



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME XIII No. 7

November, 1964

* * * * *
 * A bird is such a tiny thing, *
 * Even in bushes but half grown; *
 * A bird is such a tiny thing, *
 * To face the big world all alone! *
 *
 * But somehow as I hear him sing, *
 * In wild, free woodland glades and such, *
 * But somehow while I see him sing, *
 * I cannot believe he worries much! *
 *
 * Frances Sharpe George *
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PUBLISHED BY THE ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, HOUSTON OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB, HOUSTON, TEXAS

COMING EVENTS

December 3 (Thursday). Regular Ornithology Group meeting at 7:30 PM, Downtown Recreation Center. Norma Oates will show us more of her interesting films and maybe Harvey has one too. We urge you to attend this meeting for the programs and to possibly learn more about the Christmas count for this year. We know for certain there is to be a count for the Houston area on January 2, 1965.

The Freeport Count is scheduled for December 27th and Jerry Strickling will be pleased to add your name to the list of participants so call him and tell him you want to go.

The Galveston Count plans are still pending. This is always a good area and deserves to be counted again, so let Henry and Louise Hoffman know if you would like knock yourself out just one more day - all for the cause.

December 8 (Tuesday) - Regular O.N.C. Meeting at 8:00 PM in the Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, Texas.

BRIEF TRIP TO MEXICO

Hardin Craig, Jr.

Since reports on trips are the fashion, and fun for all of us, I should like to say a word for a couple of places in Mexico where one can live well at moderate expense and see a lot of birds without the necessity of trying to run a car on that Mexican gasoline.

One of these is the Rancho Hotel El Atascadero at San Miguel de Allende, a pleasant spot on the edge of the plateau above the town and on the side of a small valley abounding in birds. Room and meals, both very good, are only 140 or 150 pesos daily for two people, which works out to maybe \$6.00 apiece and is cheaper than staying at home. You can get there by train or by bus. The Atascadero is well run but not high pressured or fancied up.

The birds nearby, so near that you can use any spare quarter-hour for bird watching, are all U.S. types, at least in August, some Western and some Eastern. By walking through or sitting around at various vantage points in the valley a few times I compiled a list of about 40 species,

including such nice ones as the White-collared Seedeater, Broad-billed and Violet-crowned Hummingbirds, Varied Bunting, and Scott's Oriole.

In passing through Mexico City one should by all means visit the magnificent National Park called the Desierto de los Leones, which is only a few miles out the Paseo de la Reforma, beyond the handsome Lomas residential district. In an unbelievably short time you get in amongst the magnificent big conifers and other trees. We had only a little while there, but we were gratified with a view of the Golden-browed and the Red Warblers. Dropping down the road in the later afternoon you see all Mexico City spread out before you, and we were extra lucky when the clouds lifted for a moment so that we could see snow covered Popocatepetl as a background.

Near Taxco is the old Hacienda San Francisco Cuadra, now a hotel, a most picturesque spot and very quiet, not for those who want fashion shows and mariachi bands. Room and meals, simple but good, are also 150 pesos daily for two people. Senor Ramirez, one of the bachelor brothers who own the place, will meet you in Taxco in a Volkswagen bus, and if you want to do some shopping in the silver shops, he drives in to Taxco every morning at 10, and you can meet him later in the Plaza and be back in time for lunch.

The rest of the time you can explore the hills and valleys around the Hacienda, and it is indeed a lovely country--very high, but facing south so that you get a fine view of the hills in the direction of Acapulco. Mr. Buck Edwards made this his headquarters, as he reports in his Bird-Finding in Mexico. We didn't see that Blue Mockingbird he writes about, but we did see such Mexican species as the Russet-backed and Orange-billed Nightingale Thrushes, Rufous-capped Warbler, Russet-crowned Motmot, Berylline and Sparkling-tailed Hummingbirds, Golden Vireo and Golden-cheeked Woodpecker. You can hike up the hill on an old cobbled road that must be 200 years old and more, cross the ridge and come down into Taxco, in about 2 hours (including time for birding.) The woods along this path above the Hacienda are very rewarding, especially in western warblers: Townsend's, Black-throated Gray, Hermit, and the Painted Redstart.

