

Page 2.

The Purple Gallinule, one of America's most beautiful birds, was becoming scarce locally due to lack of safe breeding sites, but is now abundant on Shoveler's Pond in the refuge.

The undisputed king of the Coastal marshes, the Alligator, long gone from most of his domain still reigns here. Three were seen on the tour in Shoveler's Pond, including one giant six (6) footer.

Another reptile seen was the Cottonmouth Moccasin. Everyone had as close a look at this poisonous snake as they wanted.

An introduced alien from South America, the Nutria, was seen, including one with 5 young. This giant rodent finds our marshes an ideal habitat and is common on the refuge.

Russ informed us that the two Red Wolves and Coyote, caged on the refuge, are to be studied to determine the Red Wolf's status as a full species. These animals had been trapped in Chambers County.

A total of 85 species was reported in Dave Marrack's listing, along with his note that it was a clear, sunny day with a ^{light} north wind behind a northern front.

Most interesting and the cause of much discussion were the three Masked Ducks Russ found for the group. Russ's information that three had also been seen at the new Brazoria Refuge was welcome news.

What at first was thought to be a Mockingbird chasing a Hawk in the distance turned out to be a Marsh Hawk chasing a Golden Eagle!

Other birds of interest seen were Sora Rail, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Long-billed Curlew, American Bittern and a Peregrine Falcon that made his appearance after most of the group had departed. Snow and Blue Geese numbering in the thousands were feeding in the fields throughout the refuge. A few White-fronted and Canada Geese were also seen.

This refuge was established primarily as a waterfowl sanctuary and is obviously serving its purpose.

A beautiful day, literally thousands of birds, old and new friends meeting, made this a most enjoyable day for all. The following signed the attendance book: E. E. Davidson and wife, Ruth and Cecil Faris, Levy and Sharon Davis, Peg and Jack Smith, Betsy Perry, Estelle Bryan, Marjory Lewis, Harry and Avis Brister, Dirk Hagemeyer, Sue M. Buck, Melba Drake, Sarah Gordon, Edward and Marion Taylor, Dan and Marion Washburn, Gwendolyn Smith, Gladys Galbreath, Mabel Smith, Jane Dodge, Tess Barry, Helen Eberspacher, Mildred Elkins, Marilyn Crane, Louise Rogers, Mabel Knotts, Johanna Grabbe, E. S. Smith, Paul Marrack, David Marrack, Jean and Bill Harwell, Mrs. J. B. Entrikin, Wallace C. Mebane, Jr., Wallace C. Mebane III, Russel W. Clapper, James K. Luce, Holly Larpenter.

Speaking of books: We regret to inform our readers that the book described on Page 1 of the October, 1968 Spoonbill, "BIRD HOUSES," is no longer in print. It was in print when we last checked with the publisher, but one of our members has told us that his check was returned from the publisher recently and that it is out of print at this time. However, it can be obtained from the Central Library, 500 McKinney, and the Looscan Branch Library, 2510 Willowick Drive. We haven't taken the time to check all the branches but we are sure about these two places.

We now have a leader for our Christmas Bird Count! Wallace Mebane Jr. has volunteered to assume this arduous task, busy as he is with all his other activities. Anyone wishing to participate in the count, contact him at his home, PR 4 9435 after 6:00 P. M. The date of the count is Saturday, December 21st.

SUMMARY OF 1967 CHRISTMAS COUNTS by Noel Pettingell

(Source: Audubon Field Notes, 68th Christmas Bird Count Edition, April 1968)

Total Counts: 839 (837 North American and 2 Hawaiian)

Total Valid Species: 555 (532 North American and 23 Hawaiian)

<u>Counts with Highest Species Totals</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Observers</u>
1 - San Diego, California	209*	60
2 - Cocoa, Florida	195	63
3 - Tomales Bay, California	194	88
4 - Drake's Bay, California	183	45
5 - Monterey Peninsula, California	173	23
6 - FREEPORT, TEXAS	172	32
7 - Coot Bay-Everglades National Park, Florida	170	72
8 - Santa Barbara, California	165	77
9 - Corpus Christi, Texas	164	13
10 - Orange County (Central & Coastal), California	163	72

*New U. S. record, exceeding previous all-time high of 206 set by San Diego and Cocoa in 1966.

