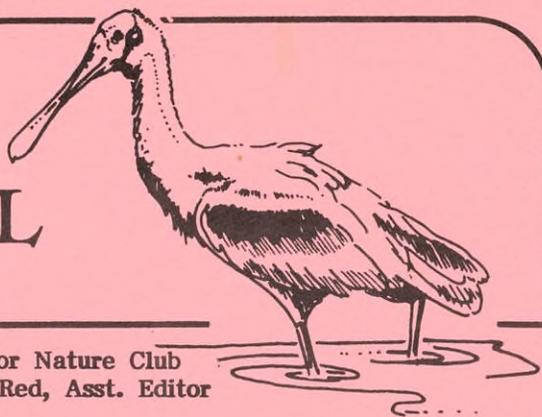


The SPOONBILL



Published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club
Houston, Texas, Libby Price, Editor; Ellen Red, Asst. Editor

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Coming Events

Sunday, Apr. 3: Deadline for Spoonbill material and for Clearing House reports.

Thursday, Apr. 7: Ornithology Group meeting at Bayou Manor, 4141 S. Braeswood at 7:30 PM. Randy Beavers, Director of the R. A. Vines Environmental Science Center, will present a program about Baha and Western Mexico.

Thursday, Apr. 14: Outdoor Nature Club Meeting at the Houston Arboretum. Carol Meyer will present the program, "Wildlife Rehabilitation."

Saturday, Apr. 23: Ornithology Group field trip to High Island led by Derek Muschalek. Meet at 7:30 AM at Smith Oaks parking area. We will scour the woods for migrant passerines in the morning and move to the nearby rice fields to look for shorebirds in the afternoon. Don't forget lunch, bug spray and \$2 per person for admission to Smith Oaks. If you need more information call Rene or Andrew Franks at 943-7609.

Sunday, Apr. 24: Audubon Birdathon '88 (see article.)

HAS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

The Houston Audubon Society will hold its First Annual Photography Contest, open to the general public. First, second and third prizes will be awarded to the best entries (colored slides only) in the following categories: Birds, Animals, Plants, Scenic Nature and Audubon Sanctuaries. No zoo or domestic animal or plant photos are allowed. Each slide will cost \$1.00 to enter; eight slides per person, two per category will be allowed. The deadline is May 3, 1988. Send labeled color slides with name address and phone number and a check to Houston Audubon Society, 440 Wilchester, Houston TX 77079.

MINUTES OF OG MEETING, MARCH 3, 1988

Rob Thacker brought the meeting to order at 7:40 PM, and turned it over to Steve Gast, who introduced the speaker, Simon Neville. He gave a program about the country, the birds and their habitats in the different regions of Australia, where he leads birding tours. His charming and interesting presentation was illustrated by fine slides of the continent's many beautiful bird species.

Jerry Patrick, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$3,352 and a \$4000 C.D. He reminded members to check the date on one's Spoonbill label if unsure if OG dues are "due."

Rene Franks, Field Trip Co-Chairman, gave details of the March field trip to the Rio Grande Valley, and announced that Derek Muschalek, "the Warbler King," will lead the April field trip to High Island. [see Coming Events.] Ed Rozenburg, Aluminum Chairman, reported that the redemption value has risen to 3¢ a can, or 55¢ a pound.

Rob Thacker announced that the Nominating Committee recommended the following slate of officers for 1988-89: Chairman - Ed Rozenburg; Vice-chairman - Derek Muschalek; Treasurer - Jerry Patrick; Secretary - Richard Uzar. There being no nominations from the floor, it was moved and seconded that the slate be accepted by acclamation. The motion carried. Thacker was applauded for his conscientious and effective Chairmanship of the OG for two years. He reported recent volunteers for the position of Clearing House Editor. They will meet soon with the Interim Editor, Ted Eubanks.

Eubanks distributed copies of a tentative form for reports to the Clearing House, accompanied by a letter of explanation. The final form will be ready and essential to use June 1st. The Clearing House Editor will be final arbiter of the reporting form. Discussion followed.

It was reported that the Lewis' Woodpecker in Kerrville and the swan near Bryan were still present. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Caroline Callery, Secretary

Noel's Niche Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

.....10 YEARS AGO/FROM MAR., 1978 SPOONBILL

"MISIDENTIFICATIONS--SOME REASONS FOR THEM
Paul DeBenedictis...in an article reprinted by Birding,
Sep/Oct 1977, from Proceedings of the North American Hawk Migration Conference.

"In answer to what causes misidentification DeBenedictis suggests three major classes of reasons: psychological, informational, physical. In discussing the first class, he says...that we can usually ignore outright dishonesty...that the problem instead is that the observer has convinced himself that he saw something that really wasn't there...The more insidious problem is associated with prestige. Any birder soon learns that finding "rare birds"...or making "high counts" is likely to bring comments and approval from one's associates. Few of us shy away from approval, and anyone who finds such praise important is likely to interpret a difficult observation in a way that maximizes the chance that such praise will be offered. Anyone who does this really believes his report, in the sense that he is convinced that he has made whatever observations are required to cinch the identification.' Two other psychological reasons are...expectations: you expect a bird to be in a certain spot, if the bird is not clearly seen, you are led to a wrong identification; and...[confusion]...some birders never seem to keep straight the criteria used to separate a species from those with which it might be confused.

"The second major class of reasons for making misidentifications DeBenedictis calls informational reasons. An observer misconceives the features essential to a correct identification, or, more subtly, no one really knows what are the criteria for a correct identification. '...we should perhaps expect that there really are a few species which can't be identified in the field.'

"The third major class of reasons '...are problems associated with the limits of the human central nervous system and associated sensory receptors.' For instance, a bird goes by so fast you don't really get to see it; the range of visual acuity among observers is considerable; depth perception may create optical illusions; color vision varies from person to person, from incident to incident.

"DeBenedictis sums up by saying 'Psychological reasons are made possible because of the imperfections in the information which we possess about birds, and by the limits of our ability to perceive the world about us. Likewise, what we do perceive is sometimes determined more by our mental state than by our abilities.'

"Additional thought: Remember when one first started birding, nearly all birds seemed rare and unusual? As time passed familiarity with our area species grew and, though I hesitate to use the expression, sometimes 'familiarity breeds contempt' when one has gotten in the habit of expecting something out of the ordinary on every birding expedition. Plumages of a particular species can be so variable

according to age of bird, season of year, etc., that sometimes a member of a familiar species can assume an unfamiliar look. Dr. Keith Arnold, in his talk before the TOS membership last fall had this excellent advice which all of us would do well to remember--when observing a strange bird not immediately identifiable, first build a case for a bird that ought to be there, taking into account plumage variation, behavior, habitat, etc. If you still can't identify it to your satisfaction, then start building a case for a bird that may have strayed into our area from afar. (Spoonbill Ed. [Margaret Jones])

THE ESKIMO CURLEW - RECENT REPORTS

The Eskimo Curlew still lives, as noted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Bulletin sent in by Hazel Nichols, now living in Dallas. Hazel is a long-time member of the OG, who still cherishes the memory of seeing the Eskimo Curlew found by Ben Feltner on West Galveston Island in 1959. Since the 60's there have been very few sightings until the 80's, when several sightings of migrating birds were made in the U.S. and Canada, two of them on the Texas coast in late April and early May, 1987. Canadian biologists also found a pair in late May in the Arctic, presumably nesting.

