



THE SPOONBILL

Volume XXV, No. 4
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PUBLISHED BY THE ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB, HOUSTON, TEXAS

COMING EVENTS

(On most field trips mentioned in Coming Events, we are asked to bring lunch and insect repellent. We are going to add, from now on, a litter bag for aluminum cans, for aluminum can be found nearly everywhere we go. Save your collections, and bring to the following OG meeting. This could add a lot to the club's income derived from the sale of aluminum).

- Saturday
Aug. 30 Bird walk in Memorial Park. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the picnic area of Memorial Park. Come join us for an early morning walk in the park. There won't be a long list of birds, but a few leisurely hours will provide us with the opportunity to see what there is to be seen. This is a good time to ease into the new season, renew our birding friendships, get acquainted with new members and any non-member subscriber who wishes to join us. It is also a good time for those who can't physically take a long field trip, or novices who wish to bird alongside more experienced birders. This is for a few hours only, but some of you may wish to bring lunch and make a longer day of it.
- Saturday
Sep. 6 Wes Cureton, our field trip chairman, is planning a scouting trip to the National Attwater Prairie Chicken Refuge, near Eagle Lake. This is not a full-fledged field trip, but Wes will welcome anyone who wishes to join him in this "find out what's there" trip. It is possible that some species may be added to the preliminary checklist being compiled by Mr. Lee Herzberger, who welcomes our aid in this project. Time will be early. If you are interested, call Wes - 862-5255.
- Saturday
Sep. 13 Audubon field trip led by Dr. David Marrack. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at roadside park in High Island. Bring lunch, insect repellent, and litter bags for aluminum.
- Tuesday
Sep. 9 Outdoor Nature Club regular meeting, 8:00 p.m., Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive. First meeting of the season looks to be very interesting: "Geology of the Big Bend". Mr. Art Link, geologist with Texaco, will present the program about this most unique area, which he promises will be geared to the layman members of our group.
- Saturday
Sep. 20 OG field trip to eastern Harris County, led by David and Dorothy Lefkovits. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at rest stop (with comfort stations) on IH 10, east of San Jacinto River. Bring lunch, insect repellent, and litter bags for aluminum. This is a half-day trip to the Cedar Bayou area and Baytown Tunnel, looking for both land and water birds. As Dorothy says: "From the prairie to the shining sea, or, to be realistic, from the prairie to the dirty bay!"
- Saturday
Sep. 27 Outdoor Nature Club field trip to Galveston Island State Park, coordinated by the OG. Complete details will be in next month's SPOONBILL, but mark this one on your calendar now, for it will be a great opportunity to become acquainted with our newest state park and the large portion of it to be left in a natural state for nature lovers. Mr. Peltier, the park superintendent will give us a welcoming talk on the park, what it offers, and what their plans are. Each of the six study groups will, hopefully, have representatives on hand to answer any "what is it?" questions.
- Saturday
Oct. 4 Audubon field trip to Galveston and Bolivar led by Dr. Marrack. Details next month.
- Thursday
Oct. 2 OG regular meeting. Details next month.

THE SUMMER OF THE HUMMER by Margaret Dunlap

The green violetear did not appear to impress Cynthia Lou Nimmons. Her mother and father, Paul and Phyllis, had driven all the way from Houston to Wimberley just to see this celebrated visitor from southern Mexico. But Cynthia Lou, nineteen days old, did not even look at the hummer. People were supposed to be looking at her!

When Steve and Maria Williams arrived, they were surprised to find the Nimmons family already on the screened porch looking down from the cliff above the Blanco River. Steve and Phyllis are fellow-teachers at Houston Baptist College, and isn't it a small world? After being introduced to Cynthia Lou, Maria exclaimed, "Quick, Steve, come look, just below the cliff, a big metallic green hummingbird giving chase to that bright red cardinal!" Four more Houstonians had added another lifer. Since July 3, when a house-guest of the Dunlaps, Mrs. Delight Hoffman, of Whittier, Calif., had first called attention to the big five-inch dark green hummer at the feeder with the black-chins, some thirty-one visitors from Houston had seen him.

