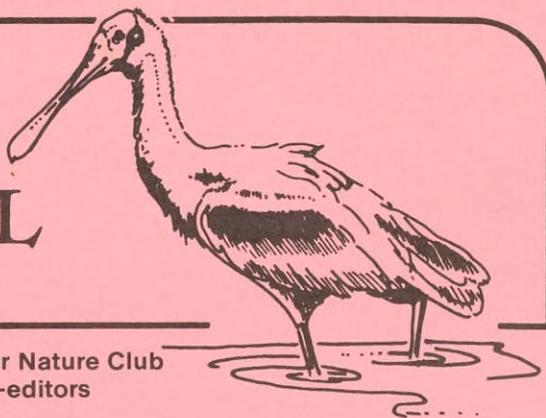


The SPOONBILL



Published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club
Houston, Texas Libby Price & Ellen Red, Co-editors

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Coming Events

Tuesday, Mar. 3: Deadline for Spoonbill articles, announcements and Clearing House reports.

Thursday, Mar. 5: Ornithology Group meeting at Bayou Manor, 4141 S. Braeswood at 7:30 PM. Dr. B. C. Robison will present the program.

Tuesday, Mar. 10: Outdoor Nature Club meeting at Sutton Elementary School Library, 7402 Albarcore. (See Nature Notes map.) Ron Grimes will present "Backcountry Big Bend."

Saturday-Sunday, Mar. 7-8: Ornithology Group field trip to Aransas NWR to see the Whooping Cranes. The trip is limited to 40 people. For reservations call Derek Muschalek (473-6876) as soon as possible. The trip will officially get under way at 12:00 noon Saturday, when all participants will meet at the Sea Gun Marina at Lamar, which is just north of Copano Bay causeway on State Hwy 35. Look for the pink buildings on the left. At this time the group will organize and each person will pay \$16 for a 4-hour ride on "The Pisces" (1-5 PM). Afterwards you could find accommodations at the Best Western in Fulton (512-729-8357) or camp at Goose Island State Park in Lamar (512-729-2858). On Sunday the group will reunite at the headquarters of the Aransas NWR at 8:00 AM to explore this great birding area.

Saturday, Mar. 14: Ornithology Group field trip to Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR to see the chickens perform their courtship display and utter their "booming" calls. You can expect to see a number of different raptors and some sparrow species as well. Directions: take I-10 west to Sealy, exit on Hwy 36 (not the first Sealy exit), go south on 36 about one mile to FM 3013, turn right and go about 10 miles. After crossing the San Bernard River look for the refuge sign on the right, and go to the headquarters building where the trip will begin at 7:00 AM. We will bird until noon. Bring lunch if you wish to bird on your own after noon.

SUCCESSFUL TREE PLANTING

A group of OG members under the direction of David Marrack planted 130 trees in Galveston State Park on Feb. 7. The hardy souls were: Barbara and Sam House, Arch Dillard, Bill and Jean Harwell, Laura Singleton, Marilyn Crane, Anne Bushman, and Ellen Red. They were rewarded by the sight of four Palm Warblers.

MINUTES OF THE OG MEETING, FEB. 5, 1987

Chairman Robert Thacker opened the Ornithology Group meeting and the treasurer, Peter Vennema, reported that dues were coming in slowly. Libby Price told of the new list of OG library books now being sold for ten cents at the meetings.

The Nominating Committee's report for next year's officers was: Robert Thacker, Pres.; Ed Rosenburg, V.P.; Caroline Callery, Sec.; Jerry Patrick, Treas.

Rob reported that the Galveston Co. Commissioners had partitioned a section of Bolivar Flats for a bird sanctuary, and thanked Stennie Meadours for her efforts in making this possible.

Rob told of a request from Hana Ginzburg that the OG erect a Purple Martin house at Russ Pittman Park. The Chickadee Bookstore has volunteered to donate one and give the OG a good price on another. Peggy Milstead moved that the OG purchase a martin house from the Chickadee for \$99 for Russ Pittman Park. The motion was seconded and passed.

Ted Eubanks reported on the Breeding Bird Atlas which Keith Arnold of A&M University is promoting. The OG has given \$250 to this project and the Audubon Society \$1000, but many more individual donations are needed.

Rob introduced Noel Pettingell, who gave the program on the subject of bird listing. The highlight was reading some delightful entries from his new book.

Ellen Red, Acting Secretary

Noel's Niche Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

.....TEN YEARS AGO THIS MONTH
FROM FEBRUARY, 1977 SPOONBILL

"CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

Black-bellied Tree Duck: (Jan. 11) 7 birds flew up from behind some reeds in the southwest corner of Maner Lake nearest the bridge. They circled briefly and went down near the same spot. The large white area on the black wings and bright pink feet were clearly seen. Later in the month, Joe DeLeon, a guide at the Club, told me there have been 25 ...there this winter.--Margaret Jones

.....THIRTY YEARS AGO THIS MONTH
FROM FEBRUARY, 1957 SPOONBILL

"Report on O.G. Field Trip to Freeport - Jan. 20
(Vic Emanuel)

At 8:10 a.m. we left our meeting place with our primary objective to explore the possibilities of having our next Christmas Count in the Freeport area. A drop in the total species on the last three counts, to this year's total of 133 makes it almost imperative for us to change the count area. The big question is whether to change to the Cove area or the Freeport area.

"Driving southward to Angleton we saw the usual common birds including a Caracara. Our first real birding stop was the Angleton Rod and Gun club, just south of Angleton on the Angleton-Clute Road. This writer was fortunate enough to be in a party which arrived in time to get a good view of a Bald Eagle. This was in the actual proposed count circle - the Gun club is one of the richest birding areas in the circle. Here we added many birds such as Maryland yellowthroats, Ruddy ducks, Pied-billed grebes, 2 Vermilion flycatchers, Swamp sparrows, Blue-gray gnatcatchers, Red-headed woodpeckers and an American bittern, and our first big find of the trip, a male and female Wilson's warbler(6WR). Leaving the Gun Club we proceeded toward Lake Jackson and at a lake along the road we located a flock of White ibis.

"We continued to Lake Jackson...Here on the lake we saw about 500 or more ducks including numerous Ring-necked (5WR), Canvasbacks and a few Mallards. After lunch we drove to the Bryan beach area where we added Dowitchers, Avocets, Long-billed curlews, Royal, Caspian, Forster's and Gull-billed terns, a Seaside sparrow, white pelicans and about 500 more ducks, including Pintails, Green-wing teals...On the beach we found Sanderlings, Willets and two Eared grebes in the rough surf. Most of the group ended the day at Surfside beach. Birds seen along this beach included 3 Common loons, a Spotted sandpiper and Brown pelicans.

"We realize the potential of the Freeport area is much higher but the big question is how high? Although this trip did not definitely tell which of the two proposed areas was superior it showed

some definite advantages for this area as well as disadvantages. After more trips to both areas perhaps we can choose the best location for our 1957 Christmas count. Members and visitors who attended this field trip included: Ronald Fowler, Henry and Mickey Aldrich, Mary Clark, Josiephine Wilkin, Helen Wolfer, Charles, Jodie and Cathy Aves, Ella Wolfer, Carl Aiken, Jay Atlas, Virginia Pieratt, Frank Pieratt, Carrie Holcomb, Jerry Baker, Eva Gilman, Vic Emanuel, Nance Cunningham, C.B. Gilman, Louise and Henry Hoffman, Hyrum and Nora Strong, Jimmie Murray and Austin Evans..."

Note: Highest Houston CBC was 192 in 1963; first Freeport CBC (SW Brazoria Co.) 105 in 1963; 15th Freeport, 1971, all-time high n. of Mexico 226-N.P.

BOOK REVIEW: Connie Hagar: The Life History of a Texas Birdwatcher by Wanda L. Smith

"People are always saying how smart I am. Well, the truth is I'm not really smart, I'm just a sticker. I stick on a problem until things unfold." This was the secret behind Connie Hagar's excellence in all of her pursuits, from bird identification to playing the piano. Her determination also paid off when convincing prominent ornithologists such as Dr. Harry Oberholser of the validity of her sightings. Dr. Oberholser demanded perfection when accepting data for his *Birds of Texas*, so their first day of birding together was to test her skills. This encounter proved to be one of the more memorable experiences in Mrs. Hagar's life.

Martha Conger Neblett grew up in Corsicana, Texas at the turn of the century. Her father, a prominent judge, taught Connie and her sister, Bert, to appreciate nature. Shortly after his death, Connie and Bert decided to honor their father by learning all of the birds, wildflowers and butterflies in Navarro County. This endeavor continued until Connie and her husband, Jack, decided to move to Rockport so that Connie could study birds and, as she put it, "to learn those shorebirds if it takes the rest of my life!" The fact that she learned to identify and chronicle so many birds so well gained her a special place among the birding elite.

The book is filled with Connie's remarkable bird sightings as well as accounts of distinguished visitors to the Hagers' Rockport Cottages and is accented by a candid view into her personal life. The author, Karen (Kay) McCracken, has written Connie Hagar's story in a very heartwarming and intimate way, as only a close friend could have done.

This book can be purchased locally and from Texas A&M University Press, P.O. Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843, for \$18.95.