If you had a car you could go down the road a few miles toward Acapulco and soon be in a different and much lower life zone, but the land around the Hacienda will keep most people occupied for a while. In the early morning, with the mist on the hills, and the smoke rising from stone cottages and the cows and sheep grazing around, you'd think you were in Scotland, except that the coffee trees and avocados and bananas would seem a little out of place over there. I strongly recommend this place.

PELAGIC FIELD TRIP

Jerry Strickling

This was the fifth pelagic trip. All have been jointly sponsored by TOS Region 8 and the Houston O.G. Each has been highly successful by any measurement; (1) participation (2) weather and (3) birds.

We sailed from the Galveston Yacht Basin at 8:00 AM, on Sunday, October 25, 1964, aboard the "Captain Doc" in perfect October weather. We first went to the area of the Pure Oil off-shore platform, then to the snapper banks and the Shell Oil area about 25 miles off shore. To complete the voyage, we circled out some 30-35 miles toward the Northeast then circled back in Bolivar roads at 6:00 PM.

Pelagic and off-shore birds are where you find them. Therefore, there are quiet moments on boat trips punctuated by moments of intense excitement. There are long periods of scanning for birds on seemingly empty water. Then one is sighted "Bird-Ho;" All aboard jump to their feet. The bait (awful offal) is heaved overboard to bring the quarry closer. More often than not, it is a relatively common bird of these warm Gulf shores. But every now and then -

We saw Mourning Doves 15 miles off-shore (a safe place from gunners) at the Pure Oil platform. And what were two Egrets (sp) doing at the Shell area 25 miles off-shore? Then temporary excitement that turned to disappointment as three dark terns in a flock of Common Terns proved to be Black Terns. A lone Barn Swallow hovered around the boat later. Then inspections of more

and more flocks of Common Terns as they fed among schools of mackerel. An unidentified immature Jaeger circled near the boat and harassed the flock of terns as they came of with fish. Then suddenly there is a small gull floating on the water - as we approach, it flies and slowly circles the boat with a small flock (7) of Common Terns. The gull has a notched tail with a dark tail band. This is truly a prize and a rare bird. Then for some 10 to 15 minutes all of the trippers achieve the great reward of a "lifer". It is clearly a SABINE GULL. It is a resident and breeder of the Arctic who comes down along the Pacific shores but is the rarest of rare birds in our Gulf. How lucky can you get? But then again, the best way to find birds is to go on bird trips.

Time is running out. We start homeward. Another dark bird with a light belly was seen flying from left to right. What was it? There were several opinions but no consensus. This, too, happens often on pelagic trips. Part of the excitement.

The 42 trippers were from Alice, Odessa, Midlan, Wharton, Baytown, LaPorte, Houston, Arlington, Wills Point, Dallas, Genoa, El Dorada, Galveston, Texas. And Jim Stewart of Shreveport, Louisiana gave it an "international" flavor.

One of the real heroes (heroines) of the trip was Ethel Pettingell. All Noel Pettingell did was watch birds - but Ethel went all out - she threw bait.

What! You missed it! Que lastina, but take heart; we'll go again so get your reservations in early next time. There are more birds in that Gulf. Next time we'll find such things as Gannets, Boobies, Shearwaters, Petrels, exotic Terns and Gulls. See you aboard.

Those old salts,

Nancy and Jerry Strickling

LETTER:

A Note of Gratitude (to Harvey Patten)

Today I received the following from Mr. Robert McLean of Pennsylvania State University:

"Would you extend my gratitude to all those who so generously and ably assisted. I want to express my deepest appreciation for your professional assistance, excellent shore excursion and wonderful hospitality to this city. You have certainly helped to make my stay an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. I hope we can do justice to the estimation of the bird populations and add some information to the epidermiology of these diseases."