The house party at Shade Ranch that first week in July consisted of thirteen people from Dallas, Houston, Cypress, Livingston, and Whittier, Calif. When the hummer was spotted, out came the field guides--a stack of Petersons, and the Golden. None of them had the right bird. Thirteen observers saw a breast of brilliant peacock blue. Only two birds in the guides were as big as this one. Only one of those had a throat of blue. But the blue-throat had to be marked with white. And none of the thirteen observers could find a single mark of white. Hazel Green, owner of the best binoculars in Wimberley, and Wimberley authority on feathered folk, couldn't find white with her binoculars, either. She brought her Oberholzer and Kincaid, and after sharing the confusion, reluctantly concluded that eyes must be playing tricks. Perhaps he was really a Rivoli's male, though no such bird had ever been seen in these parts. Neither Hazel nor the Duniaps had any of the presently available guides to birds of Mexico. It was Hazel who suggested the Rare Bird Alert in Austin. If she turned this in, she warned the Dunlaps, they should be prepared for lots of company. With the house-party now grown to nineteen, the Dunlaps hardly blinked. In Wimberley, having lots of company in summer is just a way of life.

Hazel made the call. The phone began ringing and hasn't stopped since. Within 24 hours the visitors began. The first group from Austin included John and Barbara Ribble, who had often seen the Rivoli's in Arizona, and who have extensive acquaintance with the birds of Mexico. It was Barbara who first detected the violet ear-patches and observed the decurved beak, and sent Rose Ann Rowlett over bright and early next morning to confirm her opinion that this bird was another green violetear, the bird who had created such a stir on his twenty-five day visit with Nila Ruth Copeland back in 1969. Here he was again, 800 miles from home.

The word spread quickly by the various grapevines--a note in the SPOONBILL, a ham radio alert from San Antonio, and long-distance telephone calls across Texas and the nation.

By Friday, July 25, 241 visitors had signed the guest book at Shade Ranch during the month of July. They came from 28 towns in Texas, three in California, four in Florida, one in Pennsylvania, one in Maryland, one in Massachusetts, two in Ontario; one person came from Washington, D.C., and one from Rome, Italy (this one was one of the thirty people in July who just came to see the Dunlaps--but by now the violetear was considered to be a Dunlap--the green-violeteared Dunlap). On July 12, twenty-nine of these visitors from many faraway places waited all day and left disappointed, for that was the day when the big hummer took Saturday off. A number of those who were disappointed drove back again later to be met with success.

This one flashing bird has provided many with much delight. Even Victor Emanuel, who knows the bird well from trips to Mexico, called him spectacular. For Ben Feltner, he was a lifer, Ben's 476th Texas bird. For Ben nowadays these lifers are gained rarely. It is suspected that the green violetear may have brought the list of Paul DuMont, of Washington D.C., near the rare and coveted 700. Paul Sykes, who flew from Delaney Beach, Florida, christened a new pair of binoculars which he had saved for the green violetear, the 650th bird on his U.S. list.

Margaret Dunlap is now wondering if the green violeteared Dunlap will still be around when on August 13 she returns to teach again at Woodrow Wilson High School in Dallas. How long will he stay? Will he ever return? In any case, he has made this, for the Dunlaps, The Summer of the Hummer. And Jim Tucker, editor of A.B.A.'s *Birding*, has solemnly promised, if the guest list keeps growing, to explore the idea of initiating a Club 600 for any bird's hostess who attains a guest list of 600 birders!

WANT TO BIRD WESTERN MEXICO?

Those of our readers who had their birding appetites whetted by the account in the April, 1975 SPOONBILL: Birding in Western Mexico by Elaine Robinson and Barbara Kendrick, have a great opportunity awaiting them. The tour to Sinaloa and Nayarit, Mexico will be re-run in February, 1976, just a year later. This will be your chance to use the new Mexican Guides. For further details write or call:

Ben Feltner, 331 W. 31st., Houston, Texas 77018 -- phone: 864-7824

SOME THINGS THAT WENT AWRY

*Dues paying time seems to be a time of confusion for many, even long-time members. To be a member of the Ornithology Group (dues - \$2.00 per year, payable to OG treasurer) you must be a member of the Outdoor Nature Club (dues - \$3.50 per year, payable to the ONC treasurer). Both dues are due May 1st. All OG members automatically receive the SPOONBILL. A non-member may subscribe to the SPOONBILL for \$3.00 per year, and has been referred to in the past as "subscriber". To eliminate confusion, these will in the future be referred to as "Non-member subscribers".

* Sorry about those martins last month, folks, but they started leaving before you got your SPOONBILL. The nights of the 6th, 7th (when I saw them - ed.), and 8th of July apparently saw the greatest concentrations, and they dwindled after that. By Friday night, the 11th, as many as there were to be seen, there was only a fraction of the numbers seen before. Jerry Strickland, who saw them at their height, estimates 700,000. And did you see the picture of them on the front page of the Houston Post where the caption-writer called all those lovely Purple Martins, blackbirds?

* Vic Emanuel wishes a correction to be made about Edgar Kincaid and the Black-throated Blue Warbler. This was not a lifer, but a first Texas sighting for Mr. Kincaid.

