently, and Harry and Avis, with Paul and Margaret Jones, took some printed material about the ONC and OG out there, and stayed to answer questions about birding from any interested visitor. They had already "cased the joint" the week before, and found 14 species of birds. Unfortunately, the rains came that day. The Entomology Group is to have some representatives there on August 25th.

To reach the park, turn right off IH45 onto FM 1960, and proceed east to the intersection of 1960 and Aldine-Westfield road, turn left and proceed north 1.3 miles to entrance on right. Park on grass just inside the gate, and walk up the winding drive to headquarters.

CLEARING HOUSE, JULY 1974

- Pelican, White: (320)21, Atkinson Island, FC
 " Brown: (1)21, Atkinson Island, observed from Audubon plane, FC
 Anhinga: (1)1,14, SW Freeway at Oyster Creek, Sugarland, (1,dead)12, Texas 6 just south of Dewalt, HH
 Heron, Green: (2)12, Clear Lake Shores, HH
 Egret, Reddish: (2 pair)21, Rollover, FC
 Common: (110 pair)21, Rollover, FC
 Snowy: (200 pair)21, Rollover, FC
 Heron, Louisiana: (20 pair)21, Rollover, FC
 Nightheron, Black-crowned: (3)12, Clear Lake Shores, HH; (100 pair)21, Rollover, FC
 " Yellow-crowned: (4-incl. 1 juvenile)4, (2)12, Texas 6 near Lake south of Dewalt, (1)12, Clear Lake Shores, HH
 Bittern, Least: (HC)27, Manor Lake, FC
 " American: (1)Aug. 1, Smither's Lake, Rabb's Prairie Rd., BK&ER
 Stork, Wood: (10)7, San Jacinto Monument, (4)12, Texas 6 at Frost Ranch, (10)14, Pecan grove at Richmond, HH; (7)21, near Smither's Lake, MB&DH; (30)25, Port Neches, Jo Taylor
 Spoonbill, Roseate: (3)5, Morgan's Point, (9)7, San Jacinto Monument, HH
 TREEDUCK, BLACK-BELLIED: (2)21, Rabb's Prairie Rd., Ft. Bend Co., MB&DH-see notes
 Teal, Blue-winged: (11)27, Galveston, FC
 Vulture, Black: (1)Aug. 1, Smither's Lake area, BK&ER
 Kite, White-tailed: (2a,2i)12,20, (2a,1i)27, Smither's Lake area, HH; (1a,2i)21, Smither's Lake area, MB&DH; (2)Aug. 1, Smither's Lake area, BK&ER
 " Mississippi: (1a)1, (2a)8, (3)12, Richmond State School, (1)6, Sugarland, (3)14, 3 miles NE Richmond along Hwy. 59, (1)14, Pecos grove 1 mi. NE Richmond, (2)14, 1 mi. NE Harlem RR crossing, (1)22, (5)24,27, (4)29, (3)31, Richmond, HH; (3)21, Richmond State School, (3)21, Brazos R. near 1462, MB&DH; (1)5, Richmond, Elric McHenry & Ben Feltner; (12)Aug. 1, Smither's Lake on Rabb's Prairie Rd., BK&ER
 Hawk, Red-tailed: (2)21, Brazos R. near 1462, MB&DH
 " Marsh: (1)6, near WASA on IH45, (1)28, Mykawa Rd., VEG&B
 Rail, King: (1a)June 23, FM720, (1a, 8 chicks)June 21, Rabb's Prairie Rd., HH
 " Clapper: (7)23, near Bolivar Lighthouse, JR&VE
 Oystercatcher, American: (2)7, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 Plover, Piping: (6)23, Bolivar Flats, JR&VE
 " Wilson's: (12)6, Bolivar to High Island on beach, VEG&B; (6)23 Bolivar, JR&VE
 " Black-bellied: (15)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 Turnstone, Ruddy: (1)7, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 Curlew, Long-billed: (3)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B; (2)23, Bolivar Flats, JR&VE
 Sandpiper, Solitary: (1)22, Mykawa & Willardville Rd., JR&VE
 Willet: (35)6, Bolivar to High Island on beach, VEG&B
 Yellowlegs, Greater: (5)23, Bolivar Flats, JR&VE
 Dowitcher species: (5)23, Bolivar Flats, JR&VE
 Sandpiper, Western: (15)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B; (500p)23, Bolivar Flats, JR&VE
 Sanderling: (100p)6, Bolivar to High Island on beach, VEG&B
 Stilt, Black-necked: (2)1a, 2 chicks)June 21, Rabb's Prairie Rd., HH
 GULL, GREAT BLACK-BACKED: (1)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B; (1)23, JR&VE
 Gull, Herring: (37)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 " Ring-billed: (14)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 " Laughing: (600p)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 Tern, Gull-billed: (20)21, Atkinson Island, FC
 " Least: (40)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B; (10)23, Bolivar, JR&VE
 " Royal: (250p)6, Bolivar to High Island on beach, VEG&B
 " Caspian: (7)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B
 " Sandwich: (20)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B; (30)23, Bolivar Flats, JR&VE
 " Black: (12)6, Bolivar Flats, VEG&B;
 Skimmer, Black: (1500)21, Atkinson Island, (8 pair)21, Rollover, FC
 Owl, Screech: (3 - incl. 2 juvenile)6, 20, yard, DH
 Woodpecker, Pileated: (2)10, Richmond State School, HH
 Lark, Horned: (1a,2i)21, near 762 so. of Smither's Lake, MB&DH
 Swallow, Rough-winged: (3)21, Fort Bend co., FM762, MB&DH
 Sparrow, Henslow's: (9)4, (3)20, (13)27, SW of Hobby Airport, NP; (6, incl. 1 juvenile)22, same site, JR&VE
 " Lark: (1)21, Crabb, Fort Bend co., MB&DH

CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

ME	Mike Braun	FC	Fred Collins	VE	Victor Emanuel
DH	Dan Hardy	HH	Holly Hobart	BK	Barbara Kendrick
NP	Noel Pettingell	ER	Elaine Robinson	JR	John Rowlett

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

BLACK-BELLIED TREEDUCK: Two birds watched in flight over rice field twice, each time no more than 30 seconds. Prominent, bold patches of white on the upper wing flashed in flight. Belly was black. Legs pink. Breast, neck brown. Long, goose-like neck revealed it as a treeduck. Holly Hobart found these ducks here earlier in the summer. --Dan Hardy

Correction to July notes: In the notes for the Mississippi Kite, change "Red-tail" to "Red-shouldered" in the second line. --Holly Hobart

YEAR LIST CONTEST: Please send in your totals as of the end of August for the next listing to the Clearing House Editor.

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING, ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, AUGUST 1, 1974

Chairman Harry Brister called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. and remarked that it was good to see so many of the regulars present, as well as many new faces. Fifty-nine people attended the meeting, 10 of whom were guests.

Motion was properly made, seconded and carried to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the May meeting, there being no corrections or additions to these Minutes as printed in the June issue of THE SPOONBILL.

The Treasurer's Report for the period May 1 to July 31, 1974, was accepted as read. Receipts were \$177.00, disbursements were \$84.98, leaving a balance on hand of \$869.12.

Margaret Jones described the newest acquisition to the county park system, the Mercer Park Arboretum. Not very many people know about this park as yet, and she said it was well worth a visit. In one and one-half hours the T. Paul Jones and the Bristers sighted 14 species of birds.

Harry reminded the Group that the Christmas Count is not too far off and suggested that we might begin making plans to participate, since the more people who join in, the more fun we have. The Count is tentatively set for Saturday, December 28.

The Chairman read a letter received from Texas Parks & Wildlife, which said they were trying to locate a copy of Volume 7 of the Houston Ornithological Society Bulletin, published in 1882, containing an article listing birds found in Harris Co. This is especially interesting because of the date. Anyone having knowledge of such a volume is requested to contact Mr. Brister.

Attention was called to the Houston Audubon Society's recent publication, ARMAND BAYOU PARK & NATURE CENTER, FIELD SURVEY AND GUIDELINES DEVELOPMENT, in which Appendix H lists the birds found at Armand Bayou. The cost of \$5.00. Mr. Brister commented that we have Paul and Phyllis Nimmons to thank for their work in finding these birds and passing their information along to Audubon.