THE 1986 BIRDATHON: AN EVALUATION FOR 1987 TEAMS

by Bob Behrstock

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 0 Pied-billed Grebe | 3 Broad-winged Hawk | 5 Laughing Gull | 3 Bank Swallow | 0 Cerulean Warbler |
| 5 Eared Grebe | 2 Swainson's Hawk | 0 Franklin's Gull | 0 Cliff Swallow | 3 Bl.-&-Wh. Warbler |
| 5 Am. White Pelican | 1 Red-tailed Hawk | 1 Bonaparte's Gull | 5 Barn Swallow | 5 Am. Redstart |
| 4 D-c. Cormorant | 1 Am. Kestrel | 5 Ring-billed Gull | 4 Blue Jay | 1 Prothon. Warbler |
| 5 Oliv. Cormorant | 1 Merlin | 5 Herring Gull | 5 Am. Crow | 3 Worm-eating " |
| 3 Anhinga | 5 N. Bobwhite | 5 Gull-billed Tern | 1 Fish Crow | 2 Swainson's " |
| 0 Am. Bittern | 1 Yellow Rail | 5 Caspian Tern | 4 C. Chickadee | 3 Ovenbird |
| 5 Least Bittern | 4 Clapper Rail | 5 Royal Tern | 4 Tufted Titmouse | 5 N. Waterthrush |
| 5 Great Blue Heron | 4 King Rail | 5 Sandwich Tern | 2 Brown-h. Nuthatch | 1 La. Waterthrush |
| 5 Great Egret | 2 Virginia Rail | 5 Common Tern | 4 Carolina Wren | 3 Kentucky Warbler |
| 5 Snowy Egret | 5 Sora | 5 Forster's Tern | 1 Sedge Wren | 0 Mourning Warbler |
| 5 Little Blue Heron | 4 Purple Gallinule | 5 Least Tern | 4 Marsh Wren | 5 C. Yellowthroat |
| 5 Tri-colored Heron | 5 Common Moorhen | 2 Black Tern | 1 Ruby-cr. Kinglet | 3 Hooded Warbler |
| 5 Reddish Egret | 5 Am. Coot | 5 Black Skimmer | 4 Bl.-gr. Gnatcatcher | 0 Wilson's Warbler |
| 5 Cattle Egret | 5 Black-bellied Plover | 5 Rock Dove | 1 Eastern Bluebird | 0 Canada Warbler |
| 4 Green-backed Heron | 5 L. Golden-Plover | 0 Ringed Turtle-Dove | 3 Veery | 3 Yellow-b. Chat |
| 5 Black-cr. Night-Heron | 5 Snowy Plover | 5 Mourning Dove | 3 Gray-cheeked Thrush | 4 Summer Tanager |
| 3 Yellow-cr. " " | 5 Wilson's Plover | 3 White-winged Dove | 3 Swainson's Thrush | 4 Scarlet Tanager |
| 5 White Ibis | 5 Semipalm. Plover | 3 Inca Dove | 4 Wood Thrush | 5 N. Cardinal |
| 5 White-faced Ibis | 5 Piping Plover | 1 Black-billed Cuckoo | 1 Am. Robin | 5 Rose-b. Grosbeak |
| 5 Roseate Spoonbill | 5 Killdeer | 1 Yellow-b. Cuckoo | 4 Gray Catbird | 5 Blue Grosbeak |
| 4 Fulvous Wh.-Duck | 4 Am. Oystercatcher | 3 Common Barn-Owl | 5 N. Mockingbird | 5 Indigo Bunting |
| 1 Gr. White-fr. Goose | 5 Black-necked Stilt | 1 E. Screech-Owl | 4 Brown Thrasher | 5 Painted Bunting |
| 1 Snow Goose | 4 Am. Avocet | 1 Great Horned Owl | 4 Cedar Waxwing | 5 Dickcissel |
| 1 Ross' Goose | 5 Greater Yellowlegs | 3 Barred Owl | 5 Loggerhead Shrike | 1 Rufous-s. Towhee |
| 1 Canada Goose | 5 Lesser Yellowlegs | 5 Common Nighthawk | 5 Eur. Starling | 1 Bachman's Sparrow |
| 3 Wood Duck | 4 Solitary Sandpiper | 3 Chuck-will's-widow | 4 White-eyed Vireo | 0 Lark Sparrow |
| 0 Green-winged Teal | 5 Willet | 4 Chimney Swift | 0 Solitary Vireo | 5 Savannah Sparrow |
| 5 Mottled Duck | 4 Spotted Sandpiper | 5 Ruby-t. Hummingbird | 2 Yellow-throated Vireo | 0 Grasshopper " |
| 1 Mallard | 4 Upland Sandpiper | 4 Belted Kingfisher | 1 Warbling Vireo | 1 LeConte's " |
| 1 Northern Pintail | 4 Whimbrel | 4 Red-h. Woodpecker | 0 Philadelphia Vireo | 2 Sharp-tailed " |
| 5 Blue-winged Teal | 5 Long-billed Curlew | 4 Red-bellied " | 4 Red-eyed Vireo | 3 Seaside Sparrow |
| 5 Northern Shoveler | 2 Hudsonian Godwit | 0 Yellow-b. Sapsucker | 3 Blue-winged Warbler | 2 Lincoln's Sparrow |
| 4 Gadwall | 5 Marbled Godwit | 4 Downy Woodpecker | 0 Golden-winged Warbler | 2 Swamp Sparrow |
| 1 Am. Wigeon | 5 Ruddy Turnstone | 1 Hairy Woodpecker | 4 Tennessee Warbler | 0 White-thr. " |
| 0 Lesser Scaup | 2 Red Knot | 4 Pileated " | 1 Orange-cr. " | 1 White-cr. " |
| 1 Scaup sp. | 5 Sanderling | 0 Olive-s. Flycatcher | 0 Nashville Warbler | 1 Bobolink |
| 0 Red-br. Merganser | 5 Semipalm. Sandpiper | 4 E. Wood-Pewee | 4 Northern Parula | 5 Red-w. Blackbird |
| 2 Ruddy Duck | 5 Western Sandpiper | 0 Yellow-b. Flycatcher | 4 Yellow Warbler | 5 E. Meadowlark |
| 5 Black Vulture | 5 Least Sandpiper | 2 Acadian Flycatcher | 0 Chestnut-s. Warbler | 5 Great-t. Grackle |
| 5 Turkey Vulture | 4 White-rumped Sandp. | 0 Least Flycatcher | 2 Magnolia Warbler | 5 Boat-t. Grackle |
| 3 Osprey | 3 Baird's Sandpiper | 2 Traill's-type " | 0 Cape May Warbler | 4 Common Grackle |
| 3 Black-sh. Kite | 5 Pectoral Sandpiper | 3 Great Crested Flyc. | 5 Yellow-rumped " | 2 Bronzed Cowbird |
| 1 Mississippi Kite | 5 Dunlin | 0 Western Kingbird | 1 Black-thr. Green W. | 5 Brown-h. " |
| 4 Northern Harrier | 4 Stilt Sandpiper | 5 Eastern Kingbird | 1 Blackburnian Warbler | 4 Orchard Oriole |
| 0 Sharp-shinned Hawk | 2 Buff-br. Sandpiper | 5 Scissor-t. Flycatcher | 2 Yellow-throated " | 4 Northern Oriole |
| 0 Cooper's Hawk | 5 Short-b. Dowitcher | 3 Horned Lark | 3 Pine Warbler | 5 House Sparrow |
| 1 Accipiter sp. | 5 Long-b. Dowitcher | 5 Purple Martin | 1 Prairie Warbler | |
| 3 Red-shouldered Hawk | 1 Common Snipe | 4 Tree Swallow | 2 Bay-breasted Warbler | |
| | 3 Wilson's Phalarope | 3 N. Rough-w. Swallow | 5 Blackpoll Warbler | |

The Houston Audubon Society Birdathon has been scheduled for April 25th, 1987. Last year's event fielded six teams and raised money for several conservation organizations and a private research study. The team of Art MacKinnon and John Kendall scored the second highest northeastern Texas April Big Day total. Ted L. Eubanks, Jr. and Jim Morgan broke the American Birding Association (and world?) shorebird record with a total of 36 species. Since all teams will want to better last year's score, and new teams might profit from some hints, I present the above chart of sightings, which is based on five teams only, reporting a total of 218 species. I thank Laura Singleton for passing the teams' data sheets to me for evaluation.

Of the 87 species seen by all five teams, using my arbitrary categories (i.e. Osprey is a waterbird, Swamp Sparrow is not), 54 species are waterbirds, and 33 are not. While some of these are shy (sora), or not particularly easy to identify (Semipalmated Sandpiper), most are common to abundant, many are large and gaudy, some are

noisy, and most will be seen by the average birder during a good day on the coast. Note that the list runs heavily toward migrants, and is poor in some site-specific local breeders like owls and woodpeckers. Teams would be well advised to include White Memorial Park, Lake Charlotte, or similar habitat for some of these woodland species.