This species has been hovering on the brink of extinction. In addition to finding and protecting habitat used by the bird for nesting, migration and wintering, shorebird specialists at a 1987 AOU meeting suggested that the public needs to be made aware that the species is not yet extinct.

With the number of birders on the UTC growing yearly, perhaps one of us will find an Eskimo Curlew. However, before going out this spring with hope in our hearts, we should read the article on misidentification in "Noel's Niche" in this issue.

REGISTER PURPLE MARTIN COLONIES

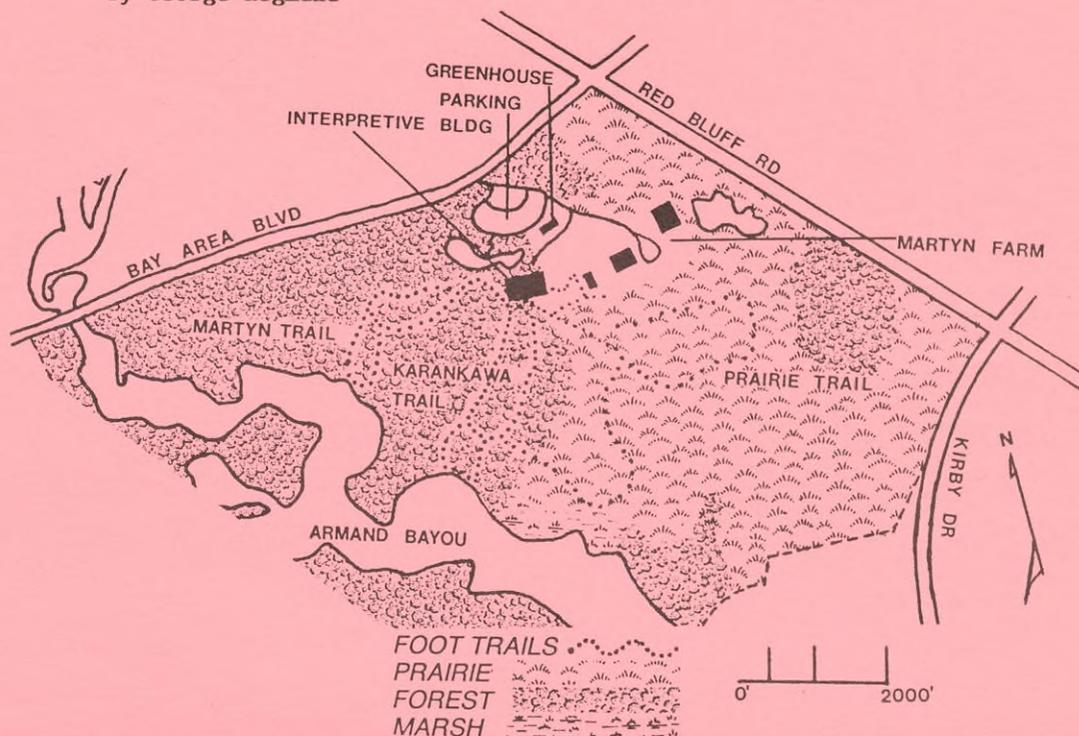
Now that Purple Martins are returning to the U.S. to nest, don't forget to register your colony, your neighbors' or any that you see on your travels. As noted in the August, 1987 Spoonbill, Purple Martins have lost many nest sites to starlings and House Sparrows, and are threatened by pesticides on their South American wintering grounds. If you have not already registered, the address is: Purple Martin Conservation Association, Institute for Research and Community Services, Edinboro Univ. of Pennsylvania, Edinboro PA 16444.

TWRC WORKSHOP FOR VOLUNTEERS

Texas Wildlife Rehabilitation Coalition, Inc. will hold its annual Spring Workshop on Sunday, April 10, from 11:00 AM until 4:00 PM at the Houston Zoo. TWRC is an organization dedicated to rehabilitating orphaned and injured wildlife. If you are interested in becoming a TWRC volunteer, please come to the workshop. Training will be provided on handling, feeding, housing and releasing our local wildlife. Call TWRC at 941-TWRC or 941-8972.

ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER: AN URBAN WILDERNESS FOR BIRDERS

by George Regmund



Located 25 miles southeast of downtown Houston, the 1800 acres forming Armand Bayou Nature Center provide a very good local wild place to look for birds. The Nature Center has within its bounds a brackish water bayou, brackish marshes, a large area of grassland, a dense gallery forest of hardwoods along the bayou and several small freshwater ponds. These varied habitats are easily accessible on the center's trail system.

The area of the entry road, trail and interpretive classroom building can produce interesting birds year-round. Resident Pileated, Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers are often seen around the entry pond and main building, along with Barn Owl, Red-shouldered Hawk and Belted Kingfisher. Eastern Bluebirds have nested in this area and can often be found around the greenhouse, parking area or road. In winter this location can yield several species of sparrows, including White-throated, White-crowned, Swamp, Lincoln's, Song, Field, Chipping and Savannah, plus Dark-eyed Junco. Feeders at the Meadows Interpretive Building can produce Pine Siskins and an occasional Purple Finch in mid-winter. In spring this area will produce large numbers of good migrants with the entry roadsides often being loaded with Indigo and Painted Buntings. Fruiting Mulberry trees near the building regularly attract Rose-breasted and Indigo Buntings, Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, plus Northern and Orchard Orioles. A good variety of warblers, vireos and flycatchers can be seen from the porches of the main building and along the entry path. In fall, hummingbird watching is often good at the Turk's Cap and other flowering plants off the porches of the main building.

Passing through the classroom building and out onto the trails, you can take your choice of going into the gallery forest and down for a look at the bayou, or out into the heart of the prairie, or along the woods' edge to some open marshland.

The Karankawa and Martyn Trails offer a pleasant walk all year. The dense forest land can produce Woodcock, Solitary Vireo, Hermit Thrush, Barred Owl, Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Carolina, House and Winter Wrens, Orange-crowned Warbler and Rufous-sided Towhee in winter. Barn and Great-horned Owls are also seen at the prairie/forest edge. Black-and-white, Swainson's and Parula Warblers herald the spring migrants, rapidly followed by a large influx of other warblers, vireos, flycatchers and thrushes. In summer the woods ring with the calls of the White-eyed Vireo, one of the most common nesters at the Nature Center. Red-shouldered Hawk, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Acadian Flycatcher and other more common nesters can also be seen. Both trails lead to Armand Bayou where you might see waders, some common shorebirds, terns, gulls and Osprey, which are on the bayou year-round.

