

N.P.



THE SPOONBILL

Volume 2, Number 1.
JULY 1953

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* When a person becomes interested *
 * in birds *
 * The woods and fields seem to become *
 * so full of life *
 * That it is as if all the birds *
 * had suddenly been created... *
 * -L. A. Hausman's *
 * BIRD HIKING *
 * * * * *

The second year for our Ornithology Group has begun and we are all hoping that it will be a year of interest, activity, and fun, all resulting in accomplishment. We should now rededicate ourselves to our objectives -- promotion of the study, observation and recording of bird life. Birdwise, our area is one of America's richest. Add to this the fact that Houston is the South's largest city and it isn't hard to see why we've got to measure up to what is expected of us by the rest of the State's and Nation's birders. A great deal has been accomplished since we organized the Ornithology Group of the Outdoor Nature Club some fifteen months ago, but more remains to be done. Our horizons are ever-widening, our activities continually expanding.

At the last Group meeting on May 13, 1953 certain projects were outlined for the coming year and they need energetic birders to carry them through. Can you help? Everyone can contribute to a successful year by taking part in the Group activities. -- We want to thank those who helped make the Nesting Census at the Little Thicket Sanctuary a success and, at the same time, remind those who were not on this particular undertaking that there are other projects in the planning stage yet to be completed. Here are the projects outlined at our last meeting and which we hope to tackle this year: -- (1). Organize Beginner's Bird Study Classes and Field Trips; -- (2). Sponsor Junior Audubon Clubs (Teachers, please note); -- (3). Make an annual Nesting Census at the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary; -- (4). Cooperate with the Conservation Committee and promote vigorous conservation measures to protect existing Spoonbills and Prairie Chickens in our region; -- (5). Make a Harris County map pin-pointing locales of various bird species throughout our area; -- (6). Compilation of a new annotated Check-List Booklet of the Birds of the Upper Gulf Coast Area of Texas for distribution; -- (7). Continue lunar bird counts. (8) COMPILATION & PRINTING OF SIMPLIFIED CHECK-LIST OF N. AM. BIRDS (BASED ON SEBASTIAN'S CHECK-LIST) CHIEFLY FOR USE AS PERSONAL LIFE-LIST (9) FOOTNOTE

PLUS YEAR-ROUND VISITS TO OBSERVE CHANGING STATUS OF BIRD LIFE (I.E., OLD & NEW RESIDENTS AND VISITANTS)

NESTING CENSUS AT THE LITTLE THICKET SANCTUARY. On the day before the Nesting Census 15 eager "lovers of the out-of-doors" forsook Saturday night revelry for the rigors of camping out in order to get an early start the next morning. Despite the fact that less than 100 acres were covered, only 6 of the 46 species known to nest within the 454-acre sanctuary were missed, these were -- Turkey Vulture, Road-runner, Screech Owl, Humming Bird, Chipping Sparrow, and Yellow-throated Warbler.

Nesting Census taken May 31, 1953 (9) NEAR EVERGREEN, SAN JACINTO COUNTY, TEX.

Nesting Pairs		Nesting Pairs		Nesting Pairs	
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	Blue Jay	6	Red-eyed Vireo	11
Bob-white	2	Common Crow	6	Parula Warbler	4
Mourning Dove	16	Carolina Chickadee	11	Pine Warbler	7
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	24	Tufted Titmouse	17	Kentucky Warbler	10
Muck-will's-widow	6	White-breasted Nuthatch	1	Yellow-breasted Chat	10
Pileated Woodpecker	2	Brown-headed Nuthatch	1	Hooded Warbler	10
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	House Wren	1	Common Cowbird	1
Red-headed Woodpecker	2	Carolina Wren	26	Summer Tanager	9
Hairy Woodpecker	2	Mockingbird	5	Cardinal	45
Downy Woodpecker	4	Brown Thrasher	1	Blue Grosbeak	3
Great Crested Flycatcher	7	Wood Thrush	1	Indigo Bunting	17
Acadian Flycatcher	2	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	9	Painted Bunting	12
Eastern Wood Pewee	5	White-eyed Vireo	34	Lark Sparrow	1
		Yellow-throated Vireo	2		

CONT.