Mr. Raymond H. McDavid sent word that the National Forest Service in the Conroe area wants to know what interested people would like to have done with a certain portion of the Sam Houston National Forest located south of Highway 1375 west of New Waverly. One meeting concerning this subject has been held and another is scheduled in September at the Gulf Coast Trade Center. The Forest Service wants to avoid the destruction of anything thought worth saving should the area be developed. Motorcyclists have already expressed their desire to be permitted to run their vehicles throughout the entire area. Any suggestions should be relayed to Mr. McDavid.

Katrina Ladwig passed around a picture of a Blue-footed Booby discovered at Surfside Beach. John Tveten reported that the Crimson-collared Grosbeak has been seen in Bentsen State Park, a first U.S. record. Also, the Gray Kingbird was sighted at Galveston this past April, and we will get copies of the pictures that were made. See the Nimmons for directions on how to find the Brown Jays currently nesting at Roma in the Valley.

Following a discussion, motion was properly made, seconded and carried that our Chairman be empowered to purchase a new tripod, estimated to cost between \$20 and \$30, for the telescope owned by the Ornithology Group. The scope is available for members of the Group to borrow and should be brought along on every field trip.

Extra copies of the SPOONBILL are available back to 1971. Anyone who wants some of them is invited to get in touch with Nell Ray.

An interesting article in the August issue of the SMITHSONIAN was called to our attention. It deals with rescuing injured and sick birds in Florida.

Mr. Brister expressed his appreciation to the following members for their help with the recent trip to Southeast Arizona: Louise Rogers, who had the participants over to her home for the kickoff arrangements; Melba Drake, who handled the money for the trip, including getting the airline tickets after AMTRAK let us down on transportation; Sarah Gordon, who took over and accepted the responsibility for seeing that the group still had a good time when the Bristers had to return to Texas; Neil Ray, who entertained us at her home for the wrap-up following our trip. Then Melba took this opportunity to say it was her honor and pleasure to present to Avis and Harry, our intrepid leaders, a copy of BIRDS OF ARIZONA, for their work on the Arizona trip and extended our heartfelt thanks for their time and generosity of spirit exhibited in making the trip the success it was. The Bristers, accepting the gift with an expression of appreciation, said the contents would tempt them back to Arizona.

There being no further business, the meeting was turned over to Sarah Gordon, Program Chairman, who described briefly some of the difficulties overcome by those who went on the trip to Arizona. Crediting Dr. Frank Hsu, Jim Beaty, Harry Brister, Marilyn Crane, Howard and Gwen Kunz, Fred Stigale, and Ella Wolfer for the slides recording many of the things we experienced and saw, Sarah emphasized how parched that part of the country was. She especially directed our attention to the slides covering the area around and including Mt. Lemmon by saying that its terrain and vegetation parallels vertically what can be found on a trip from Mexico to Canada. Narration for the slides was provided by Louise Rogers. They covered the journey from beginning to end and included shots of plant life, scenic views, wildlife, habitat, and birders, as well as birds. Several of the pictures drew applause. At the conclusion, Paul Nimmons, at Sarah's request, sang again his own composition about the Coppery-tailed Trogon he traveled so far to see and finally found.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 P.M. Respectfully submitted, Louise Rogers

UNUSUAL BASEBALL FAN by Nancy Strickling

June 25th we entered the Astrodome, made two turns down ramps when ahead of us we saw a half-grown bird flutter under other feet in front of us. Quickly I grabbed for the bird, catching it the second swoop. To my surprise, it was a Scissor-tail--no, a Western Kingbird that certainly had no business, or a ticket, to be at the ballgame. We found a cardboard box at a ticket booth, punched holes in it, and left it with the bird inside with a concessionaire until the game was over.

That night at home we force fed "K.B." with a few bits of lean ground beef and other goodies, and placed him in a bird cage. This we continued doing for several days until he accepted us as friends and began taking food and water willingly. By the weekend we were sure he was strong and ready to be released but it was not convenient to release "K.B." until the following Wednesday. Jerry stuffed him well, drove to the Dome until he spotted several other Western Kingbirds near some trees and shrubs. The other birds were high on utility lines, so our "king" was placed on a limb, then enticed to go a few limbs higher, until he finally joined the other birds. But not until begging for a "handout" one more time! He made a delightful pet for 10 days; however, he was alert, on guard and hesitant to accept us the first four days. After we switched his diet to meal worms he became very anxious to be fed and rewarded us with amusing shrill squeaks, pips and twitters. We completely enjoyed his visit with us.

