



THE SPOONBILL

Vol. 1 - No. 1 July, 1952

This is the first issue of what we hope will be a continuing series of bulletins published by the Ornithology Group of the Outdoor Nature Club and giving an account of its activities.

The Group was organized April 11, 1952 when the following officers were elected: Charles McNeese, chairman, Francis MacMahon, first vice-chairman (projects), Noel Pettingell, second vice-chairman (field trips), Frank Watson, recorder, and Carrie Holcomb, secretary-treasurer. Edna Miner has been appointed as member of Executive Board to act with elected officers. Membership is \$1.00 per year for paid up members of Outdoor Nature Club.

The Board has selected "The Spoonbill" as the name of this bulletin. We hope you like it. If not, we hope you will tell us and offer a good substitute. Because of the newness of the Group it has taken some time to get the organization perfected. As a result this bulletin is a little late getting started but we hope to be running on time by fall. The following will give you a resume of the results of our field trips so far, so those of you who did not attend will know what you missed:

Field Trip No. 1: The first field trip of the Ornithology Group on April 20/21, 1952 was a good one. In fact, it was twice as good as most trips because it lasted two days. The lucky people who were able to make the trip were Joe Heiser, Carrie Holcomb, Doris Massingill, Charles McNeese, Edna Miner, Noel Pettingell, Ruth Stamm, B. H. and Josiephine Wilkin, Ellen Watson and Armand Yramategui. On Sunday morning the group headed for High Island by way of Kemah, Galveston and Bolivar Ferry. At Kemah numerous Warblers were observed in the mulberry and hackberry thickets. Galveston Island was explored thoroughly and revisited on the return trip. The group spent the night at High Island with Mrs. J. L. Hooks, observing an early migration of Warblers and small land birds. A total of 152 species was observed including Spoonbills, 5 species of Herons, 6 species of Terns and 17 species of Warblers.

Field Trip No. 2: May 4, 1952 was BIG DAY for a group which included Betty Crowley, Nance Cunningham, Joe Heiser, Harriet Hunt, Edna Miner, Noel Pettingell, Lucile Robey, Leota Stilwell, Joseph Strehle, Ellen Watson, Josiephine Wilkin and Armand Yramategui. This trip covered much of Harris and Galveston Counties, trying to establish a record number of species seen in one day. The record was established at 159. The route generally was from Houston to Sheldon Reservoir, Lynchburg Ferry and San Jacinto Battlegrounds, near which the thrill of the day was a good look at Attwater's Prairie Chickens; the group continued to Seabrook, Kemah and Galveston Island. Of the total count only 65 species were water or shore birds. The Spoonbill was seen again, and 9 species of Sandpipers. Included in the land birds were 5 species of Woodpeckers, 5 species of Swallows, 5 species of Thrushes and 18 species of Warblers. Other species were well represented.

Field Trip No. 3: The first long expedition was made over Memorial Day weekend to Del Rio where the Houston contingent was met by a group from Midland, led by Margaret and John Galley and including Harold and Frances Williams and Don Curry. Those who made the trip from Houston were Nel Amthor, Charles McNeese, Ruth Stamm, Ellen Watson and Josiephine Wilkin. The Houston group left home Friday morning and went directly to Del Rio. Saturday and the morning on Sunday were spent covering the territory around Del Rio and a side trip was made to Devil's River Canyon. The return trip was made on Sunday afternoon with stops at roadside parks which added a few birds to the list. Probably the highlight of this trip was Saturday evening dinner in Villa Acuna, combining pleasure with pleasure, as well as doing a little shopping. In all 75 species of birds were seen by the Houston group on the 790 mile trip. Many of these species were additions to the life lists of the members, such as Audubon's Caracara, Ground Dove, Inca Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Golden-fronted and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Ash-throated and Vermilion Flycatchers, Black Phoebe, Black-crested Titmouse, Verdin, Cactus and Canyon Wrens, Sennett's Thrasher, Hooded and Bullock's Orioles, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, Green-tailed Towhee and Black-throated Sparrow.

At a meeting of the Board it was decided to undertake as a project the investigation of rumors of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker having been seen in Texas. One of these rumors was checked by Noel Pettingell, Francis MacMahon and Charles McNeese on a trip to Southern Pine Lumber Company's camp near Lufkin. The rumor proved to be false but quite a flock of Wood Ibises was observed, as well as Prothonotary Warbler, Brown-headed Nuthatch and Acadian Flycatcher. On a recent Sunday a small group including Katrina Thompson, Wallace Thompson, Dudley Bell, Nance Cunningham and Carrie Holcomb re-visited the Vingt'un Islands area, where the Outdoor Nature Club had a field trip during the last season, to again observe the Spoonbills with their young. The highlights of this trip were the sight of a colony of Black Skimmers and a Man-O'-War-Bird. Any groups on special trips are requested to send a report of their findings to our recorder, Frank Watson.

Katrina Thompson has organized and is teaching a class in bird identification for beginners and it is well attended as well as being well presented.

The next general business meeting will be held on September 25, 1952 at Central Library. The Group will have no schedule of field trips but will plan them as opportunities appear and special interests develop. You will be notified in plenty of time to attend.

Send your \$1.00 to Carrie Holcomb or Mrs. Minor Hurst, if you want to join this Group.

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