Upper Texas Coast Count Species with Highest Individual Totals in North America

<u>Species</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Individuals</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
White-faced Ibis	Freeport	130	
Swainson's Hawk	Houston	3	
Groove-billed Ani	Freeport	1	
Brown Thrasher	Houston	129	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Freeport	611	
Loggerhead Shrike	Houston	275	
Solitary Vireo	Freeport	13	
Tennessee Warbler	"	1	Tied with Cocoa and West Palm Beach, Florida
Orange-crowned Warbler	"	189	
CONNECTICUT WARBLER		2	New North American Christmas Count species
Eastern Meadowlark	Houston	1,324	
Brown-headed Cowbird	"	1,202,575	
Summer Tanager	Old River	1	Tied with Little Rock, Arkansas and Orange Co. (Central), Calif.
Le Conte's Sparrow	Houston	19	

Upper Texas Coast Counts - 1967

1 - Freeport	172 species	32 observers	Dec. 31
2 - Houston	139 "	65 observers	" 30
3 - Bolivar Peninsula	119 "	15 observers	" 31
	(1 questionable species deleted - no details)		
4 - Galveston	114 species	10 observers	" 23
5 - Old River	112 "	11 "	" 29

UPPER TEXAS COAST ORNITHOLOGY: SOME HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS - by Noel Pettingell

Explanation: (1) Refers to list of sources following chronology.

A. O. U. - American Ornithologists' Union

c. - About

O. G. - Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club of Houston

q.v. - Which see

UTC - Upper Texas Coast (Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston and Harris Counties)

c. 1840 - John James Audubon obtained several specimens of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker ("re-discovered" in the Big Thicket in 1966) along Buffalo Bayou in Harris County. (1)

May, 1864 Ivory-billed Woodpecker breeding along Brazos River in Fort Bend County. (1)

1883 and 1896 - Passenger Pigeons (extinct by 1914) recorded at Houston. (2)

1890's - Carolina Parakeets (extinct by c. 1938) seen in Chambers Co. (3)

Jan. 4, 1893 - Whooping Crane collected at Houston. (Last noted in UTC area Jan. 19, 1936 in Chambers Co.) (4) (6)

Dec. 25, 1913 - First National Audubon Society Christmas Count in UTC area conducted at Houston by George Finlay Simmons who recorded 34 species and 308 individuals. (5) (6) See also (2)

- 1923 - - - Outdoor Nature Club organized at Houston.
- Feb. 1936 - First issue of Gulf Coast Migrant, edited by Dr. George Williams of Rice University. (6)
(Seasonal reports from Rockport, Texas to the Louisiana coast until c. May-June 1938; thereafter Rockport to Beaumont, Texas through Dec. 1, 1950)
- Oct. 15, 1940 - First Texas Coastal Region report published in National Audubon Society's Bird-Lore (now Audubon Field Notes), edited by Dr. George Williams. (6)
(Seasonal observations from Rockport, Houston, Cove, and Bolivar Peninsula until July 31, 1948; thereafter South Texas Region: Del Rio, San Antonio, Austin, Cove, and Beaumont south to lower Rio Grande Valley and NE Tamaulipas, Mexico)
- 1942 - - - Bird Check List of Southeast Texas published by Outdoor Nature Club (revised in 1946).
(Annotated listing of species recorded in Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Harris, Jefferson, Liberty, and Orange Counties.)
- Apr. 29, 1945 - 2 Eskimo Curlews seen on Galveston I. (6) (?)
Re-discovered on Galveston I. in March 1959, q.v.)
- Apr. 11, 1952 - Ornithology Group of the Outdoor Nature Club of Houston organized.
- July 1952 - Vol. 1, No. 1 of O. G. newsletter, The Spoonbill. (6)
- Sept. 1952 - Field Check-list of the Birds of the Upper Gulf Coast Area of Texas published by O. G.
(1st ed. in A. O. U. order; 2nd & 3rd editions in alphabetical order, 1955 & 1958; 4th ed. in A. O. U. order, March 1966, q.v.)
- Oct. 4, 1952 - Initial O. G. letter proposing State Ornithological Society. (6)
Texas Ornithological Society organized at Austin Feb. 14, 1953).
- July 1953 -Vol. 2, No. 1 of The Spoonbill includes first Clearing House section of UTC area observations. (6)
- March 22, 1959 --Eskimo Curlew re-discovered on Galveston I. (6) (8)
(Previous record April 29, 1945, q.v.)
- Oct. 1960--Vol. IX, No. 6 of The Spoonbill includes first Clearing House with UTC species listed for single month in A. O. U. order (instead of by date, as previously done since July 1953). (6)
- Nov. 9, 1962 - Checklist of the Birds of the Upper Texas Coast, compiled and edited by Stephen G. Williams, initially distributed by O. G.
(Annotated listing of species recorded in UTC area.)
- Dec. 28, 1963 - Houston Christmas Count of 192 species exceeds all previous UTC records and is 2nd highest total of 688 reports. (6) (10)
- Dec. 26, 1965 - Freepoint Christmas Count of 193 species exceeds 1963 UTC record and is 2nd highest total of 795 reports. (6) (11)
- April 1, 1966 - Field Check-list Birds of the Upper Texas Coast, 4th Edition, initially distributed by O. G. (9)
(Birds listed in A. O. U. order with seasonal occurrence of species graphically shown in 5 variations of frequency- from Common to Accidental - for each of the 12 months.)
- July 10, 1968 - Initial meeting of Committee for an Audubon Branch in Houston.
- Aug. 15-16, 1968 - Allen's Hummingbird, recorded in Houston, is 428th valid UTC species (6) (12)
(353 UTC species have been substantiated by specimen or photograph.)