REPORT ON SABINE WILDLIFE REFUGE

Because she enjoys THE SPOONBILL, especially the Clearing House, so much, Mrs. William Cox of Bridge City sent a report of the number of species she recently saw in one day at the Sabine Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana. This is reached by exiting from IH10 onto La.27 heading toward Cameron. She suggests one checks at the Visitor Center for information about some oil field roads in the vicinity where birders are welcome. In about 6 hours July 28th, she saw some 60 species, mostly marsh and water birds. She says 11 Wilson's Phalaropes were the most unusual birds seen that day. We certainly thank Merry Cox for sharing some of her birding with us, and it makes us wonder if some of our other subscribers have a favorite birding spot they would like to tell us about. If so, let the new Editor hear about it.

WEEK-LONG FIELD TRIP TO SOUTHEAST ARIZONA - by Louise Rogers

By plane, train, bus, and private vehicles, thirty-one birders from the Houston area (including four out-of-state friends) finally made it to Arizona on the most extensive field trip the Ornithology Group has ever attempted. Originally the trip was planned as a safari by bus, but the energy crisis, as well as other factors, eliminated that means of transportation. Since most of the people who signed up for the trip wished to go as a group, AMTRAK was approached. However, at almost the last minute the railroad let us down, but the airline came through.

On Saturday, June 1, two-thirds of the group took wing for Tucson. Boarding the plane, carrying cameras and binoculars, we attracted considerable attention. At 31,000 feet, we cruised out of Houston through a slight haze to Midland. At a lower altitude, 17,000 feet, between Midland and El Paso, we saw the ruts remaining from the Old Butterfield Stage Road. Again at 31,000 feet we flew over the lunar landscape of New Mexico and through the pass into Tucson. Ella Wolfer said one wingtip barely missed a mountain during the rather rough descent. A welcoming committee of Harry and Avis Brister and Jim Beaty snapped our pictures as we got off the plane. Harry, incidentally, had set off the security alarm at the airport because his pockets were full of nuts, bolts, etc. We picked up our rent cars, bought groceries and checked in at the motel, where our guide for the Tucson area, Phillip Norton of the Tucson Audubon Society, met us. That afternoon he led us out to the Desert Museum. Under his guidance we birded a nearby gully and then toured the Museum. It was terribly hot and dry but not so uncomfortable that we couldn't bird the Museum grounds until sundown, when they ran us out. Several carloads drove to the Saguaro National Monument and walked the short nature trail, listened for owls, then went on back to Tucson, tired and ready for bed.

On Sunday, June 2, we started leaving the motel as early as 5:00 a.m. Some departed as late as 8. We went our separate ways, regrouping at Ramsey Canyon for the Mile High hummingbirds. We noticed men fighting fires along the roadside between Sierra Vista and Patagonia. Lunch was enjoyed at Mile High while watching the hummingbirds feed at the numerous feeders. Here we became expert at spotting the five species that frequent this area. This was birding the easy way. Later we checked in at the Patagonia Stage Stop Motel (some went swimming) and then headed to the San Juan River just slightly north of Nogales to look for Cassin and Botteri Sparrows. Later we had a grand time observing the Barn Swallows building nests and brooding eggs in nests beneath the porch roof of our motel. Again we went to bed early.

The next morning we devoted to the Nature Conservancy's Sonoita Creek Sanctuary and the area adjacent to it. We reached there before 6:00 a.m., while it was still cold and deserted, to search for the Five-striped Sparrow and the nesting Rose-throated Becard in particular. These and several other birds new to us were sighted in different sections of the Sanctuary and on nearby private land, including the Thick-billed Kingbird, the Band-tailed Pigeon and the Varied Bunting. The terrain and vegetation differed slightly in each section of the area, such as hardwood, softwoods, mesquite, marshes, and grasslands. Small groups of birders met each other coming back from each locale and compared notes on choice spots in which to sight certain species. After lunch we were welcomed to a local ranch, where, led by two little girls, ages 5 and 8, we saw the nest of a Gray Hawk. The hawk circled over us in plain sight, trying to approach its nest. The Sanctuary was birded again that afternoon late and during early evening. One casualty was a pair of britches split by a maneuvering through a fence, a small price to pay for a view of the little Becard on its nest. At a picnic ground we watched a Common Bushtit build its suspended nest. It was a relief to sit in the shade a while, for the day grew hot as the hour passed.