Fall and winter on the Nature Center's prairie trails can be a wet experience, as there is often standing water in much of this area. But do not let that discourage you, for the prairie is lovely this time of year and can produce a great bunch of birds. Sparrows abound there, including Swamp, Field and LeConte's. The wet conditions are ideal for Sedge Wrens, and Virginia Rail has also been seen. Black-shouldered Kites are regulars on the prairie as well. Spring brings Painted and Indigo Buntings which stay

to nest, as well as many other open country migrants.

The Martyn Farm also gives birders good access to the prairie edge. It can be a productive place from which to bird the grassland in a shorter period of time than it takes to walk the trail.

Walking directly along the prairie/forest edge trail offers an opportunity to scan both habitats, and can be a nice walk any time of year. This trail will lead you to an area of open marshland along the bayou in which you may find White Ibis, herons and often Osprey. Some shorebird activity can be expected here as well.

Armand Bayou Nature Center is an accessible place for a pleasant morning's birdwatch, and can provide quite a good variety of species in one location. To reach the center from Houston take I45 south, turn left onto Bay Area Blvd. and continue for 6.5 miles. Besides an opportunity for birding the center offers a nursery which sells native plants and herbs, a 19th-century farm and a variety of tours and classes. The center is open seven days a week from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. There is an entry fee for those who are not Nature Center members (membership is easily available). Call 474-2551 for more information.

AUDUBON BIRDATHON - SIGN UP NOW

To win a Birdathon takes skill, stamina and selectivity; skill for quick identification and for knowledge of species to be expected in each habitat; stamina to last the grueling 24-hour day; and selectivity to choose the best route to find the most species in the number of miles that can be covered in 24 hours. National Audubon has designated April 23rd or 24th for the Birdathon, but the Houston Audubon Society Birdathon will be held only on April 24th because of the Bolivar Flats beach cleanup on the 23rd. The field is statewide, not restricted to a few counties.

Teams competing must find sponsors to pledge an amount for each species found. The resulting contribution will be divided equally between Audubon Sanctuary maintenance and the Regional Audubon office in Austin. Besides the honor of winning, trophies will be awarded for the most species, the most money raised and the most warbler species. Write for an information package to Birdathon '88, Houston Audubon Society, 440 Wilchester, Houston, TX 77079, and be sure to give your name, address and phone numbers at home and work. There is no entry fee.

LAGUNA ATASCOSA NWR PLAN DRAFTED

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has announced that a Master Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge has been drafted and copies will be sent to individuals or groups wishing to be informed and involved in the refuge planning. To get on the mailing list write: Minda Stillings, Division of Refuges, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque NM 87103, or phone (505) 766-8041.

Clearing House - JANUARY, 1988

The Clearing House (CH) is a monthly listing of bird sightings made on the upper Texas coast (UTC). The UTC is comprised of Brazoria, Chambers, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, and Waller counties. How to read the CH - Species: location_code (number)_date_ observer. For those species whose sightings are itemized each individual record is segregated by a semicolon (;). The sightings of common, widely distributed species are summarized as follows: Species: #_ (r) reports_ (low count - high count)_ early date - late date. Noteworthy sightings will be underlined, capitalized, or both, according to their status as described on the 6th Edition UTC Checklist. Birds with very rare, vagrant, or accidental status on the Checklist at the date of the sighting require details. Sightings lacking required details will not be included in the CH. Details for observations affecting a species' status on the 6th Edition UTC Checklist will be published, and the documentation referred to the UTC Checklist Committee for consideration. Such documentation is required for an observation to be considered by the Checklist Committee. CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS MUST SUBMIT SIGHTINGS ON THE OFFICIAL OG CLEARING HOUSE SUBMITTAL FORM. THESE FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE OG AT NO COST.

203 species reported to the CH in the month of January

Loon, Common: 6r(2-52)4-30
Grebe, Pied-billed: 10r(1-22)2-30; UTC(22)3,MB
Grebe, Eared: UTC(39)4,MB; TCD(35)30,SW
Gannet, Northern: BC(145)28,MB; EG(12)29,TM
Pelican, American White: 12r(1-300)2-30
Pelican, Brown: 8r(1-20)10-30; BC,GC
Cormorant, Double-crested: 8r(2-1200)4-20
Cormorant, Olivaceous: UTC(150)4,MB; Galv(35)10,SW;
FBC(6)29,TM; GC(15)30,HA
Anhinga: UTC(4)3,MB; FBC(2)24,TM
Heron, Great Blue: 11r(3-25)2-30
Egret, Great: 12r(2-45)2-30
Egret, Snowy: 10r(1-40)2-30
Heron, Little Blue: 5r(1-6)10-30
Heron, Tricolored: 10r(1-4)2-30
Egret, Reddish: 5r(1-4)2-30
Egret, Cattle: 9r(2-20)1-30
Night-Heron, Black-crowned: UTC(18)3,MB; Free(6)10,MA;
Galv(2)10,SW; EG(1)29,TM
Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned: SWH(1)17,PM; SWH(1)19,PM;
GC(1)30,HA
Ibis, White: 11r(1-290)2-30
Ibis, White-faced: BNWR(1)2,RU; UTC(47)3,MB;
BC(65)23,SW; FBC(10)24,TM
Spoonbill, Roseate: 9r(1-4)2-30
Whistling-Duck, Black-bellied: BC(66)23,SW;
FBC(85)24,TM; BC(40)28,MB
Goose, Greater White-fronted: 6r(3-2100)2-24
Goose, Snow: 6r(120-13500)1-18
Goose, Ross': UTC(1)3,MB; BC(1)10,MA; WHC(2)17,JB
Goose, Canada: SBNW(160)2,JB; UTC(10)3,MB;
FBC(35)12,TM
Duck, Wood: NHC(28)2,SC; UTC(10)3,MB; FBC(4)24,TM
Duck, Green-winged: 7r(2-2300)1-30
Duck, Mottled: 8r(2-70)2-30
Mallard: UTC(85)4,MB; Free(2)10,MA; FBC(4)18,TM;
FBC(15)24,TM
Pintail, Northern: BNWR(125)2,RU; NHC(110)2,SC;
UTC(1800)3,MB
Teal, Blue-winged: 8r(3-100)2-30
Teal, Cinnamon: SBNW(11)2,JB
Shoveler, Northern: 10r(1-400)2-30
Gadwall: 8r(4-40)2-24
Wigeon, American: BNWR(300)2,RU; UTC(170)3,MB
Canvasback: UTC(59)3,MB
Duck, Ring-necked: BNWR(3)2,RU; UTC(45)3,MB;
FBC(10)12,TM; FBC(135)24,TM
Scaup, Lesser: 7r(1-400)2-23
Scoter, White-winged: EG(6)29,TM
Goldeneye, Common: UTC(1)3,MB
Bufflehead: BNWR(1)2,RU; UTC(45)3,MB; Free(11)16,SW
Merganser, Hooded: UTC(7)3,MB; SJSP(1)7,WC
Merganser, Red-breasted: UTC(105)4,MB; GC(40)10,RU;
Galv(17)10,SW; EG(75)21,JH; EG(415)29,TM
Duck, Ruddy: 6r(2-300)2-30
Vulture, Black: NHC(69)2,SC; UTC(22)3,MB; FBC(3)12,TM;
FBC(8)24,TM

(continued page 7)

UPPER TEXAS COAST CHECKLIST SUPPLEMENT AND UPDATE (THROUGH DECEMBER 1985)

This is the sixth in a series of updates to the Upper Texas Coast Checklist since publication of the Sixth Edition in January 1980. The last update appeared in the November 1986 (Vol. XXV, #11) issue of The Spoonbill. Dates of previous updates are given there.