Of the 44 species seen by four groups 15 are waterbirds and 29 are landbirds. 25 of the species can loosely be accounted for by being landbirds which were missed by Eubanks and Morgan in their pursuit of shorebirds. Indeed, only two species, Gadwall and Purple Gallinule, were waterbirds missed by them. Some of the species are territorial (woodpeckers), difficult to identify perhaps (Stilt and White-rumped Sandpipers) or difficult to spot at 60 miles per hour (Clapper Rail, Upland Sandpiper). Again I stress the importance of starting far enough inland or far enough north to get the chickadee-titmouse-woodpecker-type birds. Some of the species such as the orioles and tanagers

would probably have been seen by all groups if a good front had put down more individuals.

Of the 30 species seen by three teams six are waterbirds and 24 are landbirds. Several are stakeouts and need to be scouted out (Wood Duck, White-winged Dove, Inca Dove), while many are common migrants which were just not well represented that weekend. Again, check White Memorial Park for Banded Owl, night-heron, Red-shouldered Hawk, possible Osprey and Wood Duck, and singing Pine Warblers. Possible identification problems include Baird's Sandpiper and Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Of the 19 species seen by only two groups, six are waterbirds and 13 are landbirds. Some are highly habitat-specific and must be watched for in certain areas (Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Hudsonian Godwit, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Sharp-tailed Sparrow). Others will be found during scouting (late Ruddy Ducks, breeding Swainson's Warblers, lingering sparrows). Again, a disappointing migration accounts for flycatcher, vireo, warbler misses.

The 38 species seen by only one team included 11 waterbirds and 27 landbirds. An exceptional job of scouting enabled the Kendall-MacKinnon team to see many of these species. Many were lingerers and might have been missed altogether had the Birdathon been a week later. These might include the hawks, snipe, the kinglet, LeConte's and White-crowned Sparrow. The waterfowl may have included free-flying species attracted to tame or semitame birds. Nonetheless, anyone who has birded Hermann Park in the winter knows that tame birds can attract many additional species. Especially during slow migration many of these would be luck species.

Just so no team is content to rest on its laurels, be advised that according to the 6th Edition (1980) of A Birder's Checklist of the Upper Texas Coast, the late April possibilities marked "0" on the chart went unobserved. Of these 5 were common species, 10 fairly common and 14 uncommon. In addition to the species on the chart the checklist shows 92 more that were not seen, 28 of them rare, 47 very rare and 17 late April vagrants. There have also been some additions to the checklist since it was published.

I hope this material is of use to teams during their planning sessions. Naturally, the more birds seen, the more fun, and the more money to be raised for a variety of good causes. Side bets anyone?

REPORT ON SPRING CREEK CBC

by Mike Austin

The sixth annual Spring Creek CBC, sponsored by the Piney Woods Wildlife Society, was held on Saturday, January 3. Despite plummeting temperatures, strong winds and afternoon drizzle, a record number of both participants (49) and birds (93) were recorded. Individual bird numbers were about average for the count (8,000).

Large numbers of woodpeckers and Golden-crowned Kinglets were noted and a record number of sparrow species (13) were seen. There were, surprisingly, eight new species for the count: Northern Shoveler, Yellow-crowned Night-heron, American Bittern, Osprey (2), Northern Bobwhite, Grasshopper Sparrow, Forster's Tern and White-faced Ibis.

Encouraging signs were increased participation from birders outside our club (many thanks for your valuable contributions) and increased access to the remaining pristine areas within the count circle, particularly in Harris County. Discouraging were the harassment of some of our counters by a deer hunter who was obviously trespassing while our counters were not, and also the extensive cutting in W. G. Jones State Forest, ostensibly to control the pine bark beetle, which has resulted in a marked decline in both Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatch populations.

A SALUTE TO THE OUTGOING EDITOR

The Spoonbill lost an excellent editor when Wanda Smith resigned. In the months she has held the position we have been presented with interesting and informative articles in addition to our splendid Clearing House, edited by Ron Braun. Wanda has succeeded in addressing the varied interests of the members, not by waiting for material, but by soliciting book reviews by good writers as well as articles from members who have expertise and unusual experiences to share.

Once the material has been submitted, the editor's task is not just to pass it along to the typist. Besides checking spelling, grammar and dates, some articles must be cut to fit the available space, which is limited by ever-increasing printing and mailing costs. To cut articles that one has solicited, making sure that they read well and carry the sense, and to risk the reproaches of the authors is not an enviable task. Then there are the phone calls, made and received, to try and keep the published information full and accurate, and to coordinate the efforts of The Spoonbill staff.

Wanda has maintained a good relationship with all the other volunteers, and she has been gracious and forgiving of our occasional lapses even while bearing the brunt of any criticism. She has fulfilled the editor's job with distinction, and we new co-editors think that it will take two of us to fill her shoes. All the members of the OG owe Wanda their thanks for her dedication, skill and hard work.

Libby Price, Co-Editor

Clearing House - January, 1987

The Clearing House is a monthly record of bird sightings made on the Upper Texas Coast. How to read the CH: Location--(how many) date, observers. Common, widely distributed species on the UTC during the reported month are listed as follows: number of reports, (lowest # - highest #; total # of individuals seen), e.g. 8 reports (1-20;82). Noteworthy sightings will be underlined, capitalized, or both, according to their status. Birds with very rare, vagrant, accidental, or no status on the Checklist at the date of sighting require details. Sightings needing details but submitted without them will not be included in the regular Clearing House. All observations affecting the species' status on the current UTC Checklist must be accepted by the Checklist Committee. Documentation is a must for consideration by the Committee.

ABBREVIATION CODES

ANWR = Anahuac NWR
 BBSP = Brazos Bend SP
 BC = Brazoria Co.
 BF = Bolivar Flats
 BNWR = Brazoria NWR
 Bolv = Bolivar Peninsula
 BR = Barker Reservoir
 CC = Chambers Co.
 CSP = Challenger 7 Pk
 EG = E. Galveston
 Galv = Galveston
 GC = Galveston Co.
 GISP = Galveston Is. SP

H = Houston
 King = Kingwood
 NH = N. Houston
 NHC = N. Harris Co.
 NWH = NW Houston
 Sea = Seabrook
 SJS = San Jacinto SP
 SLP = San Luis Pass
 SWH = SW Houston
 TC = Texas City
 TCD = Texas City Dike
 WGI = W. Galveston Is.
 WHC = W. Harris Co.
 WOB = White Oak Bayou

185 Species reported this month

Loon, Red-throated: TCD-(1)31, SBW (Notes, ed.)
 Loon, Common: 9 reports (1-30;148)
 Grebe, Pied-billed: 17 reports (1-30;189)
 Grebe, Horned: TCD-(10)18, MT; TC-(1)31, SBW (Notes, ed.)
 Grebe, Eared: 11 reports (1-50;174)
 Gannet, Northern: Galv-(350)31, SBW (See CH Editor's Notes for additional comments, ed.)
 Pelican, American White: 16 reports (1-200;594)
 Pelican, Brown: BF-(1)18, MT (Notes, ed.)
 Cormorant, Double-crested: 22 reports (1-200;668)
 Cormorant, Olivaceous: 9 reports (3-30;75)
 cormorant, sp.: BC-(15)17, PH
 Anhinga: BNWR-(1)4, RU; ANWR-(1)7, MH
 Bittern, American: ANWR-(2)7, MH; (1)31, MT
 Heron, Great Blue: 21 reports (1-21;95)
 Egret, Great: 25 reports (1-70;237)
 Egret, Snowy: 16 reports (1-140;240)
 Heron, Little Blue: 9 reports (1-2;10)
 Heron, Tricolored: 9 reports (1-5;20)
 Egret, Reddish: 5 reports (1-2;7)
 Egret, Cattle: 14 reports (1-100;246)
 Heron, Green-backed: CC/GC-(1)18, RU
 Night-Heron, Black-crowned: 12 reports (1-150;355)
 Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned: BNWR-(7)4, RU
 Ibis, White: 9 reports (3-54;147)
 Ibis, White-faced: 7 reports (1-145;384)
 Spoonbill, Roseate: 12 reports (1-25;90)
 Goose, Greater White-fronted: 10 reports (5-3000;3795)
 Goose, Snow: 16 reports (2-12000;32227)
 (Goose, Blue): 4 reports (400-3000;5600)
 Goose, Ross: ANWR-(2)7, MH; WHC-(2)24, OG
 Goose, Canada: 5 reports (5-1200;1443)
 Duck, Wood: King-(2)11, SG; WHC-(4)24, OG
 Teal, Green-winged: 7 reports (3-1400;2418)
 Duck, Mottled: 12 reports (2-16;71)
 Mallard: 5 reports (1-10;21)
 Pintail, Northern: 9 reports (10-800;1801)
 Teal, Blue-winged: 6 reports (5-500;585)
 Teal, Cinnamon: WHC-(1)18, MBB; (1)24, OG
 Shoveler, Northern: 13 reports (5-3000;4456)
 Gadwall: 13 reports (3-150;495)
 Wigeon, American: 7 reports (2-90;201)
 Canvasback: 9 reports (1-190;425)
 Duck, Ring-necked: 7 reports (1-150;202)
 Scaup, Greater: CC/GC-(2)18, RU; TCD-(2)31, SBW
 Scaup, Lesser: 9 reports (3-1000;1155)
 scaup, sp.: GC-(200)4, RD; GISP-(1)18, MT; TCD-(50)24, BEW
 Goldeneye, Common: BNWR-(2)4, RU; TCD-(2)10, MP
 Bufflehead: 8 reports (2-90;118)
 Merganser, Hooded: SJS- (8)18, WBG; (83)21, DM
 Merganser, Red-breasted: 10 reports (1-60;140)
 Duck, Ruddy: 10 reports (6-300;149)
 Vulture, Black: 7 reports (1-15;29)
 Vulture, Turkey: 20 reports (1-27;132)
 Osprey: Sea-(4)4, RD
 Kite, Black-shouldered: 13 reports (1-12;41)
 Eagle, Bald: WHC-(2 ad.)18, MBB; (4 inc 2 ad, 1 subad)20, CP; (1 ad.)24, OG
 Harrier, Northern: 18 reports (1-50;156)
 Hawk, Sharp-shinned: NWH-(1)1-31, VL; NH-(1)3, WC; TCD-(1)24, FC
 Hawk, Cooper's: WOB-(1)7, 30, WC
 Hawk, Red-shouldered: 5 reports (1-15)
 Hawk, White-tailed: CSP-(1)10, MP; BR-(2 ad)24, BH (Resident localities, ed.)
 Hawk, Red-tailed: 21 reports (1-78;136) inc SWH - (1 intergrade)24, BH (Notes, ed.)