Sources Referred to in Foregoing Chronology

- (1) The Ivory-billed Woodpecker - Research Report No. 1 of the National Audubon Society by James Taylor Tanner, Oct. 1942.
(Central Library, Houston)
- (2) Birds of the Austin Region by George Finlay Simmons, 1925.
(Central Library, Houston)
- (3) Checklist of the Birds of the Upper Texas Coast by Stephen G. Williams, 1962.
- (4) The Whooping Crane - Research Report No. 3 of the National Audubon Society by Robert Porter Allen, June 1952.
- (5) Bird-Lore, Jan.-Feb. 1914, p. 41.
- (6) Fondren Library, Rice University, Houston.
- (7) The Auk, Oct. 1945 (Vol. 62, p. 635) and Audubon Magazine, Sec. II, July-Aug. 1945, p. 41.
- (8) The Auk, Oct. 1959 (Vol. 76, p. 493) and Audubon Magazine, May-June 1962, p. 162
- (9) Museum of Natural Science, 1400 Hermann Loop Dr. (P. O. Box 8175), Houston, Texas 77004
- (10) Audubon Field Notes, April 1964.
- (11) Audubon Field Notes, April 1966.
- (12) The Spoonbill, Sept. 1968, p. 1.

VISITORS FROM PENNSYLVANIA by Wallace C. Mebane, Jr.

Raymond Bubb and his wife, Kathryn, were among the 21 members and guests who spent Saturday night, November 9th, at the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary. Raymond is a naturalist at the Gifford Pinchot State Park in Pennsylvania. The park has four nature trails along a lake and through the woods. By the end of October this year Raymond had led 3822 people over those trails.

The Bubbs, being bird watchers, were lured to Texas by the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Raymond has 436 birds on his life list.

At the Little Thicket they walked over the Big Tree Trail on Saturday and were led to Chasm, Triangle and Enchanted Isle by Clayton Gilman on Sunday. A total of 82 people visited the Sanctuary during this year's Annual Field Trip.

The Bubbs missed the Masked Duck at Anahuac, but did experience the thrill of being stuck in Texas mud at the Wildlife Refuge.

They added another "lifer" at Mr. Woodham's where they photographed the Greater Prairie Chicken.

Marian and Daniel Washburn brought them to the November Meeting of The Outdoor Nature Club for the program "Murder of Silence" shown by Reagan Bradshaw of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Mere words cannot describe this really great production shown on three screens with three slide projectors, stereo tape and twelve reels of slides. It's sort of a slide show "Cinerama" about Texas. It may soon be brought back to Houston to be shown to The Sierra Club.

The Bubbs have invited us all to visit their state park in Pennsylvania. It might make a nice field trip!! To Raymond and Kathryn, we all say "It was a pleasure to have you visit us..come back again."

Arlie McKay writes along with his contribution to the October Clearing House: "I failed to report for September: Water Turkey (Anhinga) (1) 9, (500+) 19; Wood Stork (2) 9, (7) 12; Herring Gull (1) 12; Olive-sided Flycatcher (1) 8, 15; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (1) 8; Great Horned Owl (1) 19; Pileated Woodpecker (1) 19." (Cove Area)

Clearing House October, 1968

Pelican, White: (about 45, 300, 150) 10, 18, 25, Cove area, AKM; (100) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.

Cormorant, Double-crested: (1-5) 5 days, Cove area, AKM; (20) 5, Warren Ranch Lake, PR & DHH.

Anhinga: (3) 5, Warren Ranch Lake, PR & DHH.

Heron, Green: (3) 5, Clay and Jack Roads, PR & DHH; (1) 3, 4, Eureka Junction, BM.

Little Blue: (50) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.

Louisiana: (2) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.

Black-crowned: (2) 26, 5 days, Cove, AKM.