The Upper Texas Coast Checklist Committee, composed of Ron Braun, Jim Morgan, and Noel Pettingell, prepared this update. The Committee reviewed sighting reports which met the following criteria: the initial sighting:

- (1) occurred during calendar year 1985 in the six county UTC area,
- (2) has been documented (notes, photographs, or specimen), and
- (3) could potentially modify the current Checklist (no previous acceptable records within UTC, accidental/vagrant, no previous records during week observed, or new early/late date).

A subsequent update will cover 1986 sightings.

A unanimous vote of the Committee members is required for acceptance. Twenty-nine sightings were accepted as records. These are composed of:

- (1) 1 first UTC record (now accidental),
- (2) 2 records of accidentals (now vagrants)
- (3) 8 records of vagrants (one 11th record, now very rare)
- (4) 14 new weekly records (2 were also 1st monthly records)
- (5) 5 new early/late date records (one also 1st record for month & one also 1st record for week).

1985 SIGHTINGS MODIFYING UTC CHECKLIST
Checklist Committee: Ron Braun, Jim Morgan, Noel Pettingell

SPECIES	DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVERS	SIGNIFICANCE	SPOONBILL NOTES
Red-billed Tropicbird	Found 11/11/85 died 11/16/85	SW Houston (Huntington Village)	described by Fred Collins	1st UTC record (specimen at Tx A&M) (photographs - TLE)	Dec., 1985
Snow Goose	8/6/85	Brazoria NWR	Warren Pruess, Tom Taroni	1st record for 1st week of August	Sept., 1985
Broad-winged Hawk	3/5/85	SW Houston	Randy Pinkston	1st record for 1st week of March	April, 1985
Prairie Falcon	11/14/85	Warren Lake	Larry White	3rd UTC record	Dec., 1985
Purple Gallinule	12/21/85	Tennacott Prop., near Tx 35, Brazoria Co.	Anne Atkins	1st December record & 1st record for 3rd wk.	Feb., 1986
Whooping Crane	12/25/85 - 3/31/86	Brazoria Co.	Mike Lange, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	1st record since 1936 (now considered VAGRANT)	* (below)
Lesser Golden-Plover	11/24/85	W. Galveston Is.	Jim Morgan, Ron & Marcia Braun	1st record for 4th week of November	Dec., 1985
Pectoral Sanderling	11/11/85	8-Mile Rd; W. Galveston Is.	George E. Wallace, Beverly Collier	new late date	April, 1986
American Woodcock	7/1/85	Houston Arboretum	Wesley Cureton	1st record for 1st week of July	Aug., 1985
American Woodcock	8/11/85	Brazosport NC Mature Trail	Warren Pruess, Larry Menefee	1st record for 2nd week of August	Sept., 1985
Red-necked Phalarope	5/18/85	Fort San Jacinto, E. Galveston Is.	Arch Dillard, Pam & Sandy Dillard	5th UTC record	Jun/Jul, 1985
Thayer's Gull	12/22/85- 2/8/86	Surfside Jetty; Freeport	Ted & Virginia Eubanks; Mike Austin	4th UTC record	Feb., 1986 & March, 1986
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	12/22/85	Lake Jackson residence	Margaret Anderson, Faye Humphrey, Lamar Jackson	11th record - Upgrade status to very rare	Feb., 1986
Brown-crested Flycatcher	11/3/85	Galveston Is. State Park	Ted Eubanks, Jr.; Charlie & Wanda Smith	2nd UTC record (photographs - TLE)	Dec., 1985
Empidonax sp. - not Acadian or Yellow-bellied	7/31/85	White Oak Bayou	Wesley Cureton	1st record for 4th week of July	Aug., 1985
Bell's Vireo	10/1/85	Sabine Pass	Jim Morgan, Ted Eubanks, Jr.	5th UTC record	Nov., 1985
Golden-winged Warbler	10/23/85	Eisenhower City Park	Derek Muschalek	new late fall date & 1st record for 4th week of Oct.	Nov., 1985
Nashville Warbler	5/18/85	Sun Oil Property; Bolivar Pen.	Mike Austin	latest spring date	Jun/Jul, 1985
Magnolia Warbler	1/17/85	Brazos Bend State Park	Derek Muschalek	1st record for 3rd week of January	Feb., 1985
Cape May Warbler	9/12/85	Johnson Property; Bolivar Pen.	Derek Muschalek	new early fall date & 1st record for September	Oct., 1985
Townsend's Warbler	10/1/85	High Island	Jim Morgan, Ted Eubanks, Jr.	9th UTC record	Nov., 1985

Black-throated Green Warbler	1/11/85	White Memorial Pk	Derek Muschalek	1st record for 2nd week of January	Feb., 1985
Black-throated Green Warbler	2/23 - 3/15/85	Brazos Bend State Park	Derek Muschalek	1st report for 4th week of February	March, 1985 & Apr., 1985
Louisiana Waterthrush	7/7/85	Kingwood	John Buckman	1st record for 1st week of July	Aug., 1985
Louisiana Waterthrush	7/11/85	White Memorial Pk	Derek Muschalek	1st record for 2nd week of July	Aug., 1985
Hooded Warbler	11/18/85	High Island	Derek Muschalek	new late date	Dec., 1985
Lazuli Bunting	12/22-23/85	Dow property, Lake Jackson	Sherry Collins, Ruth, Arch, Pam & Sandy Dillard, Nev Isenberg; Tom Collins, Greg Lasley	8th UTC record	Feb., 1986
Yellow-headed Blackbird	2/24/85	Chambers Co.	Robert Oberfelder, Janet Weisenmann	1st record for 4th week & latest in February	March, 1985
Scott's Oriole	12/22-23/85	Chubb Lake, Oyster Creek	Bill & Will Graber; Tom Collins	2nd UTC record	Feb., 1986

(*) Sightings and monitoring by U.S. Fish & Wildlife personnel of two individually recognizable color-marked birds (Blue-White, a male & Double Blue White Spiral, a female). Checklist Committee supplied with internal U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service memo describing observations. This species will be treated as vagrant status for this and future reports.