(Hawk, Harlan's): WHC-(1)24, OG
 (Hawk, Kinglet): CC-(1)7, MH; WHC-(1)20, CP (Notes, ed.)
 Caracara, Crested: BNWR-(1)4, RU; WHC-(2)20, CP
 Kestrel, American: 32 reports (1-52;208)
 Merlin: CC/GC-(1)18, RU
 Falcon, Peregrine: CC-(2)7, MH
 Turkey, Wild: WHC-(2)1, DD (Notes, ed.)
 Bobwhite, Northern: ANWR-(15)7, MH; WHC-(15)24, OG
 Rail, King: ANWR-(1)7, MH
 Moorhen, Common: 7 reports (1-600;684)
 Coot, American: 15 reports (5-2000;4005)
 Crane, Sandhill: 5 reports (1-320;626)
 BNWR-(320)4, RU; BC-(1)9, PM; WGI-(90)10, MP;
 WHC-(15)24, MT; GC-(200)24, BEW
 Plover, Black-bellied: 11 reports (1-14;53)
 Plover, Snowy: SLP-(1)10, MP
 Plover, Semipalmated: TCD-(4)10, MP; BF-(5)18, RU
 Plover, Piping: SLP-(8)10, MP
 Killdeer: 24 reports (1-90;320)
 Oystercatcher, American: TCD-(2)10, MP; (4)24, FC; (2)24, BEW; (2)25, SG
 Stilt, Black-necked: ANWR-(20)7, MH; (1)31, MT; Bolv-(1)18, RU
 Avocet, American: 7 reports (5-500;612)
 Yellowlegs, Greater: 5 reports (1-5;13)
 Yellowlegs, Lesser: ANWR-(15)7, MH; (4)31, MT; TCD-(1)24, FC
 Willet: 10 reports (1-7;32)
 Sandpiper, Spotted: TCD-(1)4, RD; (1)18, MT; (1)24, FC; BF-(3)18, MT
 Curlew, Long-billed: 8 reports (1-35;65)
 Godwit, Marbled: GISP-(1)10, MP; GC-(1)18, JB
 Turnstone, Ruddy: GC-(35)4, RD; TCD-(5)10, MP; (1)24, FC
 Sanderling: 6 reports (4-15;57)
 Sandpiper, Western: BNWR-(6)4, RU; TCD-(1)4, RD; ANWR-(63)31, MT
 Sandpiper, Least: BNWR-(9)4, RU
 Dunlin: BNWR-(3)4, RU; ANWR-(135)7, MH; SJS-(22)21, DM; EG-(20)31, SBW
 Dowitcher, Short-billed: ANWR-(3)7, MH
 Dowitcher, Long-billed: ANWR-(7)7, MH; WHC-(300)18, MBB
 dowitcher, sp.: SJS-(50)18, WBG; WHC-(15)24, OG; TCD-(30)24, FC
 Snipe, Common: ANWR-(18)7, MH; WHC-(6)24, OG
 Jaeger, Pomarine: Galv-(1)3, SBW (Notes, ed.)
 Gull, Laughing: 14 reports (4-2000;5394)
 inc. NWH-(1)1-31, VL (Very unusual location, ed.)
 Gull, Bonaparte's: 9 reports (1-80;203)
 Gull, Ring-billed: 17 reports (2-500;1137)
 Gull, Herring: 9 reports (1-25;64)
 Kittiwake, Black-legged: TCD-(1)4, RD; (1)11, DR; (1)18, JB (Notes, ed.); (1)18, MT; (1)18, RU (All sightings presumably of the same individual, ed.)
 gull, sp.: BC-(2)17, PM
 Tern, Gull-billed: TC-(3)31, SBW
 Tern, Caspian: 7 reports (1-20;47)
 Tern, Royal: 7 reports (1-5;18)
 Tern, Common: TCD-(1)24, FC; Galv-(7)31, SBW
 Tern, Forster's: 12 reports (2-160;502)
 Skimmer, Black: 6 reports (1-600;715)
 Dove, Rock: 7 reports (2-50;184)
 Turtle-Dove, Ringed: NWH-(1-5)1-31, VL; SWH-(2)26, SBW
 Dove, Mourning: 18 reports (1-35;161)
 Dove, Inca: 12 reports (2-20;70)
 Barn-Owl, Common: WHC-(1)18, MBB
 Screech-Owl, Eastern: Algoa-(1)1-31, DDW; Heights-(1)9, WC; King-(1 heard)11, JB
 Owl, Great Horned: H-(1)1-30, MT; BBSP-(1)10, MT; WOB-(1)11, WC
 Owl, Barred: Algoa-(1-2)1-31, DDW; WHC-(2)24, SBW
 Whip-poor-will: Armand Bayou-(1)28, MA (Notes, ed.)
 Hummingbird, Rufous: Algoa-(1)5-7, DDW (Notes submitted, ed.)
 hummingbird, sp.: King-(1 Selasphorus)11, SG (Notes submitted, ed.)
 Kingfisher, Belted: 20 reports (1-21;58)
 Woodpecker, Red-headed: King-(2)11, SG
 Woodpecker, Red-bellied: 12 reports (1-10;35)
 Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: 6 reports (1-3;11)
 Woodpecker, Downy: 12 reports (1-6;23)
 Flicker, Northern: 9 reports (1-2;11)
 Woodpecker, Pileated: BBSP-(3)10, MT; King-(1)18, 24, SG; (1 heard)25, JB
 Phoebe, Eastern: 15 reports (1-8;33)
 Flycatcher, Vermilion: 5 reports (1-2;7)
 Lark, Horned: ANWR-(3)7, MH; EG-(3)31, SBW
 Swallow, Tree: 5 reports (2-80;121)
 Jay, Blue: 14 reports (1-15;83)
 Crow, American: 21 reports (1-190;395)
 Chickadee, Carolina: 13 reports (1-8;52)
 Titmouse, Tufted: 10 reports (1-15;39)
 Nuthatch, Brown-headed: King-(3)1, SG; (1 heard)1, (2 heard)25, (1)31, JB
 Creeper, Brown: WOB-(1)19, WC; WHC-(2)24, OG
 Wren, Carolina: 11 reports (1-15;35)
 Wren, House: King-(1)1, 24, SG; WHC-(1)18, MBB; Alief-(1)25, FC
 Wren, Winter: WOB-(2)1-31, WC; King-(1)24, SG
 Wren, Sedge: CC/GC-(1)18, RU
 Wren, Marsh: WHC-(2)24, OG
 Kinglet, Golden-crowned: 6 reports (1-4;13)
 Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: 17 reports (1-35;144)
 Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: 11 reports (1-3;26)
 Bluebird, Eastern: 6 reports (1-8;30)
 Thrush, Hermit: King-(2)11, JB; WHC-(1)31, SBW; WOB-(2)31, WC
 Robin, American: 20 reports (1-500;2408)
 Catbird, Gray: ANWR-(1)7, MH; Algoa-(1)7, DDW
 Mockingbird, Northern: 22 reports (1-25;123)
 Thrasher, Brown: 10 reports (1-1;10)
 Pipit, Water: TCD-(25)24, FC
 Waxwing, Cedar: 11 reports (1-500;947)
 Shrike, Loggerhead: 22 reports (1-35;108)