* There was some difficulty in transmission and reception between Ken Schwendt and your editor last month re the Yellow Rails. Ken writes to set matters straight:

"On page 321 of A.C. Bent's LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN MARSH BIRDS, he states: "The small white spots, so conspicuous on the head and neck of the adult, are entirely lacking in the young bird". This is the only information we had when we began banding yellow rails and recorded each bird as such, based on this information. It was not until we had finished banding that I became aware of the recent studies indicating that the spots are actually on immature birds, (based on captive reared birds), and not adults). This research information was borrowed from Anahuac NWR, which has conducted some field studies on yellow rails. But much remains, for little is known about these elusive creatures and more research needs to be conducted".

So, if you can get close enough to a yellow rail to see spots before your eyes, you are looking at an immature bird!

DRY TORTUGAS JAUNT by Avis Brister, aided by Mary Gillette and Marilyn Crane

By noon on Friday, May 2, the passengers of the Capt. Winner IV began arriving in Marathon, Florida for the trip to the Dry Tortugas. They came from near: Miami, Fort Myers and other points in Florida; they came from far: as far away as Montana. They came from many spots in between, such as Houston and Beaumont, Texas. Since the boat was not due to leave until 2:00 p.m., they passed their time as birders will - birding. The brown pelicans swimming around the dock and the gray kingbird perched on the wire overhead were noted, but Jack Gillette made the find of the day when he spotted a pair of burrowing owls on the golf course across the street. (OG members saw Jack's slides of this trip at the August meeting, including one of those owls!)

At 3:30 p.m., only 1 1/2 hours late, the Capt. Winner was finally under way and we all took up positions along the rail to look for pelagic birds. Flying fish jumped up in front of the boat from time to time as we checked hundreds of cormorants and almost as many terns. The cormorants all turned out to be exactly that - cormorants, and most of the terns turned out to be Least Terns - not a roseate among them. Then finally a different bird was spotted, a Wilson's Petrel, floating on the water. A flaming sunset was reflected in the calm water of the Gulf and all the photographers on board jockeyed for choice positions along the rail. Later on as darkness prevailed, we could see fluorescent fish and other luminous creatures in the water as they crossed the path of the forward searchlight.

About 9:00 p.m. a lighthouse came into view and by 9:30 we were docked at Fort Jefferson National Monument on Garden Key. The crew were soon busy building a fire on the beach and preparing supper. A tasty punch kept the 71 birders occupied while the crew fried chicken, baked potatoes, etc.

Although it was after midnight when we turned in, everyone was up in eager anticipation by 6:30 next morning. The sooty and noddy terns from neighboring Bush Key were filling the air with graceful swoops and I personally got a crick in my neck because I could not take my eyes off the magnificent frigate birds soaring high overhead, sometimes in groups of two or three and sometimes in flocks of 17-25.

To relieve the strain on my neck I joined the group inside the fort looking for migrant warblers. Although it was practically the end of the migrating season, within one hour we located cat birds, black-throated blues, magnolia and palm warblers, Cape May warblers, yellowthroats, redstarts, blackpolls and gray kingbirds. Later in the day the ovenbird, the mourning dove and the bobolink were seen. There were both rough-winged and barn swallows at the fort and many cattle egrets were trapped inside the fort, too sick and weak from the DDT they had ingested in South America to fly over the walls and continue their journey northward.

While we were taking the guided tour of the fort, word arrived from the beach that a black noddy tern had been spotted, so the guide lost about half his audience. With the help of Betty Cornelius I found the black noddys - two of them, and also located the brown booby perched in a tree on Bush Key. Later that afternoon the booby obligingly flew relatively close to our island and was seen in much better detail.

In the meantime there were those who did report seeing roseate terns and even the white-tailed tropic bird was seen by Betty Cornelius and the man from Montana. Royal terns were seen in good numbers and white-rumped sandpipers were observed on the beach.

After more of Capt. Winner's potent punch, a luau featuring red fish fingers of freshly caught fish topped off our day of birding on the Dry Tortugas. Early next morning, we left Garden Key, easing by Bush Key at close range so that the clamor of the nesting terns could be heard. The water was much rougher on the return trip so that movement around the boat was hampered. The only notable birds seen on the return trip were the great white herons spotted as we cruised past the Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge.