Additional Noteworthy Records

While not altering the Checklist directly, the following sightings were considered significant for note by the Committee:

scoter sp. (reported as Surf)	8/16/85	Sea Rim State Pk	Mary Ann Chapman	1st August (summer) record	Sept., 1985 Note 1
Wilson's Phalarope	12/21/85	Manor Lake; Brazoria Co.	Kris & Charlene Wilson	2nd December record	Feb., 1986 Note 2
Arctic Tern	4/20/85	Jefferson Co.; Tx 87 W of McFadden NWR	Bob Behrstock	Hypothetical	May, 1985
Arctic Tern	4/26/85	Bolivar Flats	Bob Behrstock, John Fitzpatrick	Hypothetical	Jun/Jul, 1985
swift sp.	2/20/85	Baytown	Ed Rozenburg	1st Feb. report for any swift sp.	March, 1985 Note 3
Magnificent Hummingbird	11/27/85	Beaumont	Bessie Cornelius	Hypothetical	Dec., 1985
Prothonotary Warbler	1/1/85	W. Harris Co. along Cypress Ck.	David Dauphin, Debra Richards	2nd January record	Feb., 1985 Note 4
Hooded Warbler	11/3/85	Old House; W. Galveston Is.	Ted Eubanks, Jr.	3rd November record	Dec., 1985 Note 5

Note 1: Although this bird was reported as a Surf Scoter, the Committee felt that White-winged Scoter could not be definitely eliminated by the description and sketch supplied. Thus it was accepted as scoter species, which is not itemized on the Checklist. However, there are no other accepted records for any scoter in the UTC during the summer months.

Note 2: There is an accepted record for the third week of December; reported on December 17, 1971 at the Brazoria NWR by R. J. Fleetwood, refuge manager.

Note 3: Although originally reported as swift species, this report is similar to the scoter species report. Even though there are five other winter sightings, reported without any supporting details, there are no UTC records for any species of swift during February, but the Checklist does not itemize swift sp. In the future, where at all possible, the Committee would prefer observers reporting swift sp. (instead of a specific species) to attempt to narrow their report and supporting details to one of two classes: Chaetura swift (Chimney & Vaux's Swift being the two of this genus that occur in the U.S.), and non-Chaetura species. Size and general flight characteristics being two important clues to making this separation.

Note 4: There is an accepted record for the first week of January; reported by Arlie McKay from Cove on January 6, 1957 (see February, 1957 Spoonbill)

Note 5: Prior to 1984, there was only one record for this species during November, that being a individual seen at Stubblefield Lake, Freeport on November 15, 1972 by T. Ben Feltner. In 1984, Derek Muschalek reported a Hooded Warbler on November 4th at Smith Woods, High Island. This was accepted as the first record for the first week of November by the Checklist Committee (see previous Checklist Update). Thus, this report becomes the third November record and the fourth November record, on November 18, 1985, becomes the new late fall date (see above).

Pre-1985 Records Accepted by the Committee

The following sighting was previously overlooked by the Checklist Committee and has been accepted as a record at this time:

Magnolia Warbler	3/20/83	Smith Sanctuary High Island	Gary Clark	1st record for 3rd week & 1st March record	April/May 1983
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Vulture, Turkey: Br(3-80)2-30
Osprey: HC(2)7,WC; BC(2)10,MA
Kite, Black-shouldered: 13r(1-5)2-30 - a classic example of differential reporting. The CH received more Black-shouldered Kite reports in January than reports for Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, or Red-tailed Hawk!
Eagle, Bald: UTC(2)3,MB
Harrier, Northern: 12r(1-12)2-30
Hawk, Sharp-shinned: 5r(1-2)2-27
Hawk, Cooper's: UTC(2)3,MB; BC(1)23,SW; FBC(1)24,TM
Hawk, Red-shouldered: 10r(1-24)2-28
Hawk, Swainson's: UTC(1)3,MB - notes submitted
Hawk, Red-tailed: 10r(1-18)2-30
Caracara, Crested: UTC(1)3,MB; BC(2)10,MA
Kestrel, American: 17r(1-17)1-30
Merlin: BC(1)23,SW
Falcon, Peregrine: EG(1)30,SW
Bobwhite, Northern: 5r(5-19)3-24
Rail, Clapper: GC(3)10,RU; Galv(2)10,SW; EG(4)29,TM; GC(2)30,HA
Rail, King: FBC(3)18,TM
Moorhen, Common: BNWR(4)2,RU; Free(3)16,SW
Coot, American: Br(1-2850)2-24
Crane, Sandhill: 6r(8-128)2-23
Plover, Black-bellied: Br(3-62)4-30
Plover, Semipalmated: 6r(1-14)2-30
Plover, Piping: UTC(30)4,MB; Galv(3)10,SW; EG(4)21, JH; EG(27)29, TM; GC(6)30,HA
Killdeer: 12r(4-190)2-30
Oystercatcher, American: 6r(1-2)10-30
Stilt, Black-necked: EG(1)10,SW; FBC(4)18, TM; UTC(2)28,MB
Avocet, American: 7r(3-2050)2-30
Yellowlegs, Greater: 11r(2-48)2-30
Yellowlegs, Lesser: 9r(1-25)2-30
Willet: 11r(3-75)2-30
Sandpiper, Spotted: Galv(1)10,SW; King(1)24,SG; TCD(2)30,SW
Curlew, Long-billed: 9r(1-15)2-30
Godwit, Marbled: BC(1)2,JB; Galv(3)10,SW; EG(4)29, TM; GC(3)30,HA
Turnstone, Ruddy: 7r(1-56)4-30
Sanderling: 6r(2-225)2-29
Sandpiper, Semipalmated: BNWR(6)2,RU - the status of this species is poorly known along the UTC. The Semipalmated Sandpiper is a strict transient migrant with a narrow migratory window. This species begins arriving on the UTC in spring around the second week of April, with the major passage between the end of April and the second week of May. Adults begin to return in fall around mid-August, and most pass (with the exception of lingering first-year birds) by late September. The Semipalmated Sandpiper winters in Central America and northern South America, and is unknown as a wintering bird in North America with the exception of southern Florida. Our banding data from Bolivar Flats indicate that 90% of the Western Sandpipers wintering here are male; i.e., the short-billed sex that approaches the Semipalmated in bill length (and producing the obvious confusion between the two species). A January Semipalmated Sandpiper on the UTC would be an extraordinary event, and would require copious and incontrovertible documentation. UTC observers should ignore the 6th Edition of "A Birder's Checklist of the Upper Texas Coast" as to the winter status of Semipalmated Sandpiper.
Sandpiper, Western: BNWR(10)2,RU; EG(20)21, JH; UTC(60)28,MB; EG(156)29, TM
Sandpiper, Least: 5r(1-53)2-30
Dunlin: 7r(10-350)2-30
Dowitcher, Short-billed: BNWR(15)2,RU; GC(6)10,RU; UTC(170)28,MB; EG(5)29, TM
Dowitcher, Long-billed: FBC(17)18, TM; FBC(10)24, TM; UTC(135)28,MB
dowitcher, sp.: 3r(15-42)2-30
Snipe, Common: NHC(9)2,SC; UTC(1)3,MB; FBC(2)18, TM; FBC(8)24, TM
Woodcock, American: 5r(1-13)12/29-01/24
Jaeger, Pomarine: EG(1)29, TM; Galv(1)30,SW
Gull, Laughing: Br(20-3000)2-30
Gull, Bonaparte's: 6r(3-150)2-30
Gull, Ring-billed: 10r(1-500)2-30
Gull, Herring: Br(2-110)2-30
GULL, LESSER BLACK-BACKED: SLP(1)16, TE - see notes
Gull, Glaucous: SLP(1)17,SG - notes submitted
Tern, Gull-billed: C7P(1)13,SW; Free(3)16,SW; UTC(3)28,MB
Tern, Caspian: 11r(1-20)2-30
Tern, Royal: 5r(2-100)4-30
Tern, Sandwich: Galv(3)10,SW; Galv(1)30,SW
Tern, Common: UTC(2)4,MB; Galv(3)30,SW
Tern, Forster's: 10r(1-175)2-30
Skimmer, Black: Br(40-1000)4-30
Dove, Rock: 10r(1-55)1-30
Turtle-Dove, Ringed: SWH(1)19,SW
Dove, White-winged: 13r(1-10)1-30; Galv,SWH,FBC
Dove, Mourning: 16r(1-112)1-30
Dove, Inca: 11r(1-25)1-30
Parakeet, Monk: NHC(2)2,SC; SWH(2)30,PM
Roadrunner, Greater: NHC(1)2,JS - no notes submitted
Ani, Groove-billed: UTC(2)28,MB
Barn-Owl, Common: NHC(1)2,SC
Screech-Owl, Eastern: SWH(1-2)1-31,TE
Owl, Great Horned: NHC(1)2,SC; UTC(1)3,MB
Owl, Barred: 5r(1-7)2-31
Hummingbird, Buff-bellied: no reports, even though the species was present in Lake Jackson throughout the month.
Hummingbird, Black-chinned: LJ(2)23,MA; LJ(2)28,MB - notes and photographs submitted.
HUMMINGBIRD, CALLIOPE: LJ(1)23,SW; LJ(1)23,MA; LJ(1)28,MB - all reports are presumably of the same individual. See notes.
Hummingbird, Broad-tailed: LJ(1)23,MA; LJ(1)28,MB - notes and photographs submitted.
Hummingbird, Rufous: LJ(2)23,SW; LJ(1)23,MA; LJ(2)28,MB
HUMMINGBIRD, (ALLEN'S): LJ(1)23,SW; LJ(1)23,MA; LJ(1)28,MB - See Editor's note
Kingfisher, Belted: 9r(1-5)2-29
Woodpecker, Red-headed: NHC(8)2,SC
Woodpecker, Red-bellied: 13r(1-25)1-30
Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: 6r(1-27)1-25
Woodpecker, Downy: 13r(1-22)1-30
Woodpecker, Hairy: Galv(1)26, JH - a Hairy Woodpecker on Galveston Island would be "incredible if true".
Flicker, Northern: 18r(1-70)1-30
Woodpecker, Pileated: 5r(1-15)2-30
Phoebe, Eastern: 11r(1-35)1-25
Flycatcher, Vermilion: UTC(2)3,MB
Lark, Horned: 5r(1-15)2-30
Swallow, Tree: Galv(6)10,SW
Jay, Blue: 13r(1-118)1-29
Crow, American: 11r(1-1500)1-30; including one on 1/30 by HA on Galveston Island. In the past 15 years I have seen American Crow on the island only once.
Chickadee, Carolina: 13r(1-104)1-25
Titmouse, Tufted: 7r(1-28)1-24
Nuthatch, Brown-headed: NHC(2)2,SC; King(1)9,SG
Creeper, Brown: 5r(1-7)2-24
Wren, Carolina: Br(1-47)2-30
Wren, Bewick's: FBC(3)12, TM; FBC(1)22, TM
Wren, House: 5r(1-13)2-30
Wren, Winter: NHC(4)2,SC; BC(1)16,SW
Wren, Sedge: 6r(1-9)2-18
Wren, Marsh: BNWR(1)2,RU
Kinglet, Golden-crowned: NHC(35)2,SC; UTC(2)3,MB; WOB(1)4,WC; SWH(1)10, TM
Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: 15r(1-158)1-29
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: 7r(1-4)1-25
Bluebird, Eastern: 6r(2-123)2-24
Thrush, Hermit: 6r(1-58)2-16
Robin, American: 27r(1-2010)1-30
Catbird, Gray: Br(1-4)2-29
Mockingbird, Northern: 19r(1-68)1-30
Thrasher, Brown: 11r(1-45)1-25
Pipit, Water: 8r(2-50)2-30
Pipit, Sprague's: BNWR(1)2,RU; UTC(7)3,MB; BC(1)23,SW
Waxwing, Cedar: 7r(10-487)1-30
Shrike, Loggerhead: 11r(2-32)2-30
Starling, European: 6r(2-786)1-30
Vireo, Solitary: NHC(4)2,SC; UTC(2)3,MB; BC(1)16,SW; WGI(1)22, JH
Vireo, Yellow-throated: NHC(1)2,SC
Warbler, Orange-crowned: 6r(1-26)2-24
Warbler, Yellow-rumped: 20r(1-500)1-30
Warbler, Pine: 7r(1-48)1-28
Warbler, Palm: UTC(2)3,MB; WOB(1)14,WC; FBC(2)24, TM; EG(1)29, TM
Ovenbird: Clute(1)16,SW; Clute(2)17,SG
Warbler, MacGillivray's: Clute(1)12/26, PL; Clute(1)10,MA; Lehman's sighting on 12/26 was the initial sighting of this individual. Notes and photographs submitted.

Yellowthroat, Common: 6r(1-5)2-29
Warbler, Wilson's: Clute(1)16,SW
Cardinal, Northern: 21r(1-203)1-26
PYRRHULOXIA: UTC(1)3,MB - notes published in December
CH.

BUNTING, BLUE: Clute(1)10,MA; Clute(1)17,SG;
Clute(1)30,PG; - see notes
Bunting, Indigo: Clute(1)5,WC
Towhee, Rufous-sided: Sr(1-6)2-24
Sparrow, Chipping: 5r(1-208)2-24
Sparrow, Field: 6r(2-13)2-24

Sparrow, Vesper: NHC(12)2,SC; FBC(2)18,TM; BC(3)23,SW;
FBC(5)24,TM

BUNTING, LARK: although unreported to the CH, the flock
that wintered on Jack Road in WHC was reported to
the RBA throughout the month.