Yellow-crowned: (2) 6, Cove, AKM.

Bittern, American: (1) 19, Galveston (Stewart Road near 8 Mile Road), Party "A".

Stork, Wood: (50) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.

Ibis, White-faced: (1 to 19) 7 days, (200+) 15, Cove, AKM.

White: (10) 6, (8) 7, 20, (250) 15, Cove, AKM.

Spoonbill, Roseate: (2) 5, (20 to 300) 8 days, Cove, AKM

Goose: Snow and Blue (no number or date given), Cove, AKM.

MALLARD: (1) 5, (15+ 6) 6, (5) 10, Cove, AKM; (3) 19, Sheldon Reservoir (male and female in flight over marsh north of Garrett Rd.), and Anahuac Refuge (male), Party "A".

Duck, Mottled: (1 to 10) 8 days, (42+) 5, (20+) 9, Cove, AKM.

Gadwall: (3 to 60) 4 days, (150+) 24, Cove, AKM.

Pintail: (1 to 75) 9 days, (150+) 1 and 20, Cove, AKM.

Teal, Green-winged: (1 to 30) 5 days, (50+) 29, Cove, AKM.

Blue-winged: (1 to 40) 5 days, (400+ 1), Cove, AKM.

Widgeon, American: (3, 40, 75) 12, 5, 29, Cove, AKM.

Redhead: (2) 19, Anahuac Refuge, Party "A".

CANVASBACK: (9) 24, (6) 29, Cove, AKM.

Scaup, Lesser: (3) 17, Cove, AKM; (12) 19, Anahuac Refuge, Party "A". (SW only).

MASKED: (1) 19, 20, Brazoria Refuge, DH; (3) 26, Anahuac Refuge, DH. See Clearing House Notes.

- Vulture, Black: (8) 6, (2) 20, (1) 24, Cove, AKM.
 Hawk, Sharp-shinned: (1) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.
 Cooper's: (1) 1, Cove, AKM.
 Red-tailed: (1) 18 and 4 more days, (2) 24, (14) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Broad-winged: (32) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, (1) 12, Clay Road, PR & DHH.
 Falcon, Peregrine: (1) 5, Galveston Island, NO & DH; (1) 19, Brazoria Refuge, DH.
 Gallinule, Common: (3) 1, (2) 12, Cove, AKM.
 Coot, American: (1) 10, 29, (125+) 12, 17 and 24, Cove, AKM.
 Oystercatcher, American: (1) 5, Galveston, NO & DH.
 Plover, Piping: (5) 19, Bolivar Peninsula (4 on beach west of "Dump Road" - F. M. 2612) and Galveston (1 at 13-mi. rd. beach), Party "A".
 Snowy: (1) 19, Bolivar Peninsula (same site as Piping), Party "A".
 Black-bellied: (1) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Snipe, Common: (1) 6, (2) 20, Cove, AKM; (1) 5, Galveston Island, NO & DH; (1) 12, Groeschke Rd., PR & DHH.
 Curlew, Long-billed: (1) 20, (4) 23, Cove, AKM.
 WHIMBREL: (1) 19, Galveston (Municipal Golf Course - half of one leg gone, but flew strongly - with Long-billed Curlews), Party "A".
 Sandpiper, Spotted: (2) 17, (1) 20, 24, Cove, AKM; (1) 12, Groeschke Rd., PR & DHH.
 Willet: (7) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Yellowlegs, Greater: (1) 18, 25, (5) 24, Cove, AKM.
 Sandpiper, Pectoral: (1) 5, Porter Road, (3) 12, Groeschke Rd., PR & DHH.
 Dowitcher, (sp.): (9) 17, (13) 24, (3) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Avocet, American: (1) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Gull, Franklin's: (20+) 29 and 31, Cove, AKM.
 Cuckoo, Yellow-billed: (2) 6, Cove, AKM; (1) 18, Eureka Junction, BM.
Black-billed: (1) 4, 10215 Chatterton, PR & DHH.
 ROADRUNNER: (1) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, south of Cypress Creek, PR & DHH.
 Ani, Groove-billed: (3) 5, Galveston Island, NO & DH; (1) 10, Cove, AKM.
 Species: (1) 12, (could have been Smooth-billed), Cove, AKM.
 Owl, Screech: (1) 16, Cove, AKM; (1) 11, 22, Eureka Junction, BM; (1) 1, 7, 15, 23, 28, 10215 Chatterton, DHH.
 Great-horned: (1) 1, 6, 12, Cove, AKM.
Chuck-Will's-Widow: (1) 6, 14, 20, Eureka Junction, BM.
Whip-Poor-Will: (1) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Nighthawk, Common: (1) 7, Cove, AKM; (4) 14, 23, Downtown Houston, (1) 18, 21, 22, 24, 28, 30, 31, Downtown Houston, (1) 20, 7146 Ilex, SE Houston, NP.
Swift, Chimney: (12) 14, Main Post Office, Downtown Houston, (40) 15, (5) 16, 7146 Ilex, SE Houston, (2) 17, Main Post Office, (1) 18, 20, 7146 Ilex, (2) 21, (7) 22, (18) 23, Main Post Office, NP; (dozens) 1 thru 16, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Hummingbird (sp.): (1 to 5) 11 days to 15, Cove, AKM.
 Ruby-throated: (25+) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.
 Kingfisher, Belted: (1 to 3) 11 days, (5) 10, Cove, AKM; (3) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff and Jack Road, PR & DHH.
 Flicker, Yellow-shafted: (1-3) 15 days, (5) 25, Cove, AKM; (1 or more) daily 11 through 31, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Woodpecker, Pileated: (1) 1, 6, 15, Eureka Junction, BM; (2) 15, Cove, AKM; (2) 5, Bear Creek, PR & DHH.
 Red-headed: (2) 12, Bear Creek Park, PR & DHH; (1) 18, Cove, AKM; (1) 1, 2, 9, 10, 12, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: (2) 15, 19, 20, 22, 30, Eureka Junction, BM; (1) 18, Cove, AKM; (1) 5, Cypress Creek, PR & DHH.
 Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed: (1) 27, Main Post Office! Downtown Houston, NP.
 Great-crested: (2) 6, Cove, AKM; (1) 12, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Phoebe, Eastern: (1) 13, 20, 30, (2) 18, (3) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Flycatcher, Empid. sp.: (1+) 6, 10, Cove, AKM.
 Wood Pewee, Eastern: (5+) 6, (1), 10, 12, Cove, AKM.
 Flycatcher, Olive-sided: (1) 6, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Vermilion: (2) 12, (1) 17, Cove, AKM.
Crow, Fish: (1) 16, South of Dayton, AKM
 Nuthatch, Red-breasted: (1) 19, High Island (Brannan's Woods), Party "A"; (1) 7, 10215 Chatterton, DHH.
 Wren, House: (1) 18, (2) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Catbird: (40+) 6, (2) 9, (13+) 10, (1) 15, 17, Cove, AKM; (1) 2, 6, 12, 13, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Thrush, Wood: (2+) 6, Cove, AKM.
Gray-cheeked: (20+) 6, (1) 9, Cove, AKM.
 Bluebird, Eastern: (5) 12, Bear Creek Park, PR & DHH.

- Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: (1) 6, 10, (5+) 25, Cove, AKM; (1) 4, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Vireo, White-eyed: (1) 6, 15, Cove, AKM.
 Yellow-throated: (1) 6, Cove, AKM; (1) 12, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Solitary: (1) 12, Bear Creek Park, PR & DHH.
 Red-eyed: (1) 11, 10215 Chatterton, DHH; (5+) 6, (2) 9, Cove, AKM.
 Philadelphia: (1) 13, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Warbler: (1) 6, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Warbler: Black and White: (5+) 6, (3) 9, (1) 10, Cove, AKM; (2) 5, Bear Creek Park, PR & DHH.
 Golden-winged: (1) 6, Cove, AKM.
 Blue-winged: (1) 6, Cove, AKM.
 Tennessee: (2+) 5, (30+) 6, (1) 15, Cove, AKM.
 Orange-crowned: (1) 26, Cove, AKM.
 Nashville: (1+) 5, (2+) 6, (1) 18, (3) 20, Cove, AKM; (10) 21, 23, 10215 Chatterton, DHH.
 Parula: (2) 3, 4, 10215 Chatterton, (1) 12, Bear Creek Park DHH; (1) 6, (3+) 10, Cove, AKM.
 Magnolia: (30+) 6, (5) 10, (1) 15, Cove, AKM; (20) 7, 10215 Chatterton, DHH.
 Black-throated Green: (1) 12, Bear Creek Park, DHH; (1) 6, Cove, AKM.
 Blackburnian: (1) 13, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Yellow-throated: (1) 12, Eureka Junction, BM; (1) 12, Bear Creek Park, PR & DHH.
 Palm: (1) 6, 10, (2 to 3) 17, 24, 25, Cove, AKM.
 Ovenbird: (1) 6, 9, 15, Cove, AKM.
 Waterthrush, Northern: (5) 6, 9, (1) 8, 10, Cove, AKM.
 KENTUCKY: (1) 12, Galveston Island, DH.
 CONNECTICUT: (1 to 6) Eureka Junction, BM.
 Yellowthroat: (1 to 5) 5, 6, 9, 12, 15, 25, (19) 10, Cove, AKM.
 Chat, Yellow-breasted: (1) 10, Cove, AKM.
 Warbler, Hooded: (1) 10, Cove, AKM; (1) 6, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Wilson's: (1) 6, Cove, AKM; (1) 3, 4, 10215 Chatterton, DHH.
 Redstart, American: (4) 12, Bear Creek Park, PR & DHH; (25+) 6, (5) 9, (2) 15, Cove, AKM.
 Tanager, Scarlet: (1) 6, Cove, AKM; (1) 13, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Summer: (1) 6, 13, Eureka Junction, BM; (1) 5, (3) 6, Cove, AKM.
 Grosbeak, Rose-breasted: (10+) 5, (3) 6, Cove, AKM.
 Blue: (2) 9, Cove, AKM.
 Bunting, Indigo: (many, n. c.) 5, (100+) 6, (15+) 9, (35+) 15, (1) 16, (10+) 17, 18, Cove, AKM; (2) 5, Katy-Hockley Cutoff, PR & DHH.
 Painted: (5+) 6, (1) 17, 20, (2) 24, Cove, AKM; (1) 6, Eureka Junction, BM.
 Dickcissel: (1) 10, Cove, AKM.
 Sparrow, Savannah: (1) 6, 17, 20, 22, (2) 25, Cove, AKM.
 FIELD: (1) 19, High Island, (edge of Brannan's Woods), Party "A". (NP & SW only).
 White-crowned: (1) 25, Cove, AKM.
 WHITE-THROATED: (25+) 25, Cove, AKM; (1) 12, Bear Creek Park, DHH.
 Lincoln's: (2) 25, Cove, AKM.
 Swamp: (1) 25, Cove, AKM.