Starling, European: 20 reports (1-100;444)
 Vireo, Solitary: King-(1)1,SG; WOB-(1)1-31,WC
 Warbler, Orange-crowned: 5 reports (1-4;10)
 Warbler, Yellow-rumped: 23 reports (1-75;370)
 Warbler, Yellow-throated: NHC-(1)27,GCI (Notes submitted, ed.)
 Warbler, Pine: 11 reports (1-5;37)
 Warbler, Palm: GISP-(1)10,MP
 Ovenbird: Algoa-(1)13,26,DDW (Described last month, ed.)
 Yellowthroat, Common: TCD-(1)4,RD; ANWR-(15)7,MH
 Warbler, Wilson's: Alief-(1)25,FC
 Cardinal, Northern: 19 reports (1-30;119)
 Towhee, Rufous-sided: King-(1)18,SG
 Sparrow, Chipping: WHC-(1)24,OG;(1)24,MT; WOB-(1)31,WC
 Sparrow, Field: King-(1)1,SG; WHC-(5)18,MBB
 Sparrow, Vesper: WHC-(3)18,MBB;(5)24,OG
 Sparrow, Savannah: 6 reports (2-10;176)
 Sparrow, Le Conte's: WHC-(1)24,OG
 Sparrow, Seaside: ANWR-(18)7,MH;(6)18,MT;
 WHC-(1)24,GC (Notes - very unusual location, ed.)
 Sparrow, Fox: King-(1)18,24,SG; WHC-(1)18,MBB;
 Alief-(1)25,FC
 Sparrow, Song: BBSP-(2)10,MT; GISP-(1)18,MT; WHC-(5)24,MT
 Sparrow, Lincoln's: 6 reports (1-4;10)
 Sparrow, Swamp: 5 reports (1-200;206)
 Sparrow, White-throated: 9 reports (1-6;38)
 Sparrow, White-crowned: WHC-(15)4,24,SBW;(40)18,MBB;
 (15)24,OG
 Sparrow, Harris': WHC-(4)18,MBB;(1)24,OG
 Junco, Dark-eyed: WHC-(3)4,SBW
 Blackbird, Red-winged: 15 reports (1-400;1048)
 Meadowlark, Eastern: 11 reports (1-30;145)
 Meadowlark, sp.: WHC-(100)18,MBB; TCD-(1)24,FC
 Blackbird, Brewer's: WHC-(200)24,OG;(1)25,MT;
 TC-(25)31,SBW
 Grackle, Great-tailed: 14 reports (1-150;480)
 Grackle, Boat-tailed: ANWR-(100)7,MH;(8)18,MT;(75)31,MT;
 SJSF-(2)18,MBG
 Grackle, Common: 8 reports (5-200;263)
 Cowbird, Bronzed: Galv-(2)31,SBW (Notes submitted, ed.)
 Cowbird, Brown-headed: 4 reports (1-1000;1115)
 blackbird, sp.: BC-(690)17,PM;(200)18,PM
 (Oriole, Bullock's): Pasadena-(1 female)4,DM
 Siskin, Pine: King-(2)11,SG; WOB-(1)19,WC
 Goldfinch, American: 13 reports (1-150;520)
 Sparrow, House: 9 reports (1-250;400)

CONTRIBUTORS - January, 1987

BEW=Bob & Edith Willman; BH=Bob Honig; CP=Jerry Caraviotis, Jim Prentice; DD=David Dauphin; DDW=Diana & Doyle Wise; DM=Derek Muschalek; DR=DD, Debra Richards; FC=Fred Collins; GC=Bob Gard, Ronnie Carroll; GCI=Gary Clark; JB=John Buckman; MA=Mike Austin; MBB=Jim Morgan, Ron & Marcia Braun; MH=Art MacKinnon, Dorothy Holmes; MLO=M. L. Owen; MP=DM, Steve Price; MT=Martin Tracy; OG=Ornithology Group field trip reported by Ron & Marcia Braun; PM=Peggy Milstead; RD=Don & Lee Richardson, Gil Douglas; RU=Richard Uzar; SBW=Steve & Beverly Williams; SG=Steve Gast; VL=Vanessa Luce; WBG=Wally & Bozema Gardner; WC=Wesley Cureton

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - January, 1987

Red-throated Loon: 1/31/87 by Steve Williams
 This bird was sighted about 150 yds off Texas City Dike, where direct comparisons could be made with Lesser Scaup & a Common Loon. It was about 3/4 as large as the Common Loon, had a sharp, thin, upturned bill, & was slightly paler gray on the back & on top of the head than the Common Loon. The paleness of the gray on the back was not as marked as Field Guides claim it to be when seen at a distance. The observation was for about 2 min with a 25X scope in good light.

Horned Grebe: 1/31/87 by Steve Williams
 There was a single individual of this species sighted in an irrigation canal east of the junction of FM 1764 & Tx 3 near Tex City. The bird was much whiter on the face, neck, & underparts than the similar Eared Grebe, & had a contrasting black cap above the white face. It was seen from about 30 yds with a 25X scope in good light for 2 minutes.

Brown Pelican: 1/18/87 by Martin Tracy
 Seen at Bollivar Flats, 3:30 pm, high overcast, good light. Seen at 100m+ for 30-40 sec. First year bird. Large brown bird with large dark gray 'pelican' bill. White crown. Little contrast between flight feathers and wing coverts. Seen with Bushnell Spacemaster with 22X wide-angle eyepiece.

Red-tailed Hawk (apparent intergrade between Harlan's Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*) & black-phase Western Red-tailed Hawk (*B. j. calurus*): by Bob Honig
 Has been present on Alief-Clodine Rd between Synott & Eldridge in W. Houston since late Dec. 1986; observed 20 & 26 Dec. 1986 & 24 Jan. 1987. Most frequently seen perched on or flying between transmission line towers on N side of Alief-Clodine Rd, also patrolling over adjacent field. Head, nape, back, throat, breast, belly, wing linings, & dorsal wing surfaces black (i.e., entire plumage except tail & ventral surfaces of flight feathers); scattered light mottling on breast, back, & nape. Eyes dark. Bill light, appeared slaty blue-gray,

with black tip. Flight feathers white ventrally, tipped with black, & with faint dark barring visible only a fairly close range. Tail white except for a well defined, bold, black subterminal band & central tail feathers dusky red dorsally (these feathers appear sooty rather than red unless seen in good light). On 20 Dec. vocalized numerous times; typical Red-tailed Hawk scream. This bird shows characteristics of both *B. j. calurus* black phase (red in central tail feathers) & *B. j. harlani* (white tail with bold, black subterminal band & white mottling on the black plumage). Seen also on 26 Dec. 1986 by Keith Arnold, Tom Olson, Steve Sheffield, & Tim White, on the Buffalo Bayou CBC. (For reference, see *Am. Birds* 40(2), 197-202, summer 1986 & *Am. Birds* 39(2), 127-133, summer 1985).

Krider's Red-tailed Hawk: 1/20/87 by Jerry Caraviotis
 A medium-sized *buteo* first spotted atop a wooden electrical line post along Sharp Rd., just W of Katy-Hockley Rd. Clear snow-white breast & belly, without even a hint of a belly band. Head white with lines of brown extending from the base of the beak over the eyes & along the lower mandible. Tail, viewed from the top, a uniform very pale brownish-pink. Back & upper wings a mottled light brown. Closest views right under perched bird. 7X50 binocs under a very heavy overcast sky.

Wild Turkey: 1/1/87 by David Dauphin
 W. Harris Co. (~1/2 mi E of Katy-Hockley Cut-off Rd down Cypress Ck on S bank (Borkstadt's side)). Two turkeys seen well but briefly from a few ft to a few yds with no binocs. Birds were seen running along our side of Cypress Ck then they flew across creek to other side. Large (~4 ft. long x 3-4 ft. wingspan) heavy iridescent grayish-brown birds with round wings & long tails. One had a beard. No white seen in wings or tail while in flight or running.

Pomarine Jaeger: 1/31/87 by Steve Williams
 This sighting was made from the Galveston Seawall at 83d St, where one individual was observed on January 31 for about 3 min. In good light only about 50 yds offshore. It was the same size as a nearby Herring Gull and very similar in its robust, stocky build. It was a well-marked light phase bird, with white near the wingtips, dark back, black cap, whitish underneath with grayish on the sides, and with short, slightly protruding central tail feathers. The burly, stocky build eliminates Parasitic Jaeger which is smaller and more slender. The lack of long tail feathers also eliminates Long-tailed Jaeger, as does the build. I could not see the exact shape of the tail feathers. The bird was observed for 3 min. In good light before it flew out to sea by 25X scope.

Black-legged Kittiwake: 1/4/87 by Don Richardson
 Equipment: 7X, 8X, & variable binocs - Scope at x30. Conditions: light plumage - exc; legs - good. Dist 30-40m. Observation was for 15 min. Location: Tex City Dike. Black bill, black eye, black spot behind the eye, black collar half way around the lower neck, black tail band. Black in the wing appeared to be in the secondary coverts and primaries (The wing was never seen unfolded). Legs were dark gray - feet black) size was similar to nearby Laughing & smaller than Ring-bill. Tail was slightly forked but nearly square.

Black-legged Kittiwake: 1/11/87 by David Dauphin
 Texas City Dike. Bright light, 30 yds - 3 ft. with/w/o scope & binocs, photographed. Immature bird seen perched & in flight. All white except, short black beak, black legs, black post ocular spot, black eye, wide black nape band, black band on end of notched tail, black "M" on back extending into black primaries. Gray mantle. Larger than Bonaparte's. Same length as Laughing but shorter wingspan. Heavier appearing than adjacent Laughing Gulls.