Sparrow, Savannah: Br(3-180)2-30
Sparrow, Grasshopper: FBC(1)12,TM; FBC(1)18,TM
Sparrow, Le Conte's: FBC(1)18,TM
Sparrow, Sharp-tailed: EG(1)29,TM
Sparrow, Seaside: Galv(2)10,SW; UTC(1)28,MB;
EG(2)29,TM
Sparrow, Fox: King(5)12.29,SG; NHC(4)2,SC; C7P(1)13,SW;
FBC(2)18,TM

Sparrow, Song: 7r(1-29)2-29
Sparrow, Lincoln's: 5r(2-12)2-24
Sparrow, Swamp: 10r(1-62)2-29
Sparrow, White-throated: 14r(2-262)2-29
Sparrow, White-crowned: UTC(7)3,MB; FBC(4)12,TM
Sparrow, Harris': WOB(1)4,WC; WOB(1)8,WC
Junco, Dark-eyed: NHC(119)2,SC; WOB(7)4,WC;
WOB(7)14,WC; FBC(3)18,TM

Longspur, Lapland: FBC(28)5,SW
longspur, sp.: FBC(150)5,SW; Free(1)10,MA
Blackbird, Red-winged: 11r(1-6600)2-30
Meadowlark, Eastern: 11r(8-132)2-30
Meadowlark, Western: NHC(1)1,JS
Blackbird, Brewer's: 6r(1-115)2-20
Grackle, Great-tailed: 9r(1-1120)2-30
Grackle, Boat-tailed: BNWR(4)2,RU; GC(15)10,SW;
Free(5)16,SW

Grackle, Common: 5r(8-4000)2-29
Cowbird, Brown-headed: 7r(2-2000)2-30
Finch, Purple: NHC(13)2,SC; WOB(3)14,WC
Siskin, Pine: 8r(1-33)2-30
Goldfinch, American: 17r(1-226)1-30
Sparrow, House: 5r(20-120)1-28

Editor's Note - field notes for a Brant reported by DG
in FBC on 1/09 have been forwarded to the UTC
Checklist Committee for review.

Location Codes

AB - Armand Bayou
ANWR - Anahuac NWR
Algo - Algoa
BBSP - Brazos Bend State Park
BC - Brazoria County
BF - Bolivar Flats
BNWR - Brazoria NWR
BP - Bay Area Park
Bayt - Baytown
Bol - Bolivar Peninsula
C7P - Challenger 7 Park

CC - Chamber's County
CUTC - Coastal Upper Texas Coast
EG - East Galveston Island
EH - East Houston
FBC - Fort Bend County
Fr - Friendswood
Free - Freeport
GC - Galveston County
GISP - Galveston Island State Park
Galv - Galveston Island
H - Houston
HA - Houston Arboretum
HI - High Island
HP - Hermann Park
Kemp - Kempner Park
King - Kingwood
LC - Lake Charlotte
NHC - North Harris County
Pasa - Pasadena
Pear - Pearland
RP - Rollover Pass
RU - Rice University
SBNW - San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge

SLP - San Luis Pass
SWH - Southwest Houston
SWHC - Southwest Harris County
Seab - Seabrook
TC - Texas City
TCD - Texas City Dike
UTC - Upper Texas Coast
WC - Waller County
WGI - West Galveston Island
WH - West Houston
WHC - West Harris County
WMP - White Memorial Park
WOB - White Oak Bayou

CONTRIBUTORS - JANUARY, 1988

Observers

DG - Donald Gray
JB - John Buckman
JS - Jas Stewart
MA - Mike Austin
MB - Mark Brown
MO - M.L. Owens
PG - Peter Gottschling
PL - Paul Lehman
PM - Peggy Milstead
RU - Richard Uzar
SG - Steve Gast
SW - Steve Williams
TE - Ted Eubanks

TM - Tommy Michaels
WC - Wesley Cureton
WS - Wanda Smith

Parties

HA - Houston Arboretum Field Trip
JH - John and Jane Hamilton
SC - Spring Creek Christmas Count (Harris County only)

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - JAN., 1988

GULL, LESSER BLACK-BACKED

1/16/88

Adult winter-plumaged Lesser Black-backed Gull
located at San Luis Pass in late afternoon on 1/16/88.
Slightly smaller than adjacent Herring Gulls, larger
than adjacent Ring-billed Gulls. Mantle considerably
darker than adult Herring, approaching darkness of
adjacent Laughing Gulls. Bright yellow legs. Dusky
smudging around head, extending down to lower hind-
neck. Complete field description submitted to TOS Bird
Records Committee.

Ted L. Eubanks Jr.

HUMMINGBIRD, CALLIOPE

The Calliope Hummingbird remained in Lake Jackson
from late January through February. This individual has
been described by many observers, and the following
field notes, submitted by Jim Morgan, represent the
best summary of the relevant field marks. Photographs
have been forwarded to the TOS Bird Records Committee
for consideration. This represents the fourth record of
Calliope Hummingbird for the UTC - ed.

Description - Bright metallic green underparts; very
short, straight, all black bill; white post ocular
spot; white underparts but grayish sides, flanks and on
sides of breast; very short tail; gorget in some light
showing radial rows of small purple spots, becoming
radial streaks of brilliant purplish-red (forming
inverted "V" on throat) with proper light.

HUMMINGBIRD, ALLEN'S - Fred Collins and I captured the
possible Allen's Hummingbird in Lake Jackson in
January. A single tail feather (R1), and a set of in-
hand measurements, have been forwarded to Nancy
Newfield for comparison with specimens in the LSU
collection. The CH will publish Mrs. Newfield's
response, and I have chosen to refrain from treating
this individual as more than *Selasphorus* sp. pending
the outcome of the museum comparisons.

BUNTING, BLUE - Mike Austin submitted a complete set of field notes on the female Blue Bunting originally discovered on 12/20 by himself and Jim Beard. These notes represent the most complete description of the female submitted to the CH.

Species: Blue Bunting
Distance: 15'
Relative Size: Solitary Vireo
Head & Neck: Uniform rich cinnamon brown
Eye & Lores: Concolor with head
Upper & Lower Mandibles: Conical blue-gray bill
Legs & Feet: Not seen
Upperparts: Nape and upper back concolor with head & wing coverts - rich cinnamon buff
Underparts: - Throat, breast, upper belly concolor with malar area (rich cinnamon buff) with no trace of streaking. Lower belly paler buff, gradually blending into cinnamon buff of upper belly.
Rectrices: Rather short, all dark, slightly notched tail.
Wing: Coverts rich cinnamon buff, concolor with back. No trace of blue or pale feather edgings. No wingbar. Folded primaries dark.
Vocalization: None
Behavior: Sedentary. Flew up into yaupon twice from dense (palmetto/weed/yaupon) ground cover, sat motionless, then dropped to ground. Responded to E. Screech-Owl tape with mixed flock of 25 birds (Orange-crowned Warbler, Solitary Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse).
Additional Comments: Similar species - Indigo Bunting: bill odd color, overall color more reddish, no face-throat contrast, no streaking/blotching on underparts. Lazuli: no wingbar, face/throat contrast. Blue Grosbeak: too small, no face/throat contrast, back unstreaked.