(9) (PROJECTS OF O.G. OF O.N.C. - CONT.) ROUND-THE-YEAR FIELD TRIPS THROUGHOUT OUR 7-COUNTY AREA (PURPOSE: TO GIVE AN ACCURATE YEAR-TO-YEAR PICTURE OF THE REGION'S ORNITHOLOGY) (10) MORE EXTENSIVE PLANNING OF XMAS & SPRING BIRD COUNTS

(Nesting Census - cont'd)

Most common species: Cardinal (45) White-eyed Vireo (34) Carolina Wren (26)
Yellow-billed cuckoo (24) Tufted Titmouse (17) Indigo Bunting (17) Mourning
Dove (16) Painted Bunting (12) Carolina Chickadee (11) Red-eyed Vireo (11)
Kentucky Warbler (10) Yellow-breasted Chat (10) Hooded Warbler (10).

Observers for the Nesting Census were: Jerry Baker, Luta Buchanan, Nance
Cunningham, Victor Emanuel, Oliver Ferguson and 2 sons, Joe Heiser, Edna Miner,
Noel Pettingell, Leota Stilwell, Lawrence Taboney, Josephine Wilkin, Ella Wolfer,
and Armand Yramategui.

Our Sanctuary Director, Joe Heiser, says there is a good chance that the follow-
ing species will be added to the list of Little Thicket breeding birds in the not-
too-distant future: Black Vulture - Sharp-shinned Hawk - Cooper's Hawk - Swainson's
Hawk - Killdeer - Barred Owl - Nighthawk - Swift - Red-cocaded Woodpecker - Martin
- Fish Crow - Catbird - ~~Blackbird~~ - Shrike - Meadowlark - and Orchard Oriole.

BLUEBIRD

CLEARING HOUSE. This is the department devoted to reports from our readers. Any
unusual local bird observation or, for that matter, news of out-of-town or out-of-
-State trips should be sent to your Editor for publication in the next issue of
the Spoonbill. * * * Miss Erna E. Giesecke's Pine Siskins finally left for the
far North after enjoying the benefits of her feeding stand at 1509 Courtlandt
here in Houston for the past Winter and most of this Spring. Miss Giesecke saw
them for the last time on May 25th. * * * Mrs. Minor Hurst saw a flight of some
75 to 100 Wood Ibises fly over her house (located just inside the northern city
limits of Houston) on May 31st. They were heading northeast. Mrs. Hurst and her
neighbor, Mrs. L. W. King of 5217 Young also report the Baltimore Oriole nesting
in their area, as well as the Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Resthaven Cemetery some
10 miles north of Houston off U.S. Highway 75, and also in the vicinity of West
Road and U.S. 75. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak was last seen June 14th and the
Baltimore Oriole, June 24th, at the latest report. * * * Anyone wishing to see
a Golden Plover in full Summer plumage (noted by Mrs. Hurst, June 23rd) should go
north along U.S. 75 to Steubener Airline Road and watch the pastures in the vic-
inity for this crippled bird inamong the many nesting Killdeers. * * * A new
Spoonbill colony on an island near Morgans Point was discovered on June 6th by
Armand Yramategui and Franklin Smith. Over 150 adult Spoonbills were observed
over the island. It was estimated there were 50 pairs nesting. Four kinds of
herons were also found to be nesting on the island, viz. 300 pairs of Louisiana
Herons; 125 pairs of Black Crowed Night Herons; 300 pairs of Snowy Egrets; and
125 pairs of American Egrets (all figures are rough estimates). Armand, who is
the Outdoor Nature Club's Conservation Committee Chairman, is now investigating
the possibility of making this area a refuge similar to the Vingt-un-Islands. * *
* * Watch the CLEARING HOUSE for future developments concerning this important
project. * * * * Before bringing this department of the Spoonbill to a conclu-
sion, here are a few reminders -- The new year will need the means to carry on;
if you have not done so, please send \$1.00 registration fee to Betty Crowley,
Secretary-Treasurer. The funds received the first year were spent for stationery,
the Spoonbill plate which you see reproduced at the top of this issue, stamps,
cards for recording names of members and dues paid, filing card box, and a scrap-
book for keeping items of interest contributed by members such as articles,
pictures, cartoons, etc., and other supplies needed to carry on. There was
left over in the treasury from last year \$9.20 and to this has been added \$12.50
this year. Funds for the printing of the Check-Lists were advanced by Joe Heiser
and repayment for this advance has been made from the sales of the Check-Lists.
To-date about 2/3 of this obligation has been paid. The Check-List was compiled
and printed as a Group project last year and once the cost of printing is paid
then future sales will be a source of revenue for the Group. A full accounting
will be made at the next Group meeting in September and we hope that every member
will be present at that time. * * * * Send your field notes to Noel Pettingell
to incorporate in the Spoonbill. * * * Notify Darris Massingill regarding any
unusual species which other birders may be interested in seeing. Also, call her
if you desire information on forthcoming field trips. Her phone number is FA-7766.
* * * Finally, keep in mind the next Business Meeting of the Ornithology Group
in September (definite date to be announced later). Topping the agenda will be
a review of our chief activities and accomplishments during the period following
our organizational meeting on April 11, 1952.