We were up early again the next morning, Tuesday, to be at the Sanctuary to look for the Black Hawk, known to fly down the Creek. The earliest birders were not successful; a later group finally spotted it. This day's first casualty was a birder who fell into the creek. One by one, each carload left the Patagonia area for the Southwest Research Center of the Museum of Natural History. Two cars went to Guadalupe Canyon, others went to Madera Canyon. On the way to Sierra Vista a Golden Eagle was sighted on a telephone pole; it never moved, giving us a real closeup view. Later a pair were sighted flying south of Sierra Vista. Following a brief stop at the Lavender Pit Copper Mine at Bisbee, we saw, on the way into Douglas, a Roadrunner perched on the crossbar of a powerline pole, with his tail hanging down and his head upright -- an unusual silhouette against a sky marred with pollution from the mines, dust devils, and smoke from forest fires in the mountains across the Mexican border.

Reaching Guadalupe Canyon, we pulled off under the cottonwoods beside the dry streambed for lunch. There we discovered a flat on one of the cars. Unloading, we thought we saw a rescuer drive up. But he turned out to be in a hurry to get a flat of his

own fixed in Douglas. The man identified himself as an agent of the Department of Justice looking for marihuana smugglers. He told us he had seen us earlier and thought at first we were Boy Scouts but on closer observation saw that we were just old folks! Then when he saw us parked beneath the trees, he concluded we were okay because of the quantities of food we were removing from the cars. He asked if we were birdwatchers and admitted he had studied ornithology but gave it up when he learned how early birders arose. We mentioned we had seen a small, white van which pulled off the road to let us pass. From our description he judged it may have been one of the vehicles the Justice agents were searching for. We were cautioned that we were just a few feet from the Mexican border and there was a lot of smuggling going on.

After the young man departed, we changed the tire, finished lunch, and watched a pair of Vermillion Flycatchers feed one fluttering fledgling. When Guadalupe Canyon has a running stream it is delightful for birding; but when it is dry, it is desolate. This side trip put us into the Research Station just before dark. First we checked in with the Forest Service, obtained our permits to enter this wooded area suffering from drought, and were greeted down by the campgrounds by Clayton and Eva Gilman who joined the field trip for the next couple of days. Dr. Vince Roth, in charge of the Station, assigned us to cabins and invited us to enjoy our picnic suppers under the trees in the twilight. Other carloads of birders came in later during the evening, the last one at 3:00 a.m., also having had a flat out in the middle of nowhere. Other inconveniences experienced were a busted overweight spring, malfunctioning seatbelts, and carkeys locked inside guess what.

June 5 we arose to a cool morning but not as cold as we had expected, birding on the Station grounds until breakfast. Dr. Roth conducted a brief orientation session, explaining we were restricted to the grounds, the roads, and the trail up one mile from the blockade on the South Fork Road. He told us the area around Tucson had not had rain for almost a year, the July 1973 rains having failed to materialize. As a result the desert plant life was very sparse and the entire food chain was disrupted. Animal life from the lowest to the highest forms were starving, while the forests were terribly threatened by the danger of fire.

After breakfast we lost the leadership of Harry and Avis, who had to return to Texas because of a death in her family. Sarah Gordon filled in for the Bristers and Clayton Gilman volunteered to lead us up the South Fork Road to seek out the Copper-tailed Trogon. Our morning hike was fruitless. After lunch we loafed at the Station, watching the hummingbirds, orioles, grosbeaks and finches at the feeders. A few birders went swimming. Following dinner we looked for the Harlequin Quail in a meadow and on a hill where they had been sighted that morning. Again the birds eluded us. After dark we joined the Gilmans at their camp and played recordings of owl hoots. This strategy called up an Elf Owl, finally located in the trees by the aid of flashlights. On the return trip to the Research Station, several deer and coatimundi were noticed on the roadside.

Thursday, June 6, found several carloads of birders checking out the Cave Creek Motel grounds after breakfast. There were lots of Gambel's Quail on the desert section and Summer and Western Tanager and immature Bullock Orioles holding their own at the hummingbird feeders. At a nearby private dwelling was a captive Golden Eagle. Years ago, Indians had captured the young bird, keeping it for its feathers. When rescued, the bird was too old to be turned loose; so its present owners maintain it in a spacious enclosure where the bird looked to be in fine condition.