Additional Comments on Black-legged Kittiwake: 1/18/87 by John Buckman
 The bird was so tame it seemed fearless. I approached within 6 ft & the bird barely stirred. The obvious (& perhaps correct) conclusion is that this is the bird's 1st exposure to humans & it doesn't know it has anything to fear. At close range the half-collar seemed very thick (3/4" - 1") in the center of the nape. The so-called spot behind the eye on this bird was actually a line about 1/8"-1/4" thick running from behind the eye up to the center of the crown & joining one running up the other side of the head. There was also a black triangle over the eye, apex up & a thin line ran from the apex to the top of the crown. I thought the head markings resembled those on winter Bonaparte's or C. Black-headed Gulls.

Whip-poor-will: 1/28/87 by Mike Austin
 Armand Bayou. Waiting with naturalist George Regmund on wooden porch on the E side of Armand Bayou NC bldg for a lecture to begin. Dusk, 65 degrees, sky partly cloudy, wind SW 15 mph - high temperature for the day 78, only 4 degrees under the record high. Listening for owls about 6:45 p.m. we heard an odd noise emanating from the woodland N of the headquarters bldg. We moved about 50 yd to the N side of the bldg & during the next 2 min the creature called about 4 times. I was sure, at once, by the hollow reedy call that we were hearing a caprimulgid although it never sang a complete song. I would estimate the bird was 100-200 yds distant in an oak woodland with a dense yaupon understorey. The bird gave a rolling, upslurred 1st note followed by a brief 2nd note. The 1st note seemed more like a western than an

eastern "Whip" introductory note but was quite unlike any note a Chuck-will's-widow would utter. After 3 or 4 brief calls the bird fell silent & did not call again in the next 10 min. I have a fair amount of experience with calling Whip-poor-wills, particularly eastern ones &, although I've tried to talk myself out of the I.D., I can't imagine what else it was heard. I note in Oberholser that Whip-poor-wills are rare winter residents along the immediate Gulf coast into Feb. & there are dots on our checklist through Jan. so I guess there are precedents for the bird's presence here in late Jan. I observed a large number of these birds at dusk around Royal Palm Hammock in Everglades NP, Florida during the 1st week of Feb. last year but none were "tuning up" as this bird must have been doing.

Seaside Sparrow: 1/24/87 by Bob Gard
Sightings: Porter Rd, W Harris Co.; heavy bill w/ thick base, short bright yellow eyebrow, white throat separated from white facial stripe by dark whisker, grayish cheek, brownish shoulder patch, yellowish cast to breast, back, darker buffy flanks, no obvious streaking on breast or sides, streaked brownish back, no prominent wing bars; Observed in good light about 11 am on partly cloudy day by 2 observers (Ronnie Carroll and me) from a distance of about 30 yds with 55x scope; seen for total of about 15 mins in 2 episodes perched about 4' high in weeds along edge of field - unobstructed view. Very unusual location for this bird; only obvious alternative would be the Grasshopper Sparrow, but bright yellow eyebrow along with clear throat whisker would seem to rule it out, also no crown striping was observed.

CH EDITOR'S NOTES - January, 1987

CORRECTIONS for Previous Issues

In the November 1986 Clearing House two contributors' initials were inadvertently listed identically, Gary Clark & Glenn Cureton (both GC). This can be corrected by noting Glenn Cureton's name next to the Selasphorus hummingbird sp. sighting credited to GC. All other sighting references appearing in the Nov 1986 CH refer, I believe, to Gary Clark.

At the end the Dec. 1986 Clearing House, after the "Summary of UTC Christmas Bird Counts", I gave the count code explanations somewhat incorrectly. Please note that BBCBC refers to Buffalo Bayou CBC (not Brazos Bend SP CBC as listed). The Brazos Bend SP CBC has a column coded BBSPCBC. My apologies to Bob Honig & Doug Williams, co-compilers for these two CBCs, for my mistake.

MORE UTC CBC SUMMARIES

Thanks to the U.S. Postal Service, the Armand Bayou CBC results did not arrive for inclusion with last month's summaries, even though George Regmund complied with my mailing deadline request. Thus the Armand Bayou CBC is summarized this month, along with two additional UTC area CBCs, the Galveston CBC & the Houston CBC, which were received after last month's Spoonbill deadline.

Previous Totals = Totals from last month's CBC Summary
ABCBC = Armand Bayou Nature Center CBC (George Regmund, co-compiler)
GCBC = Galveston CBC (Arch Dillard, compiler)
HCBC = Houston CBC (Celeste Hinds, co-compiler)
All CBC Totals = Sum for all CBCs reported this & last month

Note 1: Vagrant - 2 UTC records (last 9/16/84)
No notes received for this UTC sighting.

SUMMARY OF UTC CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS (Totals not included in the CH)

| Species | Previous Totals | ABCBC 12/19/86 | GCBC 12/27/86 | HCBC 12/27/86 | All CBC Totals |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Loon, Pacific | | | 6 | | 6 |
| Loon, Common | 11 | 19 | 50 | 10 | 90 |
| Grebe, Pied-billed | 781 | 20 | 170 | 38 | 1009 |
| Grebe, Horned | 1 | | | 10 | 11 |
| Grebe, Eared | 45 | 12 | 233 | 35 | 325 |
| Booby, Masked | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Gannet, Northern | 95 | | 24 | | 119 |
| Pelican, American White | 2780 | 43 | 676 | 472 | 3971 |
| Pelican, Brown | 10 | | 9 | | 19 |
| Cormorant, Double-crested | 5786 | 101 | 1274 | 2490 | 9651 |
| Cormorant, Olivaceous | 107 | 5 | 60 | 4 | 220 |
| cormorant, sp. | 2910 | 132 | 40 | 9 | 3082 |
| Anhinga | 312 | | | | 321 |
| Bittern, American | 18 | 2 | 1 | | 21 |
| Heron, Great Blue | 873 | 41 | 183 | 169 | 1266 |
| Egret, Great | 1749 | 59 | 192 | 258 | 2258 |
| Egret, Snowy | 1191 | 25 | 208 | 258 | 1682 |
| Heron, Little Blue | 246 | 2 | 26 | 21 | 295 |
| Heron, Tricolored | 219 | 8 | 39 | 33 | 299 |
| Egret, Reddish | 51 | | 21 | 3 | 75 |
| Egret, Cattle | 1050 | 76 | 138 | 165 | 1439 |
| Heron, Green-backed | 22 | | 4 | 2 | 28 |
| Night-Heron, Black-crowned | 947 | 56 | 101 | 194 | 1298 |
| Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned | 184 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 124 |
| Ibis, White | 4112 | | 159 | 301 | 4572 |
| Ibis, White-faced | 7185 | | | 32 | 7218 |
| Spoonbill, Roseate | 482 | | 38 | 42 | 562 |
| Whistling-Duck, Black-bellied | 1545 | | | 33 | 1545 |
| Goose, Greater White-fronted | 25782 | 40 | 356 | 42 | 26211 |
| Goose, Snow | 199699 | 2190 | 1947 | 2626 | 206462 |
| Goose, Blue | 63493 | 435 | 380 | 508 | 64816 |
| Goose, Ross' | 31 | | | | 31 |
| Goose, Canada | 6813 | | 45 | 24 | 6882 |
| goose, sp. | 3400 | | | | 3400 |
| Duck, Wood | 222 | 15 | | 20 | 257 |
| Teal, Green-winged | 23187 | | 399 | 3268 | 26854 |
| Duck, Mottled | 482 | 49 | 26 | 39 | 596 |
| Hallard | 2150 | 48 | 34 | 19 | 2251 |
| Pintail, Northern | 11877 | | 105 | 57 | 12039 |
| Teal, Blue-winged | 3076 | 3 | 27 | 22 | 3128 |
| Teal, Cinnamon | 74 | | | | 74 |
| Shoveler, Northern | 17754 | 1 | 230 | 502 | 18487 |
| Gadwall | 7117 | 6 | 104 | 111 | 7338 |
| Wigeon, American | 2439 | 2 | 168 | 39 | 2648 |
| Canvasback | 1279 | | 2 | 3 | 1284 |
| Redhead | 17 | | 2 | 2 | 21 |
| Duck, Ring-necked | 685 | 5 | 19 | 5 | 714 |
| Scaup, Greater | 4 | | 3 | | 3795 |
| Scaup, Lesser | 3273 | 30 | 157 | 328 | 3939 |
| scaup, sp. | 98 | 2 | 51 | | 151 |
| Oldsquaw | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Scoter, Black | 181 | | 15 | | 116 |
| Scoter, Surf | 20 | | 1 | 2 | 23 |
| Scoter, White-winged | 29 | | 2 | 1 | 32 |
| scoter, sp. | | | 68 | | 68 |
| Goldeneye, Common | 10 | 3 | 27 | 17 | 57 |
| Bufflehead | 51 | | 130 | 27 | 208 |
| Merganser, Hooded | 15 | | | 16 | 31 |
| Merganser, Red-breasted | 548 | 8 | 347 | 20 | 923 |
| Duck, Ruddy | 682 | 1 | 753 | 2116 | 3552 |
| duck, sp. | 11055 | | | | 11055 |
| Vulture, Black | 662 | 10 | | 2 | 674 |
| Vulture, Turkey | 1479 | 280 | | 7 | 1766 |
| Osprey | 12 | 14 | | 2 | 28 |
| Kite, Black-shouldered | 184 | 2 | 22 | 4 | 132 |
| Eagle, Bald | 33 | | | | 33 |
| Harrier, Northern | 675 | 2 | 21 | 23 | 721 |
| Hawk, Sharp-shinned | 42 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 47 |
| Hawk, Cooper's | 28 | | 1 | 5 | 34 |
| Accipiter, sp. | 6 | | | | 6 |
| Hawk, Red-shouldered | 252 | 4 | 1 | 30 | 287 |
| Hawk, White-tailed | 6 | | | | 6 |
| Hawk, Red-tailed | 676 | 17 | 19 | 69 | 781 |
| Hawk, Ferruginous | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Buteo, sp. | 5 | | 3 | | 8 |
| Eagle, Golden | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Caracara, Crested | 11 | | | | 11 |
| Kestrel, American | 1024 | 36 | 77 | 135 | 1272 |
| Merlin | 3 | | 1 | | 4 |
| Falcon, Peregrine | 7 | | 1 | | 8 |
| FALCON, PRAIRIE | 1 | | | | 1 |
| falcon, sp. | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Pheasant, Ring-necked | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Turkey, Wild | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Bobwhite, Northern | 412 | 3 | | 13 | 428 |
| Rail, Yellow | 26 | | | | 26 |
| Rail, Clapper | 59 | 1 | 14 | 8 | 82 |
| Rail, King | 35 | | | | 35 |
| Rail, Virginia | 54 | | | | 54 |
| Sora | 35 | | | 1 | 36 |
| Moorhen, Common | 1962 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1969 |