The following report was received last month from Charles and Pat Jones, but was left out of December's CH due to space constraints.

SPARROW, BAIRD'S (?)

On December 25, 1987, in the afternoon just before a cold front came through, my wife and I were walking along the edge of a large field to the east of Fry Road. There is a drainage ditch on Corps of Engineers land which passes by the Equestrian Center on Mason Road, and we were about 1.5 miles along it to the east. The field is overgrown with weeds 2 to 4 feet high, numerous substantial brambles, and a few Chinese Tallow trees. We were observing a group of sparrows (most of them Savannahs) when one individual arrested our

attention. We were struck immediately by its much cleaner, sharper features and its buffier appearance. It possessed narrow, well-defined (not blurred) black streaks on its upper breast, and two rows of streaks along its flanks. The lower breast and undertail coverts were clear and had no hint of streaking. The streaking on the breast came to an abrupt and even end on the upper breast and was quite striking. In the center of the upper breast, the streaks formed a dark spot similar to that of a Song Sparrow or a Savannah Sparrow. The throat was clear and whitish. The tail was notched and not rounded. Two bold, dark whisker stripes were apparent on each side of the throat. The head possessed a well-defined but not overly broad, buffy central stripe. We would not say that the color of this central stripe was especially orange. Both wings possessed extensive areas of rust coloration from the scapulars down to the tips. The back had a bold and impressive area of black feathers edged with white, giving a scaly appearance. There was a patch above the throat whiskers which was light orange and contrasted with the white throat. The head was rounded and not flat. The bill was light in color and neither noticeably large nor small. Its behavior did not differ from that of the Savannah Sparrows. We did not observe it running along the ground. When we approached it too closely it moved away in a short flight. Once it and two Savannahs jumped into the Chinese Tallow tree. The bird remained briefly after the other two flew. My wife and I observed this bird for at least two minutes from a distance of 50 feet. Each of us had a pair of 9X36 binoculars. The sky was overcast.

We did not notice any areas of gray on the face. We did not notice the color of the tail edges. We did not notice a strong contrast between the nape and the head.

We have only seen a Baird's Sparrow on one occasion. Ben Feltner pointed one out to us when we were on his West Texas trip. It was also with a group of other sparrows.

If it was a Baird's Sparrow, we like the clean, well defined marks, the central head stripe, the scaly back, and the abrupt termination of the necklace. However, problems we see are: the head stripe was buffy and not orange, no behavioral differences from the Savannah Sparrows, the drainage ditch was only 50 yards away, the rust or chestnut color extended down past the scapulars, the presence of a central dark spot on the breast, and the fact that the head was not overly wide. If the bird was a juvenile Baird's these problems would be somewhat mitigated.

Charles and Pat Jones

Editor's Note - these field notes will be referred to the UTC Checklist Committee for consideration.

A Message from the CH Editor

With the spring rapidly approaching, our thoughts race to High Island and the teeming masses of migrants. We only have to look to how few stands of trees remain there, however, to be struck with the fragility and vulnerability of these unique habitats. The Houston Audubon Society has been aggressively acquiring property in this region to preserve as sanctuaries for migrants and observation posts for interested birders and scientists. Last year HAS purchased a 5% undivided in Smith Oak's Woods, and has within the past few days secured a commitment for an additional 12.5 % interest. Please, consider a donation to the Houston Audubon Society Sanctuary Fund. With Old House now fenced and off-limits to birders, and Thrush Woods rapidly being cut, we must support those organizations that are moving rapidly to preserve the few coastal mottes that remain.

FOR OG information, checklists, maps, contact
Maxine Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston
77096, 723-8559.

SEND bird sightings for Clearing House to:
Ted L. Eubanks, Jr. c/o NOVA, P.O. Box 1024,
Houston TX 77251-1024.

RARE Bird Alert Tape, sponsored by Piney Woods
Wildlife Society: 821-2846.

SEND material for Spoonbill to Editor, Libby Price,
3715 Sunset, Houston 77005, 665-1159.

SEND dues, subscriptions and address changes to
Jerry Patrick, 814 St. Francis, Houston 77079.
Members' annual dues: \$15 (ONC \$5, OG \$10).
Spoonbill subscriptions for non-members: \$13.

ADVICE TO THE BIRD-LORN

Dear Phoebe,
Raily I am ready for the Nuthatch. All those great birds in the Valley and I can't go see Ani of them. It's tax season and I have so many Psittaciformes to fill out - all Myna since the other Gull quit. When I asked my boss for some help, this was his Merganser: "I'm Sora, but we are economizing Albatross the board; if you can Knot Hawk it we Willet you go." You could hear my Screech Owl the way down the hall. I don't Caracara, Jacana work any faster to Finch by quitting time. I would like to Chukar the job I am so Bittern.

Robin

A. Dear Robin,
I don't know what to Dowitcher. Ibis I did. I won't give you Ani Bulbul, because I haven't seen those birds Eider, and would like to Grouse to somebody myself. Maybe we should both become Cockatiel waitresses near birding hotspots. I'm a Gamebird if you are.

Siskinly,

Phoebe

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DON'T HARASS THE BLACK-CAPPED VIREO

The endangered Black-capped Vireo has been reduced to a few small populations by loss of habitat and cowbird nest parasitism. The large number of birders looking for the bird in the Austin area, many playing calls to the point of harassment, has prompted the Committee for Wild Basin Wilderness to issue a warning that birders have become an additional hazard for the vireo. Anyone intending a trip to Austin to see the bird is asked to contact the Wild Basin Office and join a tour under the leadership of a guide. Tours will be held every Saturday from late March through June to visit colonies of vireos on private land, by special permission. The Wild Basin/Davenport Ranch colony is OFF LIMITS!

Those wishing to join a Saturday tour, or make arrangements for a tour at some other time (according to guide availability) should write to Wild Basin, P.O. Box 13455, Austin TX 78711, or call (512) 476-4113. Another area for seeing the vireo is Lost Maples State Park in Bandera County, where tape recorder use is also strongly discouraged to prevent harassment.

Though an individual might not see other birders during a visit to the Austin area, there could be repeated visits by birders day after day to the same area. Not only should birders realize that they can disturb courtship and nesting if they go unescorted, but they should be aware that they would be breaking the law to harass the endangered Black-capped Vireo.

IF YOUR MAILING LABEL SAYS '87, THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE UNTIL YOUR '88 DUES ARE PAID

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