Later that morning the campgrounds where the Gilmans had been staying were again checked out but nothing out of the ordinary was seen. A number of our birders went directly to the end of the trail on the South Fork Road early in the day, vowing to stay until the Trogon was sighted. They did not turn up at the Station for lunch, following which the rest of us enjoyed an opportunity to see some of the exhibits of beetles, moths, bees, and wasps from Dr. Roth's laboratory. Most interesting was his collection of tarantulas and the brief lecture on them. While we were gathered around Dr. Roth, Jim Lane appeared. He was generously sharing with us his knowledge of where certain birds were likely to be found when word came down from South Fork Road that the Trogon had been spotted. So back up the mountain some of us went, climbing in and out of the rocky streambed where the Nimmons thought they had the bird located for us. Once more we failed. Incidentally that mile-long hike is the longest mile on record and it's even longer going downhill than uphill!

At dinner that evening, Paul Nimmons was honored with an award ribbon for the birder who looked the longest for a particular bird, in his case the Trogon. If he hadn't sighted it, Paul would be there yet! Later, most of the group again went back up the now well-climbed South Fork Road to call up owls. They heard the Poor-will and

saw the Whip-poor-will and may have heard a Flammulated Owl. On their return, a visiting ornithologist from the University of Tucson, Steve Russell, showed them a couple of Whiskered Owls. He does his night birding with the aid of a miner's lamp, a device some of us might want to adopt.

June 7, Friday, most of us were up at 4:00, helping ourselves to the coffee, cereal and toast thoughtfully provided by Jenny, the cook, and took off for Mt. Lemmon by 5:00. It was great, driving up the mountainside during the morning while the air was still clear and viewing spectacular. Several carloads of our group caught up with one another, particularly in search of the Red-faced Warbler. It was spotted several places, one of them being the picnic grounds just below Summerhaven, as it flitted among the pines. It was in this same locale that Jim Beaty and Carolyn Norvell were astounded to see a hawk (unidentified) carry off a Robin. The latter cried out when he saw the hawk swoop down for him. It was this cry that caught the attention of the two birders who commented later on the speed with which the incident took place, with only a few feathers fluttering down as predator and prey disappeared. On the way down the mountain, we stopped at several likely places, including the lovely Rose Canyon. However, the wind picked up and a haze began to form, obscuring the view. Considering the severity of the drought and the danger of fire, we were surprised at the number of people who had ventured up the mountain that day. The Forest Service told us they had successfully put out a 40-acre fire on the other side of the mountain the day before. The next day we learned that four of our birders found overnight accommodations at Mt. Lemmon and got up early on Saturday to locate the Olive-sided Warbler, with well-earned success.

Saturday, June 8, we stayed abed until 6:00 a.m. and began leaving at 7:00. Some of us toured the San Xavier Mission to search for the Abert's Towhee in the mesquite alongside a small stream. The sharpest-eyed among us were in luck. As the morning became increasingly hot, we departed for the airport, where we turned our cars back to Hertz, checked our luggage, had a bit of lunch or brunch, greeted each other and began comparing notes on our experiences and what we had seen. We boarded the 1:35 flight and passed around the checklist first thing so that everyone could verify that all sightings had been recorded. The previous day's high winds had left behind a residue of haze which obscured the view from the plane coming home, but we did see the Chisos in the distance out of El Paso.

Landing in Houston, we hoped no one recognized the tired folk who had looked so smart and chipper eight days earlier. We had averaged 850 miles of driving, had sighted 153 species and heard three others, and missed lots and lots of sleep. The Bristers, who organized the trip in spite of appalling complexities and difficulties, well deserve every expression of gratitude we can extend them for all the work they did to make this trip a success.