AROUND AND ABOUT

Russ Clapper, from Anahuac NWR, sent a note from Mrs. Gladys C. Curns (who has become a new SPOONBILL non-member subscriber): "At West road and the beach, looking west across fence into pasture, my sister and I saw a pair of Long-billed Curlews, and two downy chicks, no more than 24 hours old, one chick with each curlew". This would seem to confirm the nesting of another bird marked "S" on our checklist. ("S" means "Nesting suspected but unconfirmed in upper Texas Coast area). Last month we reported confirmed nesting of the Cliff swallow at the Hwy 59-Oyster Creek bridge by Holly Hobart, and later, by P&MJ and Jane Dodge.

* From The Wilson Bulletin, Vol. 87, No.1, March 1975 comes this information by Edward L. Flickinger, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Victoria, Texas (another of our non-member subscribers):

"Incubation by a male Fulvous Tree Duck.--On 26 July 1968, I obtained evidence of a male Fulvous Tree (Whistling) Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) incubating 13 eggs near El Campo, Wharton County, on the Texas Gulf Coast. I observed two Fulvous Tree Ducks (sexes indistinguishable by plumage) fly from a nest near the edge of a rice field and then return a short time later. One of the birds settled on the nest, and, on dissection, found it to be an adult male. Three eggs examined from the clutch contained 18-day-old-embryos." Mr. Flickinger says in the article, that, while it had been suggested by some that the wild male Fulvous Tree Duck shares incubation duties with their hens (like the Black-bellied Tree Ducks) to his knowledge it had not before been confirmed. This confirmation by Mr. Flickinger was accepted 15 July 1974.

* Every birder knows of the battle the Kirtland Warbler has been having to avoid extinction, what with loss of habitat, encroaching cowbirds, and such. Now the Flint Journal, Flint, Mich., reports problems with the National Guard and Chambers of Commerce. It seems about 45 pairs of the 334 rare warblers chose a nesting site right in the middle of a tank range at Camp Grayling, National Guard maneuvering area. The State Department of Natural Resources ordered the Guard to postpone its tank exercises for one month, until Aug. 15, eliciting cries of outrage from the spokesman for the Grayling Regional Chamber of Commerce. He protested that the birds were not worth the million dollars that comes into the area from the guardsmen and their families. A regional wildlife biologist said the ban was imposed after the DNR discovered the birds will mate a second time if left alone. The original restrictions were modified a bit later, when further surveys disclosed that the birds were concentrated more than at first thought. Cooperation and compromise between the Department of Natural

Resources, foresters and National Guard training specialists provided plans for protection of the birds and adequate tank facilities within the Grayling Military Reservation. Who would have thought a half-ounce of feathers could stop a tank!

* Marjorie Adams of Austin (who, with her husband, Red, has done so much to publicize the Golden-cheeked Warbler and its shrinking habitat) had an article in the June/July issue of National Wildlife, which was condensed in the June Reader's Digest, called "Birding--A Sport for All Seasons". In this article she calls attention to the growing interest in "listing"--seeing how many different species one can see in a given area, be it state or North America. That, of course, can be an interesting facet of birding, as her article very cleverly points out.

* And in the July Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine an article entitled "Oh You Virtuous Owls" you will find among the illustrations some of John Tveten's pictures. Especially interesting to those of us who were on the Prairie Chicken field trip last spring are the two little Great Horned Owlets we stood around and watched as all the photographers snapped away at them.

* For those of you who do any traveling at all through Texas, the Highway Dept. has an invaluable aid to birders in their county road maps. Many charming by-ways can be found that will get you from "here to there", shunning the busy, crowded highways, and leading to some very good, and sometimes unexpected, birding along the way. The book is \$15.00 and contains all of the counties in Texas. If you don't travel very much around the state, a copy of each county map of the checklist counties will enable you to explore with confidence this upper Texas Coast we live in. The county maps are each 25¢ per sheet, and they, and the books, can be gotten at the Texas Highway Department office, 7721 Washington Ave., Houston.

* We think our Galveston Curve-billed Thrasher is a rarity, but Randy Korotev says there has been a Curve-billed Thrasher female reported for the last four years in Wisconsin! Randy is a member of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology, and receives their newsletter each month. He says any of you planning a trip to Wisconsin, can, is you care to, contact him for information on birding in that state.

LIBRARY NEWS:

John James Audubon never wrote his autobiography, as such. But from his many letters, journals and published writings Alice Ford has selected excerpts that faithfully give his own story of his life. AUDUBON, BY HIMSELF, was published in 1969 for the American Museum of Natural History. This book is available from our club library and makes very interesting reading. To make arrangements to borrow it, call Avis Brister at 681-6456.

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING, ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, AUGUST 7, 1975

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Harry Brister. Present were 34 members and 10 guests. All were extended a warm welcome by the Chairman, and our guests were invited to meet with us again.