Contributors to Clearing House:

Party "A"

DH
 DHH
 AKM
 BM
 NO
 PR

Dan Hardy, Mark and Noel Pettingell, Pat Ridge, Steve Williams.
 Dirk Hagemeyer.
 Dan H. Hardy.
 Arlie McKay.
 Bill McClure.
 Noel Pettingell.
 Pat Ridge.

Clearing House Notes:

Masked Duck: by Dirk Hagemeyer: Brazoria Refuge - October 16th, 1968. Two male and one female Masked Ducks were sighted on the Brazoria Refuge by R. J. Fleetwood, Manager of that Refuge. He saw them again at the same place on the morning of October 17th and returned that same day with a local newspaper photographer who took color and black and white pictures of these birds. Fleetwood saw all three ducks again on October 18th. This was the last time that the drakes were sighted. I looked for them on the 19th and again on the 20th of October but could only find the female. She was, on both days, in the same location as seen previously. But she was no longer there on October 27th. Must have left the refuge during the latter part of the week October 20-26th, 1968. Anahuac Refuge -

October 20th, 1968: Russel Clapper, Manager of the Anahuac Refuge found two Masked Ducks in female plumage on the Anahuac Refuge on the morning of October 20th. He believes that these ducks were immature, 4 to 5 weeks old. On October 26th these same birds plus a third, also in female plumage, were seen at the same location by all who joined on the monthly fieldtrip.

These sightings give rise to some interesting speculations. If the ducks seen at Anahuac were indeed immature, then they must have been raised there - not improbable because adults were seen in June and July. It is possible that the adults seen at the Brazoria Refuge were connected with the brood at Anahuac. Last year all adults had left by the time the young Masked Ducks about 4 weeks old, an interesting speculation indeed!

The sightings further suggest that the Masked Duck could be extending its range, or have they always been here, in small numbers, hidden in the coastal marshes, which were never very accessible. This does not seem unreasonable. The Anahuac Refuge has been with us since 1963, the Brazoria Refuge since 1966. On both refuges, the first sightings have been by the refuge managers, i. e. the ones who visit the refuges most often and should be able to recognize unusual birds. The refuges probably offer ideal habitat for this duck.

Robin: by Noel Pettingell: None found in Rice University-Hermann Park area October 15 and 31, nor Kempner Park, Galveston October 19, nor Glenbrook Country Club (SE Houston) October 25. Upper Texas Coast seasonal status possibly should be changed from occasional to rare from September through November.