Yours truly,

Bob McLean

The Sabine's Gull

During last month's pelagic trip into the Gulf of Mexico, I had an opportunity to take some motion pictures of the Sabine's Gull that was observed. The results are tolerable and I hope to show this film at the December meeting if time permits.

Harvey L. Patten

ON BLACKBIRDS AND COWBIRDS:

Charlotte Johnson

October 31, I visited Oakley Plantation near St. Francisville, Louisiana. Merle, a young custodian there, told me he had a Blackbird trap and had banded in the past year 6000 Blackbirds. His birds have been reported from as far away as Maryland. Recently, he trapped a female Red-eyed (or Bronzed) Cowbird which he banded. He showed me his report on this which he had just

typed and was preparing for mailing. He said that as far as he could ascertain this is the most Eastern known presence of the Red-eyed Cowbird. Last March 15, on Roger's Road off Westheimer, I found a one-legged Bronzed Cowbird on a fence post. (I was alone, unfortunately.) However, maybe they are on the move East and/or maybe there is a population explosion. I realize that Cowbirds are not considered interesting to watch, but I think it would be fun to look for the Bronzed Cowbird here this winter, and even more fun if its presence were substantiated to the degree that it could be moved from Accidental to Visitant to Rare.

NEW MEMBERS, SUBSCRIBERS, AND SOME CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES

Mrs. G. E. Cornelius, 720 Wode, Beaumont, Texas

Mrs. Jere Van Zandt, 2320 Neches, Beaumont, Texas

Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Bradley, 3 Briarway, Houston, Texas MO4-3985

Address change: Mrs. Imogene Pettit, 7527 Gulf Freeway, Apt. #22, Houston, Tex.

and Mr. and Mrs. Steve Williams, 1714 E. Mesquite, Victoria, Texas

Telephone No. for Miss Elizabeth R. Blount, 741 Ruiz, San Antonio is CA3-4820

Correct spelling in name of subscriber - Mrs. Ivan Barry, Beaumont, Texas

Please notify Miss Helen Wolfer of any address changes in order to insure receiving the Spoonbill.

CLEARING HOUSE - October, 1964

Pied-billed Grebe: (32)6, (20)10,20,22 Cove AKM.

Double-crested Cormorant: (1)3, (20)5 Cove AKM; (6)20 Galveston LH HH;
(2)6 Galveston "A".

Anhinga: (1)4 Skinner's Rd. Lake CJ CFJ.

Cattle Egret: (200)10,19,20, (300)16 Cove AKM; (750)1 Hwy. 762, (37)27
Anahuac Refuge LH HH; (25)6 Galveston "A"; (2)17 Galveston HP RM;
(60-80)11 Precinct Rd. CJ CFJ.

Reddish Egret: (1)3,7,19 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galveston LH HH; (5)6 Galveston "A";
(2)17 Galveston HP RM.

Snowy Egret: (5)17 Galveston HP RM.

Black-crowned Night Heron: (1)4, (2)27 Cove AKM.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron: (1)17 Galveston HP RM.

Wood Ibis: (250)3, (3)4, (500)6, (1)10 Cove AKM.

White-faced Ibis: (20)7, (1)16 Cove AKM; (1)6 Galveston "A"; (1)17 Precinct
Rd. CJ CFJ.

White Ibis: (11)6 Galveston "A"; (1)17 Galveston HP RM.

Roseate Spoonbill: 10 days, (30)7,11,3 Cove AKM; (2)20 Galveston LH HH;
(50)6 Galveston "A".

Canada Goose: (5)10, (10, lesser)20 Cove AKM; (400-600)10 Longenbaugh CJ.

White-fronted Goose: (8)7, (6)19 Cove AKM; (40)6 Galveston "A".

Snow Goose: (75)6 Galveston "A".

Blue Goose: (12)6 Galveston "A".

Snow and Blue Geese: (20)5, (100)8,9,10 AKM; (8000-10,000)10 Longenbaugh CJ.