There being no additions or corrections to the Minutes of the May 24th Meeting, as published in THE SPOONBILL, motion was properly made, seconded and carried to dispense with the reading of those Minutes.

Accepted as read was the Treasurer's Report for the period May 1, 1975 to July 31, 1975. Receipts were \$302.24; disbursements were \$192.28; balance on hand was \$741.35, of which \$221.63 is earmarked for the future publication of the 6th checklist.

Our Treasurer reported that old reports on our Treasury and a number of copies of out-of-date checklists would be inventoried and stored in the archives at Bayou Manor. A copy of the inventory will be given to the Chairman. Mrs. Gillette also mentioned that there would still be a number of copies of old OG checklists left over, as well as some old Steve Williams checklists which will be made available to any of our members who might want them. Several of the latter will also be placed in the archives. See Mary if you are interested in any of the old checklists.

Dr. Pat Sullivan, Membership Chairman, exhibited our new Meeting Register and called attention to the old one which will be retired to the archives. It covers the period from August 26, 1965 through May 24, 1975. She said that glancing through the pages brought back a lot of memories, including several marriages between members.

Word from the Austin area is that the Calliope Hummingbird has departed and that the Violet-eared does not put in an appearance on Saturdays!

A letter of appreciation from Mr. Joe M. Heiser, Jr. for the fine write-ups memorializing the late Mr. Arlie McKay was read by Mr. Brister. In it Mr. Heiser included a contribution toward the continued publication of THE SPOONBILL.

Paul Nimmons moved and Gladys Galbreath seconded a motion that the OG make a \$25 contribution to the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary honoring Mr. McKay. Motion carried.

Mr. Brister read a suggestion advocating the increased use of carpooling on field trips. The advantages of economy, convenience, getting better acquainted with fellow birders, and making the line of cars more manageable were stressed. He would welcome a volunteer to serve as carpool coordinator.

Our Chairman announced that the Ornithology Group will be sponsoring both monthly meeting and field trips for Outdoor Nature Club for the months of September and December. Louise Rogers asked for material on Big Bend for the exhibit table at the September 9 Meeting of the Club. A friend of Mr. Brister, Dr. A.J. Link, will speak on "Rocks of Big Bend". The T. Paul Joneses, leaders of the Club trip to Galveston Island State Park, September 27, assured us that though the park may not be officially open by then, we will be officially welcomed by park personnel. Representatives from each of the ONC Groups will be invited to accompany our exploration on foot of this new park.

Avis Brister, in charge of our book library, reviewed briefly a number of volumes she brought to the meeting to encourage readership. Those interested were invited to browse through them, sign the library card and take the books home. Another group of books will be made available at the next OG meeting.

The Christmas Count, coordinated by Paul Nimmons, is set for December 20. He said he hoped that scheduling the count before rather than after Christmas would enable us to see more birds. Leaders have been secured; the hours will be from 4:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Paul said he had gone over the reports of birds seen over the past five years, and compiled for the leaders a list of the birds seen less than 3 years out of these last 5. Any birds on this list sighted in this year's count must have substantiating details.

Mr. Brister displayed a copy of OPERATION NATURE GUIDE by the Tahoma Audubon Society, which lists the names of people who will serve as unpaid guides for various nature subjects in different parts of the country. They are looking for additional names. Those interested were invited to glance through the book.

A few copies of a recent checklist published by Sea Rim State Park have been made available to us, courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. T. Paul Jones.

Our Chairman reminded us that no collecting of any kind is permitted in any State Parks without a permit for a particular time for a particular park and secured from the park officials. (correction: from Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. in Austin--ed.)

Following a discussion of a letter received from the Dallas Audubon Society asking for contributions toward the hard cover publication of the research study on the Golden-cheeked Warbler by Warren Pulich (the book is already being published in paperback), the hat was passed and \$32 was collected. Our Treasurer was authorized to forward a check to them from OG in that amount. Bill Mealy reports that the birds' habitat is decreasing alarmingly.

Ornithology Group members were extended an invitation by Katrina Ladwig to attend the Audubon Society's openhouse at the Edith L. Moore Sanctuary from one to five on August 17. The house will also be open to visitors on that day only.

Paul Nimmons described a birding trip he had in mind to Southern California, to be done by plane and rent car as was the trip to Southeast Arizona. A show of hands indicated considerable interest in such a trip, so Paul said he would check into the possibility further and give more details at a later date. He also asked for a show of hands on a possible trip to the Northwest Coast and got a very favorable response. More about that later too.