Miscellaneous Articles re Bird Sightings Not Included in the Clearing House:

Notes on October 19 "Big Day"-type Party Count - by Noel Pettingell

135 species, including Rock Dove, were recorded by Party "A" - probably an all-time high for a single day in October by one party in the Upper Texas Coast area. The route was the same as that of the June 17 and August 20 all-day counts. The timetable (CDT) by main areas (species totals in parentheses) was as follows:

Leave 7146 Ilex, SE Houston-----	5:55 AM
Sheldon and Lake Houston area-----	6:15 - 10:00 "
Anahuac Refuge-----	11:30 AM - 1:05 PM (82 - 98)
High Island-----	1:30 PM - 2:30 "
Bolivar Peninsula-----	2:30 " - 3:40 "
Galveston Island-----	3:55 " - 7:45 " (121 - 134)
Arrive 7146 Ilex-----	8:25 " (135)

The Rock Dove was not added to the list until 4 PM and a Barn Owl was spotted flying across the Gulf Freeway near W. P. Hobby Airport by Steve Williams at 8:15 - the 135th species. But the best bird of the day for Steve was a Red-breasted Nuthatch at High Island - a new one for his Life List.

Car miles totaled 285, plus 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ on foot and 3.2 on Bolivar Ferry. Skies were for the most part clear and temperatures at Houston were 57 to 81, Beaumont 49 to 78, and Galveston 66 to 76. (Noel did include some of the "better birds" of their list of a total of 135 species, in the Clearing House above.)

From Bill McClure: Mike Ross at the McAshan Hall in Memorial Park is interested in tabulating the birds that have been seen in and near the park. He has been given a checklist with more than 100 sightings. It is requested that birders who spot any of the less common species within 2 miles of Memorial Park let Mike know at phone number 681-5544.

On October 19, in my yard, I saw several Carolina Chickadees using a feeding technique that was new to me. The Chickadees examined the underside of the leaves of a hackberry tree and picked out a leaf, grasped it in the bill, twisted the head and popped the leaf off the twig. It was taken to a stronger limb and held in place with the left foot. They then pecked at the underside of the leaf several times and then discarded it. The routine was then repeated. The leaf always popped off at the first twist so they were obviously experienced at the procedure. I examined the leaves and found that they had a gall on the underside. The gall was about 1/5 inch in diameter and flat. Each contained a small green larva with black eyes. It has been identified as the Hackberry Button Gall, Pachypsylla umbilicus.

Texas' Fourth Ruff in Corpus Christi by Dan H. Hardy

On October 19 and 20, 1968, Tommy Schulenberg of Corpus Christi, making his weekly rounds

at Cayo del Oso (local mudflat), found a strange shorebird which he was not familiar with. The 23rd it was positively identified as a Ruff!!

Informing me of his find, I made it to Corpus two weeks later. On the morning of November 2, I watched his Ruff for 45 minutes. Our best view was on a mudflat with Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Black-bellied Plovers and a dowitcher, from 20 feet for five minutes. It was flushed three times and the tail was seen clearly. A cold front came through that night but the next morning the bird was still there. Total observation time: 2 hours.

Our Ruff was an adult male in winter plumage. It was distinctive from surrounding shorebirds with its scaly back and dumpy size. It had bright orange legs, a grayish wash on its breast, a stout black bill with an olive-yellow base, and a faint eye-line. It had an unusual "white-faced" appearance with white cheeks and throat meeting over the bill. The white sides of the tail were not clear-cut ovals.

The bird to date, November 9, has been seen by fourteen people including three people who have seen previously.

More on Gannets by Bessie G. Cornelius

I am not sure whether I or Sharon Davis gave you the information about the dead Gannet found in the same locality where the live ones were seen, but to follow up on the Gannets here is the information: On October 6, 1968, Dr. Jed J. Ramsey, Lamar State College of Technology, Dr. Howard Mackey also of Lamar and his son Tiger, found a dead Gannet on the beach about 150 feet east of the High Island Fishing Pier. It was immature.

So that is the last report I have received on the Gannets and I thought it might sort of wrap up the other two reports I made to you.

From Marian Washburn: Credit lines for several cartoons were omitted from the roster, due to an error on the part of the editor, and said editor wishes to try to make amends. The "Marmaduke" cartoon should have carried the line: "Reprinted by permission, Houston Post and National Newspaper Syndicate." The two delightful pictures of "The Girls" appeared by courtesy of the artist, Franklin Folger. The poem by Gwen Frostic was also printed by permission.

The roster editor has apologized personally to the artist, the post and the syndicate and it is hoped that they will not sue us for a million dollars in damages!