Mallard: (2)9 (first 5 migrants)19, (12)26 Cove AKM.

Mottled Duck: 22 days, (38)3, (25)26 Cove AKM; (4)6 Galveston "A".

Gadwall: 7 days, (3)6,10,19 (200)20,22 Cove AKM; (2)20 Galveston, (7)27
Anahuac Refuge LH HH; (1)6 Galveston "A".

Pintail: 12 days, (220)3, (300)9 Cove AKM.

Green-winged Teal: 13 days, (500)9, (1500)11,19 Cove AKM.

Blue-winged Teal: (8)2, (5)6, (1)9,19, (2)16,20 Cove AKM; (42)20 Galveston
LH HH; (36)6 Galveston "A".

American Widgeon: 11 days, (200)4, (150)22 Cove AKM; (22)20 Galveston,
(10)27 Anahuac Refuge LH HH; (20)6 Galveston "A"; (35)17
Galveston HP RM.

Shoveler: 7 days, (40)11,19 Cove AKM; (2)20 Galveston, (15)27 Anahuac
Ref. LH HH; (12)6 Galveston "A".

Wood Duck: (2)6, (4)10 Cove AKM.
 Redhead: (2)22, (1)30 Cove AKM.
 Ring-necked Duck: (100)20, (50)22, (15)30 Cove AKM.
 Canvasback: (3)20, (35)22, (5)30 Cove AKM.
 Lesser Scaup: (3)6, (35 -first migrants)19, (20)30 Cove AKM; (23)18 Foster Area LH HH.
 Ruddy Duck: (1)6, (3)10, 20, (17)22, (8)30 Cove AKM.
 Black Vulture: (1-5) 6 days Cove AKM.
 Red-tailed Hawk: (3)27 Anahuac LH HH.
 Rough-legged Hawk: (1)30 Clay Road "B".
 Marsh Hawk: (18)27 Anahuac Ref. LH HH; (10)6 Galveston "A".
 Sparrow Hawk: (15)6 Galveston "A".
 King Rail: (1)27 Anahuac Ref. LH HH.
 Clapper Rail: (1)20 Galveston LH HH; (2)17 Galveston HP RM.
 American Oystercatcher: (2)20 Galveston LH HH; (1)6 Galveston "A".
 Semipalmated Plover: (8)20 Galveston LH HH; (2)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Piping Plover: (10-15)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Black-bellied Plover: (1)20 Galveston LH HH; (6)6 Galveston "A".
 Ruddy Turnstone: (1)20 Galveston LH HH; (6)6 Galveston "A"; (1)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Common Snipe: (1)20 Galveston, (1)25 Foster LH HH.
 Long-billed Curlew: (50)20 Galveston LH HH; (100)6 Galveston "A"; (4)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Knot: (15)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Least Sandpiper: (2)27 Anahuac Ref. LH HH; (10)6 Galveston "A".
 Semipalmated Sandpiper: (45)6 Galveston "A".
 American Avocet: (20)6 Galveston "A".
 Franklins Gull: 9 days, (4)4, (250)22, (400)26 Cove AKM; (175)18 over yard Houston LH HH.