We saw only one duck, the Mexican, and one Plover, the Killdeer; sighted were ten hawks including the Gray and Zone-tailed. Scaled, Gambel and Harlequin Quail were found, but no Bobwhite. Six species of pigeons and doves were recorded, as well as both nighthawks. The owl recap included the Great Horned seen and the Spotted and Pygmy heard. Some of us added to our life lists the White-throated Swift, the Black-chinned, the Broad-billed, Rivoli, and Blue-throated Hummingbirds. Eight woodpeckers were listed, among them the Gilded, Gila, Acorn and Arizona. Fifteen species of flycatchers were identified. You just can't mistake a Say's Phoebe feeding young in the nest on a cabin porch at the Research Center. All the summer swallows were sighted, so was the expected Scrub Jay and the White-necked Raven. The Mountain Chickadee and Bridled Titmouse were common. White-breasted and pygmy Nuthatches were added to some life lists, the Bendire and Crissal Thrashers to others. A few Western Bluebirds were noted and one lone Veery. To some, the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher and the Loggerhead Shrike were new. Five species of vireos put in an appearance as did thirteen species of warblers. Watching a Painted Redstart drink from a tiny pool of water not six feet from you is a rewarding experience. The Hepatic Tanager was another first for several of us. Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks, together with Lazuli Buntings, contributed their colors. So did the bright Lesser Goldfinch. The hooded and Scott-Orioles came in all ages, just to add to the confusion. It took a while to find the Red Crossbill, the Green-tailed Towhee, the Rufous-winged and Rufous-crowned Sparrow but the Black-throated Sparrow and the bright-eyed Mexican Junco were quite common. And depending on the terrain and the vegetation, if you caught a glimpse of something you weren't certain of, you could call out Cactus Wren, Black-throated Gray Warbler, or, as someone said, did you ever think you'd get bored with them, the Phainopepla, and nine times out of ten you would be right. As for those who, in addition to binoculars, lugged cameras or recording equipment, may your footing be always secure and the grade no greater than 10 degrees.

Anyone for Southeast Arizona? Don't call Harry, he'll call you!

Those who took part in the field trip were: Jerry Baker, Tess Barry, Jim Beaty, Harry and Avis Brister, Annella Creech, Marilyn Brane, Bessie Cornelius, Melba Drake, Milbrey Dugger, Gladys Galbreath, Clayton and Eva Gilman, John and Candy Hinterminster, Frank and Grace Hsu, Howard and Gwen Kunz, Paul and Phyllis Nimmons, Carolyn Norvell, Babette Odom, B.D. and Lucy Orgain, Neil Ray, Louise Rogers, Fred and Glenda Stigale, Ella Wolfer, Helen Wolfer.

GRAY KINGBIRD AT GALVESTON

(Dr. Prince Beach sent the following details and photos to me in July of this extraordinary sighting -- Dan Hardy)

Dear Mr. Hardy:

Miss Drake, the head nurse on my Urology Service at the Houston V.A. Hospital informed me of your interest in our recent sighting and photographing of the Gray Kingbird. In accordance with our telephone conversation, I am forwarding the information you requested for your use in the "Spoonbill".

1. Date: April 24, 1974 - 8:00 a.m.
2. Weather: Clear, no wind.
3. Location: Sportsman Road, Galveston, approximately 1/4 mile South of the only building on the left. The bird was in a small, dead bush standing in one small ponds on the right that are in the back yards of the houses facing West Bay. The open ditch parallelling the road is on the left.
4. Sighting: We were first attracted by the Kingbird's flight as it landed in the dead bush. The field glasses picked up the heavy short bill in a predominantly gray bird with a black mask, without yellow. We then noted the absence of a band on the notched tail with no white. The bird flew several times in fly-catcher fashion returning each time to the same perch.
5. Field Glasses:
 - A. 8 x 10 Trinovid
 - B. 10 x 50 Bushnell
6. Photography:

The photographs were taken with Hi-Speed Ektochrome, set for 400 ASP at 125/F4. Two cameras were used - both Pentax Spotmatic II. One used a 300 mm. lens with 2 X multiplier. The other used an 85-205 mm. Solinar zoom lens with 2 X multiplier. The exposures were, therefore, 600 mm. and 400 mm. This photo is from the 300 mm. X 2 at 125/F4.

The photographs and negatives were submitted to Chandler S. Robbins, who has assigned Accession No. 445-1Ba for the bird perched and No. 445-1Bb for the enlargement. Mr. Fred S. Webster, Jr. of Austin, Texas has submitted a copy of the photo to Birding. A copy of the lower power color photo will follow later. It gives an indication of the location on Sportsman Road, Galveston.

Sincerely,

Prince D. Beach M.D., Houston, Texas

H.G. Stevenson, Annapolis, Maryland

ATTRACTING HUMMINGBIRDS INTO THE YARD - by Margaret Anderson

For the last 10 years I have planted flowers and furnished gallons of sugar water to try to increase the hummingbird population in our yard. I have had a fair amount of success with this and will share some of my experiences with you.