A birding trip to Mexico for about eight or nine days next February to be led by Bill Mealy is also under consideration. Enough interest was evidenced to encourage Dr. Mealy to present this project in more detail at a later date. He did mention that the birders would be staying at motels and that the trip would be relatively inexpensive. The itinerary could include the Valles area, the marshes at Vera Cruz and the cloud forest.

Accompanied by commentary by Harry Brister, Dr. Frank Hsu showed a number of slides from our film library. The rest of the viewers identified the birds and added helpful information.

There being no further business, the program was turned over to the Program Chairman. Dr. Mealy explained that the theme of the programs for the coming year would be travel. One program would be on the Welder Wildlife Refuge, another on Peru, a third on Hawaii. This evening's program was presented by several members who had travelled this summer. First, Marilyn Crane exhibited her slides taken on a trip to Alaska on a Bird Bonanza tour. This was followed by Jack Gillette's slides made on the Jim Lane Tour to the Dry Tortugas. In conclusion, Bill Mealy showed a few slides of Point Pele, several made in New York, and a number made during a summer marathon trip through Texas during which 250 species were sighted.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Louise Rogers

OPERATION NATURE GUIDE

If you are willing to guide an occasional visitor who shares your particular nature interest, send your name, listing that interest, to :

Nature Guide, 34915 - 4th Ave. South, Federal Way, Washington 98002

If you wish a Guide, send \$1.00 to the above address.

CLEARING HOUSE, July, 1975

(How to read the C.H: Name of bird: (how many)date, location, observers)

Pelican, White: (9)26, east side of San Jacinto Battleground Park, DD.

Cormorant, Olivaceous: (9)19, (12)20, (3)26, #3 Exxon Lagoon-Baytown Tunnel, DD.

Anhinga: (1)1, 24, (3-4)14, Oyster Creek at Sugarland, HH; (2)20, Hwy 59 just north of Oyster Creek, P&MJ, HH; (3)25, Smithers Lake area, P&MJ

Bittern, Least: (1)5, Anahuac Refuge, DD.

Stork, Wood: (3)13, Tunnel Park, LaPorte side, (4)26, (35)27, San Jacinto Battlegrounds Park, DD; (20)26, Jefferson Co., GC.

Ibis, White-faced: (20)5, Chambers Co. at intersection FM 562 & 2936, DD.

" , White: (25+)5, West Chambers Co. at IH 10 and Old River bridge, DD.

Spoonbill, Roseate: (13)13, Baytown Tunnel, (27)19, (8)20, #3 Exxon Lagoon, Baytown, DD; (1)13, Smithers Lake area, P&MJ

Shoveler, Northern: (2)26, #3 Exxon Lagoon, Baytown Tunnel, DD.

Duck, Wood: (2)20, (4)25, in slough on east side of Hwy 59 between Sugar Creek Blvd. and Oyster Creek, P&MJ

" , Ruddy: (8)19, (7)20, (8)26, (4)27, Exxon Lagoon-Baytown Tunnel, DD.

Kite, White-tailed: (1)11, Johnson Space Center, RK; (1)13, 25, Smithers Lake area, P&MJ;

(1)21, FM road west of Sandy Point, Mike & David Braun, Dan Hardy

" , Mississippi: (1-3)15 days, (4)31, Richmond, HH; (2)21, Sandy Point area, David & Mike Braun, Dan Hardy [this is a fairly regular bird along Brazos River in summer--C.H. ed.]; (1)25, Richmond, P&MJ

Hawk, Red-tailed: (1)25, Smithers Lake area, P&MJ

" , Red-shouldered: (1)25, Smithers Lake area, P&MJ

Hawk: Swainson's: (1)27, N. Braeswood Blvd. at Main St., David Deifik; (1)all month, Johnson Space Center, RK; (2)20, Bruce McCandless, HH [this bird is an irregular summerer in this area, therefore, details not required]

Gallinule, Purple: (2--each with 3 chicks)5, Anahuac R., DD

" , Common: (1)19, 20, (3)26, Baytown Tunnel, DD

Oystercatcher, American: (5)5, Bolivar Flats, DD

Tern, Royal: (1000+)5, Bolivar Flats, DD

" , Black: (2)19, (2)19, (3)20, (6)26, Baytown Tunnel, DD

Skimmer, Black: (1)20, HL&P Spillway into Trinity Bay, West Chambers Co., DD

Dove, White-winged: (6)24, Galveston Co. Courthouse, NP--see notes

Owl, Great Horned: (2)11, Johnson Space Center, RK

Hummingbird, Ruby-throated: (1 male)around 4-6, near TC Jester & 34th, Mrs. Pat Strickland (reported by Wes Cureton)