 Forster's Tern: (1)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Common Tern: 4 days, (20)19 Cove AKM; (3)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Royal Tern: 3 days Cove AKM.
 Sandwich Tern: (30-40)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Caspian Tern: 5 days Cove AKM.
 Black Tern: (3)3, (19)11, (2)15 Cove AKM; (6)6 Galveston "A".
 Ground Dove: (1)16 Cove AKM; (2)20 Precinct Rd. CJ.
 Inca Dove: (10)6 Galveston "A"; (3)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo: (1)19 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galveston, (2)27 High Island LH HH; (2)6 Galveston "A".
 Black-billed Cuckoo: (2)19 Cove AKM.
 Groove-billed Ani: (1)1, (3)16 Cove AKM.
 Barred Owl: (1)30 Cove AKM.
 Screech Owl: (1)12, 20 Cove AKM.
 Great Horned Owl: (1)7, (2)20 Cove AKM.
 Chuck-Will's-Widow: (1)27 Cove AKM.
 Whip-Poor-Will: (1)5, (2)7, 15, (3)19 Cove AKM.
 Common Nighthawk: (2)12, (1)23 downtown Houston, (3)28 over yard Houston NP.
 Chimney Swift: 6 days, to 7th and 15th Cove AKM; (8)12 downtown Houston NP.
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 17 days to 19th, (8)3 Cove AKM; (1)27 High Island LH HH; (10)6 Galveston "A".
 Belted Kingfisher: 10 days, (4)19 Cove AKM; (1)27 Anahuac Ref. LH HH; (2)6 Galveston "A"; (2)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Yellow-shafted Flicker: (8)15, (10)19, 18 days Cove AKM.
 Pileated Woodpecker: (1)6, (2)10 Cove AKM; (1)27 Anahuac Park LH HH.
 Red-headed Woodpecker: (1-5) 6 days Cove AKM.
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (1)4, (2)27 Cove AKM; (2)3 Memorial, (1)16 yard, (3)27 High Island, (1)20 Galveston LH HH; (4)6 Galveston "A".
 Downy Woodpecker: (1)3, 13, 20, (2)15 Cove AKM.
 Eastern Kingbird: (1)3 Cove AKM.
 Tropical Kingbird: (2)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: (8)19, (1)20, 24, (2)27 Cove AKM; (30)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Eastern Phoebe: 11 days, (1)6, (3)15, (12)20 Cove AKM; (2)20 and daily in yard LH HH; (1)9 in yard CJ.
 Say's Phoebe: (1)16 Cove AKM.
 Empidonax Flycatchers: (4)7 Cove AKM.
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: (1)20 Galveston LH HH.
 Eastern Wood Pewee: (1-4) to the 19th Cove AKM; (8)6 Galveston "A"; (1)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Vermilion Flycatcher: 6 days, (4)30 total of 6 Cove AKM.