Migrant hummers arrive here about March 15th every year and remain in the area until May 15th, although I have had them come a little earlier and leave a little later. At this period all of them are Ruby-throated and, any blooming flowers will attract them. They seldom touch the feeders in the spring even though I keep them full and clean the whole time.

The fall hummers start through about July 15th and continue until about November 1. The males arrive first followed by females and immatures about August 15th. In the fall they do not feel the urgency to hurry on and are easier to attract to a feeder. It is in the fall that both Rufous and the Allen's males may wander into the yard. Some dates for the appearance of Rufous hummers are Sept. 30, 1969, Oct. 21, 1969, and Aug. 7, 1971. A beautiful Allen's male hummer came to the feeder on Aug. 15, 1968 and stayed 3 days.

Now for my favorite of all--the winter hummers. I usually expect them to come into the yard anytime after December 1. I have had Rubythroats and Rufous every winter except one. Other winter hummers are Buff-bellied (12-15-64), Black Chinned (1972-73 and 1973-74) and Anna's (1974). Once the winter hummers start feeding at the feeders they will remain until they leave for nesting in the spring. Rubythroats, Black-chinned and Rufous stay until about April 1. This year both of my Black-chinned birds left on April 1. The Anna's left February 10--he is an early nester. By the time the males leave they are always in full breeding plumage.

In regard to plants they like, I find Shrimp plant far superior to anything else. They like wild Turks Cap even better, but by the time the rare winter hummers come the Turks Cap is dormant. But the Shrimp plant will bloom here all winter except when we have an unusually severe freeze. A solution of 4 parts of water to one part of sugar is fine for the feeder. In trying to catch their eye you may put in a few drops of red food coloring. After they once become addicted to the sugar water the coloring is immaterial. I find it helpful to place the feeder near a 25 foot bed of Shrimp plant and this encourages them to find it. If the temperature goes below 28 degrees I use 1 part sugar to 2 parts water so it will not freeze so easily. My experience is that the hummingbirds can survive temperatures down into the teens if they have enough food.

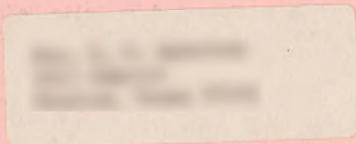
To sum up, I highly recommend a good planting of Shrimp plant with sugar water feeders near it as a way to have a great deal of pleasure in your own yard.

COMING EVENTS

- Tuesday
Sep. 3 The Photography Group will have Col. W.D. Taylor showing his pictures, "An Hour of Flowers", with musical accompaniment.
- Saturday
Sep. 21 Audubon Field Trip to Bolivar and High Island, led by Steve Williams. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the East End of the Seawall in Galveston. Bring lunch and insect repellent.
- Saturday
Sep. 28 OG Field Trip to Cove led by Arlie McKay. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the roadside park just before you get to the Trinity River Bridge (on the north side of IH10). Bring lunch.
- Thursday
Oct. 3 Plan now to attend the OG meeting on October 3rd to hear Mike Hoke talk on "Birds of High Island, A Census and Banding Study".
- Weekend
Oct. 12-13 The Ornithology and Botany Groups are combining as sponsors for the October Field Trip for the OIG to Sea Rim State Park. Details as to meeting place, time, lodging, etc. will be in the next SPOONBILL.
- Saturday
Oct. 26 Audubon Field Trip to White Memorial Park, led by Norma Oates. This is particularly for new birders. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park (take Hankamer exit from IH10, turn right (south) on Hwy. 61, and go approximately 1 or 2 blocks. Bring lunch.

OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB
(ORNITHOLOGY GROUP)
10602 Cedarhurst
Houston, Texas 77035

(Return postage guaranteed)



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Treasurer:	Miss Melba Drake, 1746 Wroxton Ct., Houston, Tex. 77005		523-8285
Spoonbill:	Mrs. T. Paul Jones, 4902 Fern, Bellaire, Tex. 77401		665-4197
Clearing House:	Mr. Dan Hardy, 10215 Chatterton, Houston, Tex. 77043		468-2748
Rare Bird Alert:	Mrs. L.W. Anderson, 2913 Amherst, Houston, Tex. 77005		668-6405
Change of address:	Mrs. Richard Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston, Tex. 77035		723-8559