Kingfisher, Belted: (2)15, Fresno, Charlene May

Woodpecker, Red-headed: (2)5, White Memorial Park, DD

Flycatcher, Scissor: (100+)all month, East Harris-West Chambers Counties, DD

Swallow, Cliff: (8-10)20, Oyster Creek bridge at Hwy 59, P&MJ & HH in canoe counted 10 nests: (8+, 10 nests)August 2, Oyster Creek bridge at Hwy 59, HH

Bluebird, Eastern: (5)20, Johnson Space Center, Bruce McCandless, HH

Warbler, Black-and-white: (1)6, Aline McAshen Botanical Garden & Arboretum, Jackie & Charlene May

Bunting, Indigo: (1)21, FM road west of Sandy Point, David & Mike Braun, Dan Hardy.

Sparrow, Henslow's: (13)18, Mykawa Rd. (All birds heard singing), NP

CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

GC - Glenn Cureton; DD - David Dauphin; HH - Holly Hoberl; P&MJ - Paul & Margaret Jones; RK - Randy Korotev; NP - Noel Pettingell.

The following species were seen in usual numbers and habitat: Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Little Blue Heron, Cattle Egret, Reddish Egret, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Louisiana Heron, Black-crowned Nightheron, Mottled Duck, Turkey Vulture, Bobwhite, Coot, Killdeer, Long-billed Curlew, Willet, Blue Jay, Mockingbird, Cardinal, Loggerhead Shrike, Eastern Kingbird, Purple Martin, Eastern Meadowlark, Least Tern, Laughing Gull, Starling, Mourning Dove.

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

Swallow-tailed Kite: Orlyn Gaddis telephoned Mike Braun on July 20 from Bay City to report that he had seen 3 Swallow-tailed Kites 2 miles north of Rosharon on Hwy 288 that same afternoon. (This is all the detail I have been able to collect at this time. C-H ed.)

The following account was sent to the SPOONBILL editor, from someone at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, arriving the day after last month's issue was mailed. Note that the place called Holiday Lakes was also mentioned on the list given us by Tom Collins, which was printed on the back page of last month's SPOONBILL.

"A Swallow-tailed Kite, *Elanoides forficatus*, was reported seen along Oyster Creek on June 29th by Glen Johnson, age 13, at Holiday Lakes, 5 miles west of Angleton, Texas.

This was the second sighting of a swallow-tailed kite at this area by Glen. The first sighting in April was unreported because Glen was alone at the time. The sighting on Sunday afternoon of June 29th, was at treetop level. The kite was observed for about ten minutes and was witnessed by Reavis Johnson, Director - Brazosport Museum of Natural Science. An unconfirmed sighting of a swallow-tail kite was reported to Mr. Johnson at the Brazosport Museum on June 30th of a bird, seen in the vicinity of the "Boilers" near Surfside on June 29th."

White-winged Dove: 2 birds on nests in one tree on Moody Avenue (21st st.) side near Winnie St. (Avenue G), Galveston. --Noel Pettingell

NO DETAILS were submitted with the following sightings:

Eared Grebe: (2)19,20,26, (3)27, #3 Exxon Lagoon, east side of San Jacinto Battlegrounds Park, DD

Roadrunner: (1) sometime during week of 20-27, north of Needville, Ft. Bend County, Linda Tielke, (reported by Holly Hobart).

The following was sent in as a "possible" sighting in June:

Bronzed Cowbird?: Anahuac Refuge; chased by Redwing. Paul and Phyllis Nimmons and Stan Wecker. 8x40, 8x30, and 7x35 binoculars; marsh; observed for 45 seconds in good light at 100 feet; slightly smaller or same size as Redwing; no epaulets, no streaks; head black; body very dark brown; dark eye; no ruff on neck; no sheen; all observers are reasonably familiar with blackbirds.

RARE BIRD ALERT

A Brown Pelican was reported to Margaret Angerson August 12, seen on Freeport side of San Luis Pass bridge, patrolling beach.

PLACES TO GO

For a pleasant bird walk consider MERCER PARK ARBORETUM, in north Harris County. In just 1 1/2 hours one afternoon last August some 13 species were sighted. Nothing spectacular or rare, but who doesn't enjoy the sight of a Parula Warbler, Summer Tanager, or Wood Thrush? To reach the park, turn right off IH 45 onto FM 1960, and proceed east to the intersection of 1960 and Aldine-Westfield road (about 3 miles), turn left and proceed north 1.3 miles to entrance on right. Open 8 to 5, all week.