Horned Lark: (2)27 Anahuac Ref. LH HH; (12)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Bank Swallow: to the 4th Cove AKM.
 Cliff Swallow: to the 9th Cove AKM.
 Tufted Titmouse: 4 days Cove AKM.
 Brown-headed Nuthatch: (1-3) most days in yard LH HH.
 Brown Creeper: (2)15 earliest ever by 3 days Cove AKM; (1)25 in yard LH HH;
 (5)20 Galveston "A".
 House Wren: (1)7,15,16,27, (5)19, (2)20 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galveston, (2)20
 High Island LH HH; (4)6 Galveston "A".
 Winter Wren: (1)27 Cove AKM.
 Long-billed Marsh Wren: (6)20 Cove AKM.
 Short-billed Marsh Wren: (1)19 Cove AKM.
 Catbird: (3)3,4,16 Cove AKM; (1)27 High Island LH HH; (3)6 Galveston "A".
 Brown Thrasher: (1)20 Galveston, (1)25 in yard, (3)27 High Island LH HH;
 (25)6 Galveston "A".
 Wood Thrush: (1)6 Galveston "A".
 Hermit Thrush: (1)15,16,28, (2)19 Cove AKM; (1)20 yard LH HH.
 Eastern Bluebird: (10)18 yard LH HH.
 Golden-crowned Kinglet: (1)20 earliest ever by 1 day Cove AKM; (1)27 High
 Island LH HH.
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet: (3)20 yard, (4)20 Galveston LH HH; (7)6 Galveston "A".
 Water Pipit: (1)30 Cove AKM.
 Sprague's Pipit: (1)15,18,19, (3)16,20, (2)26 Cove AKM.
 White-eyed Vireo: (1)27 High Island LH HH.
 Yellow-throated Vireo: (1)6 Galveston "A".
 Solitary Vireo: (1)16,19 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galveston, (1)27 High Island LH HH.
 Red-eyed Vireo: (1)7 Cove AKM; (1)6 Galveston "A".
 Philadelphia Vireo: (1)7 Cove AKM.
 Black & White Warbler: (1)3, (3)19 Cove AKM; (5)6 Galveston "A".
 Tennessee Warbler: (8)27 High Island LH HH; (3)6 Galveston "A".
 Orange-crowned Warbler: (1)17,19 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galveston LH HH.
 Nashville Warbler: (2)7, (10-12)16,19, (15)20 Cove AKM; (3)20 Galveston,
 (1)27 High Island LH HH; (2)6 Galveston "A".
 Parula Warbler: (1)19 Cove AKM; (2)6 Galveston "A".
 Magnolia Warbler: (2)1 Sugarland, (1)27 High Island LH HH; (3)6 Galv. "A".
 Myrtle Warbler: (1)19 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galveston, (1)27 High Island LH HH;
 (3)28 in yard NP.
 Black-throated Gray Warbler: (1)16 Cove AKM; (1)27 High Island LH HH.
 Black-throated Green Warbler: (1)15,19 Cove AKM.
 Pine Warbler: (3)10 Cove AKM; (1)28 yard LH HH.
 Mourning Warbler: (1)19 Cove AKM.
 Yellowthroat: (3)16, (4)20 Cove AKM; (3)25 Foster LH HH; (8)6 Galveston "A";
 (1)11 Precinct Rd. CJ CFJ.
 Yellow-breasted Chat: (1)15,27 Cove AKM; (1)6 Galveston "A".
 Hooded Warbler: (1)3 Cove AKM; (1)27 High Island LH HH.
 Wilson's Warbler: (1-2)16 Cove AKM; (3)6 Galveston "A".
 American Redstart: (1)7,19 Cove AKM; (1)19 Fondren Rd, (1)20 Galveston,
 (1)27 High Island LH HH; (1)6 Galveston "A"; (1)2 Fondren
 Woods CJ.
 Baltimore Oriole: (1)20 Galveston, (1)27 High Island LH HH; (2)6
 Galveston "A".
 Brewer's Blackbird: (1)19, earliest ever by 10 days Cove AKM.
 Common Grackle: (50)15, (200)16,27, (100)18 Cove AKM.
 Summer Tanager: (1)7 Cove AKM; (1)6 Galveston "A".
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak: (1)27 High Island LH HH.
 Blue Grosbeak: (1)6 Cove AKM; (3)6 Galveston "A".
 Indigo Bunting: (1)3, (3)10,16, (4)19, (5)20 poorest season ever Cove AKM;
 (5)27 High Island, LH HH; (6)6 Galveston "A"; (3)18
 Fondren Rd. CJ.
 Dickcissel: (1)11 Cove AKM.
 Savannah Sparrow: (19)27 Anahuac Ref. LH HH.
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow: (1)16 Cove AKM.
 Seaside Sparrow: (2)7,19, (6)20 Cove AKM; (6)17 Galveston HP RM.
 Lark Sparrow: (4)7, (1)16, (2)19,20 Cove AKM; (2)4 Morton Rd. CJ CFJ.
 Chipping Sparrow: (1)3 Cove AKM.
 White-crowned Sparrow: (1)20 earliest ever by 4 days Cove AKM.
 White-throated Sparrow: (8)20 earliest ever by 10 days Cove AKM; (5)27
 High Island LH HH.
 Lincoln's Sparrow: (1)7,19, (2)15, (10)20 Cove AKM; (4)20 Galveston,
 (9)25 Foster area LH HH.