COMING EVENTS:

December 2, 1968
Monday

Let's travel with H. Charles Laun, our Audubon Wildlife Film speaker, who will take us to visit the land above the timberline in the mountains, where life is forever a survival story. His program will be "The Alpine Tundra," shown at the Greater Houston Builders Auditorium, 2710 West Alabama at 8:00 P. M. There will be the usual dinner at Suzanne's Cafeteria where there will be an opportunity to meet the speaker before his program. (Suzanne's is located at 2912 S. Shepherd in Houston.)

December 5, 1968
Thursday

Regular meeting of the Ornithology Group at the Downtown Recreational Center (Fondé Recreation Center on Memorial Blvd. behind the Houston Coliseum), at 7:30 P. M. Wallace C. Mebane, Jr., Chairman, reports that Melba Drake, Chairman of the "Save The Spoonbill" Committee, has been successful in obtaining copies of all "Spoonbills." We must now vote on the price to pay to have them bound. Melba will report on competitive bids and give us her recommendations. - The Nominating Committee, composed of Mr. Richard Miller, Chairman, Mrs. Clayton Gilman, and Miss Louise Rogers, will report on their nominations for Club officers. The names of the nominees will be published in the January Spoonbill. At the February Meeting, additional nominations may be made from the floor before the election. - - Our speaker will be Mr. Bill Brummel, the Area Manager for the Sheldon Wildlife Management Area. (Texas Parks and Wildlife). Mr. Brummel has studied at Arlington State College, Texas Christian University and Texas A & M, majoring in Wildlife Management. He has been with the Department for 5

years and has been at Sheldon 2½ years. The primary purpose, as Mr. Brummel will point out to us, of Sheldon is a water-fowl refuge, and secondarily public fishing. There are 2,300 acres, of which about 800 acres are suitable for public fishing. Last year there were 73,000 fishermen. (No count made of birdwatchers!) In December of 1967 on one day there were 36,000 (21 species) of waterfowl. There are Canada Geese staying at the Refuge the year round. Presently there are 23 Canadas, all born on the Refuge. They are Lesser Canadas and there are 5 new ones this year. He states that in 1967 Sheldon had the highest population of Canvasbacks in the UTC, 1,500. There are also Hooded Mergansers, peak last year 50 in the period November 16 to January, none seen this year. This Refuge is approximately 20 miles from Houston off of US 90, the Beaumont Highway. (Note, the information given above as to birds seen this year may not be accurate at this time, since it was given to the editors last month for preparation of this Spoonbill.)

December 10, 1968
Tuesday

Regular Meeting of the Outdoor Nature Club at the Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive at 8:00 P. M. The program will be "Highway Beautification" by Bill McClure.

December 14, 1968
Saturday

All conservationists are invited to attend a rally to help get the BIG THICKET federal project off to a booming start in the next Congress. Time and place: Saturday, December 14, 9:00 A. M. to noon, Silsbee State Bank Auditorium, Silsbee, Texas. Senator Ralph Yarborough will be there to discuss the best steps we can take to save the Big Thicket. If the National Park Service report is out by then, it will be discussed. We should have some representation at this meeting!!

December 21, 1968
Saturday

1968 Houston Christmas Count. Wallace C. Mebane, Jr., Leader of this year's endeavor, requests that anyone interested in participating phone him at his home, PR 4-9435. The area will be the same as last year. He advises to DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY, as the Count is on the Saturday before Christmas. To quote Wally "While the last minute procrastinators are jammed into the stores and traveling bumper to bumper on the streets, we will be out in the field enjoying the weather and the birds. Now is the time to do your homework on winter plumages, re-contact the land owners for permission to enter private property and spend every weekend birding your assigned area."

December 28, 1968
Saturday

We have a note from Victor Emanuel asking us to print this information: The Annual Freeport, Texas Bird Count will be held on December 28th, Saturday. If you wish to participate please write: Victor Emanuel, Adams House B-23, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

OFFICERS:

Chairman:	Mr. Wallace C. Mebane, Jr., 7106 Mobud, Houston, Texas 77036
Vice-Chairman:	Dr. John Tveten, 512 Inwood Drive, Baytown, Texas 77520
Secretary:	Mrs. Bill (Katrina) Ladwig, 3303 Sunset Blvd., Houston, Texas 77005
Treasurer:	Miss Sarah Gordon, 1746 Wroxton Court, Houston, Texas 77005
Field Trip Chairman:	Dr. David Marrack, 420 Mulberry Lane, Bellaire, Texas 77401
Program Chairman:	Mrs. Daniel T. (Marian) Washburn, 2101 59th St., Galveston, Texas
Co-Editors of The Spoonbill	Mr. and Mrs. Ewell (Julia) Bradley, #3 Briarway, Houston, Texas 77027

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