SUMMARY OF UTC CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS
(Totals not included in the CH)

| Species | Previous Totals | ABCBC 12/19/86 | GCBC 12/27/86 | HCBC 12/27/86 | All CBC Totals |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Coot, American | 18556 | 209 | 503 | 443 | 19811 |
| Crane, Sandhill | 2657 | 55 | 16 | 2 | 2730 |
| Plover, Black-bellied | 347 | 6 | 195 | 38 | 586 |
| Plover, Snowy | 20 | | 4 | | 24 |
| Plover, Wilson's | 1 | | 3 | | 4 |
| Plover, Semipalmated | 23 | 1 | 33 | 45 | 102 |
| Plover, Piping | 64 | | 71 | | 135 |
| Killdeer | 4151 | 226 | 138 | 508 | 5023 |
| PLOVER, MOUNTAIN | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Oystercatcher, American | 14 | | 65 | | 79 |
| Stilt, Black-necked | 269 | | 7 | 1 | 277 |
| Avocet, American | 1068 | | 1725 | 955 | 3748 |
| Yellowlegs, Greater | 366 | 5 | 41 | 66 | 478 |
| Yellowlegs, Lesser | 431 | 1 | 57 | 37 | 526 |
| Millet | 439 | | 370 | 65 | 874 |
| Sandpiper, Spotted | 75 | 13 | 13 | 38 | 139 |
| Whimbrel | 1 | | 1 | | 2 |
| Curlew, Long-billed | 971 | | 182 | 1 | 1154 |
| Godwit, Marbled | 55 | | 100 | | 155 |
| Turnstone, Ruddy | 93 | 16 | 62 | 3 | 174 |
| Knot, Red | 3 | | 61 | | 64 |
| Sanderling | 435 | 8 | 695 | 258 | 1396 |
| Sandpiper, Western | 1072 | | 1890 | 1770 | 4732 |
| Sandpiper, Least | 858 | 76 | 221 | 56 | 1211 |
| Dunlin | 762 | | 805 | 626 | 2193 |
| peep, sp. | 380 | | | | 380 |
| Sandpiper, Stilt | 1 | | | | 1 |
| sandpiper, sp. | 80 | | 1150 | | 1230 |
| Dowitcher, Short-billed | 80 | | 112 | 1027 | 1219 |
| Dowitcher, Long-billed | 1254 | | 81 | 1 | 1336 |
| dowitcher, sp. | 833 | | 1200 | 1311 | 3344 |
| Snipe, Common | 634 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 647 |
| Woodcock, American | 11 | 4 | | 1 | 16 |
| Jaeger, Pomarine | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Jaeger, Parasitic | 2 | | | | 2 |
| jaeger, sp. | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Gull, Laughing | 9632 | 122 | 5513 | 3670 | 18937 |
| Gull, Bonaparte's | 1412 | | 54 | 2 | 1468 |
| Gull, Ring-billed | 2833 | 47 | 2159 | 3223 | 8262 |
| Gull, Herring | 345 | 7 | 322 | 74 | 748 |
| Kittiwake, Black-legged | 1 | | | | 1 |
| gull, sp. | 2001 | | | | 2001 |
| Tern, Gull-billed | 12 | | 20 | 20 | 52 |
| Tern, Caspian | 383 | 16 | 78 | 32 | 509 |
| Tern, Royal | 521 | 17 | 240 | 33 | 811 |
| Tern, Sandwich | 11 | | 5 | | 16 |
| Tern, Common | 62 | 2 | 21 | 70 | 155 |
| Tern, Forster's | 2025 | 107 | 942 | 345 | 3419 |
| Skimmer, Black | 1236 | | 1482 | 4 | 2722 |
| Dove, Rock | 795 | 32 | 253 | 622 | 1702 |
| Turtle-dove, Ringed | 9 | | | | 9 |
| Dove, White-winged | 1 | | 64 | | 65 |
| Dove, Mourning | 4815 | 129 | 100 | 631 | 5675 |
| Dove, Inca | 60 | 17 | 135 | 215 | 427 |
| Ground-dove, Common | 43 | | 4 | | 47 |
| Parakeet, Monk | 16 | | | | 16 |
| Ani, Groove-billed | 32 | | 64 | 4 | 100 |
| Barn-Owl, Common | 26 | | | 5 | 31 |
| Screech-Owl, Eastern | 29 | 3 | | 89 | 121 |
| Owl, Great Horned | 32 | 1 | | 11 | 44 |
| Owl, Barred | 102 | | | 5 | 107 |
| Owl, Short-eared | 8 | | | 3 | 11 |
| nighthawk, sp. | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Hummingbird, Buff-bellied | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Hummingbird, Ruby-throated | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Hummingbird, Black-chinned | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Hummingbird, Anna's | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Hummingbird, Broad-tailed | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Hummingbird, Rufous | 3 | 1 | | 1 | 5 |
| Hummingbird, sp. | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Kingfisher, Belted | 344 | 23 | 60 | 57 | 484 |
| Woodpecker, Red-headed | 9 | | | 10 | 19 |
| Woodpecker, Red-bellied | 632 | 21 | 43 | 696 | 1352 |
| Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied | 338 | 8 | 3 | 21 | 370 |
| Woodpecker, Downy | 222 | 10 | | 14 | 246 |
| Woodpecker, Hairy | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Flicker, Northern | 358 | 26 | 24 | 55 | 463 |
| (Flicker, Red-shafted) | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Woodpecker, Pileated | 203 | 11 | | 22 | 236 |
| (Note 1) WOOD-PEWEE, WESTERN | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| FLYCATCHER, LEAST | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Empidonax, sp. | 8 | | | | 8 |
| Phoebe, Eastern | 1324 | 27 | 20 | 84 | 1455 |
| Phoebe, Say's | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Flycatcher, Vermillion | 30 | | 1 | | 31 |
| Flycatcher, Ash-throated | 5 | | | 1 | 6 |
| kingbird, sp. | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Lark, Horned | 272 | | 8 | | 280 |
| Swallow, Tree | 167 | 60 | | 43 | 270 |
| Swallow, Barn | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Jay, Blue | 688 | 44 | 3 | 100 | 835 |

SUMMARY OF UTC CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS
(Totals not included in the CH)