Swamp Sparrow: (2)15, (5)19, (8)20 Cove AKM; (1)25 Foster Area LH HH;
(1)6 Galveston "A".

AKM	Arlie K. McKay	CJ	Charlotte Johnson
LH	Louise Hoffman	CFJ	Cyrus F. Johnson
HH	Henry Hoffman	"A"	Nancy Strickling
HP	Harvey Patten		Louise Hoffman
RM	Robert McLean		Henry Hoffman
NP	Noel Pettingell	"B"	Margaret Anderson
			Louise Hoffman

NOTES FROM CLEARING HOUSE REPORT

I got 71 species on the 3rd, (81)15, (79)16, (103)19, (85)20; 169 in Oct., (280) 30 year total, (137) first half, (167 in 1959), 30 year total (256); (147) in second half, (163 in 1954), (252 in 30 years.

Water Thrush (sp.) none the whole season, first time in over 30 years.

October 16 was my big day, even though I got only 79 species. Sanderling, Stilt and Pectoral Sandpipers, Ground Dove, Pigeon Hawk and Sharp-tailed Sparrow were good finds; better were Sprague's Pipit, second for October. Ani first for October, Harlan's Hawk my second individual (3rd year for this one), Say's Phoebe my second (in the same place the first one had stayed three winters) but best of all a Black-throated Gray Warbler, A Lifer.

Arlie K. McKay

My thanks to Louise and Henry Hoffman for all their kind work on the October Spoonbill. I should say Our thanks as this was appreciated by both of us.

Pat Ellis

HOUSTON CHRISTMAS COUNT January 2, 1965, David Marrack, leader

Some of our members who have participated in the Christmas Counts on previous years, including some of the area leaders, will not be available this year. A successful count requires a large number of observers in the field and a particular responsibility falls on each of us to support the Audubon Society's sponsored annual Christmas Count. It is the major annual effort of birders throughout the United States. The areas used are standard fifteen mile circles.

The competition is keen. We were second last year! Let us go forward to do better this year.

All members of the Outdoor Nature Club and visitors are invited to participate, experience in bird identification is not essential. You can help greatly by assisting other observers in your party and it is great fun.

For the "hard core" the count is usually a before dawn to after dark endeavor. Man-hours in the field are the raw material from which good counts are made and if you would like to participate for only an hour or two or for half the day, Dr. Marrack will make good use of your time. The hour you spend in an area missed by one of the "flying squads" may add a new species to the list. If you did not participate last year and would like to this year, write or call Dr. Marrack at 420 Mulberry Lane, Bellaire 77101, MO7 1397. If you were on last year's count, Dr. Marrack will contact you.

The field checklist as revised last year to facilitate recording species in the field and tabulating the final results will be used. The following are responsibilities of all persons participating in the count:

1. Make sure that your name appears in the upper right-hand corner of your party checklist.

2. Return checklists to your area leader at the meeting following the count.
3. Estimate total party mileage covered on foot and by car of times "in" and "out" of your area.
4. Pay 50¢ per person to your area leader. This is to help pay for the cost of publishing the count in Audubon Field Notes.

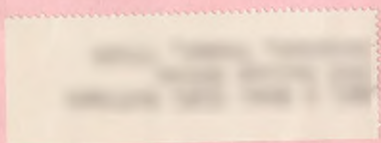
The Snyders have again very kindly extended an invitation to the count participants to meet at their home in LaPorte following the count. A generosity we all appreciate after a long day in the field. Bring a covered dish to contribute to the post-count feast. The Snyders will furnish meat and refreshments. In return for their hospitality every counter should bring clean dry shoes and refrain from driving on the lawn.

Area leaders should:

1. Obtain permission from landowners to enter all private property. Keep a record of landowners names, addresses and location of the area. Give this information to club secretary for future reference.
2. Familiarize themselves with their area, habitat, bird locations, roads and tracks.
3. Introduce the members of your party to the area before the count.
4. Collect 50¢ from each party member.
5. Tally up birds, mileage, etc. at the end of the day.

Officers of the Ornithology Group

Chairman: Harvey Patten
 Secretary: Miss Katrina Thompson
 Treasurer: Miss Ella Wolfer
 Field Trip Chairman: Bob Braden
 Program Chairman: Mrs. L. W. Anderson
 Co-editors of the SPOONBILL: Jim and [redacted] is, 5414 Fairdale, Houston 77027



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