And for some late afternoon birding (as well as any time) there is the SMITHERS LAKE AREA, a map of which was in the September 1974 SPOONBILL. For those of you who do not have that issue, here are directions:

Hwy 59 to Richmond (look for Mississippi Kites soaring over town, good vantage point is Courthouse or Library), turn left on FM 762. Follow this road until it crosses a bridge over the upper end of Smithers Lake, then turn left at Smithers Lake Road, which is the first road after the bridge, a gravel road, and is come upon rather abruptly just after a curve in the road. Rabbs Prairie Road makes a square, with the north side of the square being Smithers Lake Road. In the late afternoon or evening Great Horned Owls can usually be seen now in some dead trees visible from the east

leg of Rabbs Prairie Road. The White-tailed Kite is nearly always seen in or near the square made by this road. Black-bellied Treeducks have been seen recently by walking the railroad track west from the western leg of Rabbs Prairie Road (this is a rather difficult walk because of the roadbed gravel) for about a mile, as well as herons, ibis and nighthérons coming in to roost near Worthington Lake (No accessibility to this lake that we know of at this time).

This whole area is rich in rice fields, and should yield some excellent birding all year. With the aid of your county road maps you can explore many of these gravel farm roads south of Richmond with confidence you'll not get lost.

There has been some interesting roadside birding for the past month or so on the east side of Hwy 59 between Sugar Creek Blvd. and Oyster Creek bridge. In a slough paralleling the frontage road nesting Yellow-crowned Nighthérons, Green Herons have been observed, and just the other day a Pied-bill Grebe pair with three chicks provided a delightful picture. Though we have seen four Wood Ducks several times, we have not yet seen any ducklings. Anhingas have also been observed here. This can be a very pleasant 15 minute stop, though the nests are probably empty now.

As mentioned in last month's issue, so many of you requested more local birding information. Above are examples of three different kinds of birding. These are places P&MJ have enjoyed, surely there are many more you can add to the list. Send in some locations where you have enjoyed birding, whether for 15 minutes or 15 hours, so they can be shared with others.

Next month we are going to include in PLACES TO GO areas of Galveston, with a map, so be sure to get your favorite spot in to the editor.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING

New members:

Mrs. Peggy Gerba, 5806 Green Craig, Houston, Texas 77035 - 723-3870
Mr. Johnny Chometa, 5607 Warm Springs, Houston, Texas 77035 - 723-9627
Miss Charlene May, PO Box 217, Fresno, Texas 77545 - 431-2217
Mrs. John T. Hamilton, Jr., 4620 Ave R 1/2, Galveston, Texas 77550

New non-member subscribers:

Mr./Mrs. T.H. Collins, 115 Dogwood, Lake Jackson, Texas 77566 - 1-265-4847
Mr. Roger Zimmerman, 6808 Westview, #225, Houston, Texas 77055 - 683-8750
Mrs. Gladys C. Curns, 4430 Bell Ave., Houston, Texas 77023 - 923-5176
Mrs. Dick Munro, 3860 Holland Dr., Beaumont, Texas 77707

Change of address:

Mrs. James Leibfarth (June Rushing), 7342 Cabin Creek, San Antonio, Texas 78238
No. Texas Bird & Wildlife Club, Mrs. Garland Moore, 6530 Southwest Parkway, Wichita Falls, 76310
Miss Madeleine Baker, Route 1, Box 81 DD, Arcadia, Texas 77517
Miss Jackie May, 1700 Seaspray Ct., #2067, Houston, Texas 77008 - 868-2975

NEW ROSTER

The 1975-1976 roster has been published and will be mailed shortly. These will be mailed to members and Rare Bird Alert participants only, though there are a few copies over that will be available to non-member subscribers if the editor is so notified. Members, non-member subscribers, complimentary copy recipients, exchanges and Rare Bird Alert participants, as well as officers of OG are listed.

Correction to the roster: Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Chandler's vacation home address was inadvertently listed in the roster, please change to permanent address.

Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Chandler, 1200 Bellies, Course, Texas 77301 - 1-756-6863

OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB
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10602 Cedarhurst
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NAMES FOR REFERENCE:

Chairman:	Mr. Harry Brister, 2314 Saxon, Houston, Texas 77018	681-6456
Treasurer:	Mrs. J.M. Gillette, 5027 Longmont, Houston, Texas 77027	626-1755
Spoonbill:	Mrs. T. Paul Jones, 4902 Fern, Bellaire, Texas 77401	665-4197
Clearing House:	Mr. Dan Hardy, 10215 Chatterton, Houston, Texas 77043	468-2748
Rare Bird Alert:	Mrs. L.W. Anderson, 2913 Amherst, Houston, Texas 77005	668-6405
Change of address:	Mrs. Richard Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston, Texas 77035	723-8559