| Species | Previous Totals | ABCBC 12/19/86 | GCBC 12/27/86 | HCBC 12/27/86 | All CBC Totals |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Crow, American | 4795 | 282 | | 185 | 5262 |
| Chickadee, Carolina | 2545 | 55 | 1 | 148 | 2749 |
| Titmouse, Tufted | 1463 | 32 | | 34 | 1529 |
| Nuthatch, Red-breasted | 14 | | | | 14 |
| Creepers, Brown | 16 | 1 | | 1 | 18 |
| Wren, Carolina | 473 | 28 | | 90 | 591 |
| Wren, Bewick's | 4 | | | | 4 |
| Wren, House | 182 | 1 | 27 | 48 | 258 |
| Wren, Winter | 12 | | | | 12 |
| Wren, Sedge | 597 | 6 | 25 | 14 | 642 |
| Wren, Marsh | 180 | 2 | 11 | 10 | 183 |
| Kinglet, Golden-crowned | 252 | 10 | 1 | 43 | 306 |
| Kinglet, Ruby-crowned | 4623 | 278 | 153 | 641 | 5695 |
| Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray | 1052 | 5 | 16 | 224 | 1297 |
| Bluebird, Eastern | 531 | 12 | | 254 | 797 |
| Thrush, Hermit | 142 | 12 | 1 | 36 | 191 |
| Thrush, Wood | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Robin, American | 19307 | 95 | 157 | 2143 | 21702 |
| Catbird, Gray | 51 | | 5 | 6 | 62 |
| Mockingbird, Northern | 1480 | 45 | 146 | 174 | 1845 |
| Thrasher, Brown | 221 | 4 | 6 | 16 | 247 |
| Pipit, Water | 321 | 21 | 27 | 32 | 401 |
| Pipit, Sprague's | 8 | | | | 8 |
| Waxwing, Cedar | 3278 | 98 | 40 | 139 | 3555 |
| Shrike, Loggerhead | 1262 | 54 | 109 | 203 | 1628 |
| Starling, European | 11036 | 473 | 2599 | 1860 | 15968 |
| Vireo, White-eyed | 16 | 1 | | 6 | 23 |
| Vireo, Solitary | 67 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 78 |
| Vireo, Yellow-throated | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Warbler, Orange-crowned | 430 | 12 | 39 | 79 | 560 |
| Warbler, Nashville | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Warbler, Magnolia | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Warbler, Yellow-rumped | 7513 | 645 | 542 | 4048 | 12748 |
| (Warbler, Audubon's) | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Warbler, Blackburnian | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Warbler, Yellow-throated | 4 | | 1 | | 5 |
| Warbler, Pine | 206 | 26 | | 98 | 330 |
| Warbler, Prairie | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Warbler, Palm | 35 | | 6 | | 41 |
| Warbler, Black-and-white | 8 | | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| Redstart, American | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Ovenbird | 2 | | | | 2 |
| Waterthrush, Northern | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Yellowthroat, Common | 306 | 5 | 23 | 12 | 346 |
| Warbler, Wilson's | 21 | 1 | | 1 | 23 |
| Tanager, Summer | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Tanager, Western | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Cardinal, Northern | 2810 | 113 | 12 | 283 | 3218 |
| Grosbeak, Blue | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Bunting, Indigo | 19 | | | | 19 |
| Towhee, Rufous-sided | 2 | | | 3 | 5 |
| Sparrow, Chipping | 142 | | 4 | 104 | 250 |
| Sparrow, Field | 38 | | | 6 | 44 |
| Sparrow, Vesper | 229 | | | 6 | 235 |
| Sparrow, Lark | 4 | | 1 | | 5 |
| Sparrow, Savannah | 3899 | 6 | 122 | 165 | 4192 |
| Sparrow, Grasshopper | 3 | | | | 3 |
| Sparrow, Le Conte's | 76 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 88 |
| Sparrow, Sharp-tailed | 45 | | 131 | 7 | 183 |
| Sparrow, Seaside | 298 | | 105 | 8 | 411 |
| Sparrow, Fox | 43 | | | 2 | 45 |
| Sparrow, Song | 137 | | 4 | 9 | 150 |
| Sparrow, Lincoln's | 213 | 1 | 25 | 70 | 309 |
| Sparrow, Swamp | 1162 | 1 | 140 | 114 | 1417 |
| Sparrow, White-throated | 604 | 9 | 6 | 122 | 741 |
| Sparrow, White-crowned | 97 | | | | 97 |
| Sparrow, Harris' | 5 | | | | 5 |
| Junco, Dark-eyed | 5 | | | | 5 |
| sparrow, sp. | 22 | | | | 22 |
| Longspur, Lapland | 186 | | | | 186 |
| longspur, sp. | 1190 | | | | 1190 |
| Blackbird, Red-winged | 13034023 | 2 | 1320 | 6662 | 13042007 |
| Meadowlark, Eastern | 1981 | 20 | 77 | 169 | 2247 |
| Meadowlark, Western | 3 | | | | 3 |
| meadowlark, sp. | 995 | | 39 | | 1034 |
| Blackbird, Brewer's | 1347 | | | 31 | 1378 |
| Grackle, Great-tailed | 10199 | 2 | 2270 | 270 | 12741 |
| Grackle, Boat-tailed | 524 | | | 19 | 543 |
| Grackle, Common | 12302 | 351 | 240 | 1664 | 14557 |
| Cowbird, Brown-headed | 7063747 | 20 | 330 | 2099 | 7066196 |
| blackbird, sp. | 56340 | | 560 | 4250 | 61150 |
| Oriole, Northern | | | 2 | | 2 |
| (Oriole, Bullock's) | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Finch, Purple | 24 | | | 6 | 30 |
| Siskin, Pine | 3 | | | 2 | 5 |
| Goldfinch, American | 2873 | 82 | 19 | 853 | 3827 |
| Sparrow, House | 754 | 66 | 256 | 106 | 1182 |
| TOTAL Individuals | 20751696 | 8046 | 40211 | 59068 | 20859021 |
| TOTAL Species | | 117 | 151 | 172 | |
| Observers | | 19 | 36 | 42 | |

BIRDING FOR PRAIRIE WARBLERS

by Art MacKinnon

I have received many cards and letters asking how to see Prairie Warblers in East Texas. Since I am rarely available as a personal guide, because of my many hours of research and part-time work, I thought I might help those who want to look for this species by giving a brief description of what to look for in habitat.

Prairie Warblers arrive on their breeding ground in East Texas in mid-April. This is the best time to view the warblers because they are abundant and singing. They breed early in the year; nest building occurs from the end of May to the first week in June; and young can be found from early to mid-July. So mid-April to mid-May is the time I encourage visitors to the breeding ground.

Prairie Warblers in East Texas breed in young pine plantations of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) or loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*) when the pines are five to ten years old or 4 to 8 cm. dbh. In this stage of the plantation there will be a few hardwood saplings such as sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*) and blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*). Several shrubs also grow in this stage of the plantation: flame-leaf sumac (*Rhus copallina*), yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) and southern wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*). The floor of the plantation is dominated by bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.) but there are many sedges and rushes, mixed with an array of wild flowers.

All of these factors make finding Prairie Warblers very difficult. Nonetheless, these factors also provide nesting for several species of birds, including Blue Grosbeak, Indigo and Painted Buntings, Common Yellowthroat and Yellow-breasted Chat. So another reason for visiting the breeding grounds in mid-April is to avoid disturbing all of these breeding birds. The microhabitat of the pine plantation is excellent birding in all seasons.

Prairie Warblers are very interesting and so is their niche in East Texas. I have been studying these warblers for three years now. If anyone suspects he has found breeding Prairie Warblers, please write to me at P.O. Box 9437, Beaumont, TX 77709. Thanks.

1987 BIRDATHON ANNOUNCED

The annual Houston Audubon Society Birdathon will be held on April 25th. This is an effort by teams of 2-5 people to find as many species as possible in a 24-hour period. Winners will be raising money for worthy nature projects. For details call HAS at 932-1392 or Laura Singleton at 666-7736. Read the results of last year's Birdathon in this issue for help in planning your route.

REPORT ON THE HOUSTON CBC

by Celeste Hinds

In January Jim Morgan reported for the Freeport Christmas Count 212 species of birds sighted; Bob Honig and Doug Williams said that for the first Brazos Bend Count 130 species were observed, and for the Buffalo Bayou Count 107 species were recorded.

With a total of 42 participants our counters reported 172 species. Of note were the following: Magnolia Warbler, Sandhill Cranes, Greater Scaups, Surf Scoters, White-winged Scoters, Ross' Goose, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin and Sandwich Tern.

The 42 participants for the Houston CBC were a little lopsided in that there were plenty of volunteers for the boat count across Galveston Bay and up Cedar Bayou and only a few for some other areas. The day picked for this year's count was moved from the usual Saturday before Christmas to the Saturday afterwards, causing conflicts for some of the seasoned counters. That problem should be addressed and resolved before another year rolls around.

Although Don Richardson provided excellent notebooks and materials from years past, the Houston area was without a leader until the final hours when Pat Wight and I were drafted. Pat did the compilations and previous counters were quick to do their jobs. Both Pat and I were novices (not in paperwork but in birding experience) but due to the work of the "old timers" we managed to muddle through. Thanks to Aaron Stoley, Don Richardson, Ellen Red, David Dauphin, David Marrack, Wes Cureton, Derek Muschalek and Stennie Meadours, who once again led their area counts. Also thanks to newcomer Richard Uzar, who claimed he was a novice but proved otherwise. And we appreciate the use of Captain and Mrs. Walter Springall's yacht, the "Kalani" for the Galveston Bay count.

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Annual Dues \$11 (ONC \$5, OG \$6)
Annual Subscriptions: \$9

FOR NEW BIRDERS

Chickadees, titmice, warblers and other small birds travel in mixed flocks during the winter. In the morning they travel into the wind. Therefore if you are out for a city walk and can't see all the species in a flock before they fly into someone's back yard, walk into the wind ahead of them and get a second look.

PRECOCIOUS PROTHONOTARIES

According to Hal H. Harrison in his book, Wood Warbler's World, Prothonotary Warblers generally nest in holes in trees or stubs above running water. If young Prothonotaries happen to fall into the water they swim expertly to a place where they can get out.

DUES ARE DUE

Please check the date in the upper right-hand corner of the mailing label of your Spoonbill. It shows the date of your last scheduled issue. It may show that you need to hurry up and pay your 1987 dues.

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