(11) REVISE PRINTED CHECK-LIST (ACCORDING TO CORRECTIONS ON HAND)

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION. For the benefit of all those who are not yet familiar with the new 5th A.O.U. Check-List bird names which we have incorporated in our own local Check-List, a comparative listing of the old and new names is given below - (note, names which have virtually remained unchanged are excluded from the list):

<u>Old (4th A.O.U.) Name</u>	<u>New (5th A.O.U.) Name</u>	<u>Old (4th A.O.U.) Name</u>	<u>New (5th A.O.U.) Name</u>
Mexican Cormorant	Olivaceous Cormorant		
Water Turkey	Anhinga	Red-backed Sandpiper	Dunlin
Man-o'-war-bird	Magnificent Frigate bird	Cabot's Tern	Sandwich Tern
American Egret	Common Egret	Alder Flycatcher	Traill's Fly-catcher
Louisiana Heron	Tricolored Heron		
White-faced Glossy Ibis	White-faced Ibis	Arkansas Kingbird	Western Kingbird
American Merganser	Common Merganser	Long-billed Marsh Wren	Marsh Wren
Duck Hawk	Peregrine Falcon	Short-billed Marsh Wren	Sedge Wren
Florida Gallinule	Common Gallinule	Olive-backed Thrush	Swainson's Thrush
Hudsonian Curlew	Whimbrel		
Semipalmated Plover	Ringed Plover	Blue-headed Vireo	Solitary Vireo
Wilson's Plover	Thick-billed Plover	Wilson's Warbler	Pileolated Warbler
		Northern (Grinnell's) Water-Thrush	Small-billed Water Thrush

* * * * * *PINE-WOODS SPARROW* *BACKMAN'S SPARROW*

ABOUT THE NEXT ISSUE. After compiling all the material we had intended to include in this July issue, your Editor found (much to his dismay) that he had accumulated enough for at least two additional Spoonbills! However, we'll do our best to catch-up in the next edition. * * * Complete results of our record-shattering Spring Roundup (221 species!) last April 26th. * * * Reports from birders back from their vacations. * * * A resume of Mr. Arlie K. McKay's remarkable observations over in Chambers County (he has seen all but 13 of the 308 birds in our local Check-List, plus 28 rarities not on the Check-List.) * * * A preliminary list of some 138 birds recorded at the Little Thicket Sanctuary - (we may expect constant additions to this list). * * * A list of 63 species not included in our local Check-List but recorded in our area and therefore to be constantly watched for (5 such rarities were seen on the April 26th Roundup).

▼ *SEPT. 1953 SUPPLEMENT*

FUTURE FIELD TRIPS. July 26th, Sunday, is the date for our next planned field trip. It will be to Galveston to observe the birds of the Island. All members and friends are invited to attend. Beginning birders will have opportunity to observe and learn Summer residents of Galveston Island and also see Fulvous Tree Duck and Least Tern nestlings. There may be some young Rails and Black-necked Stilts to be seen. MEETING PLACE: At the filling station at the right, at Broadway and 69th Street, Galveston. TIME: 2:00 PM. (Plans are to start home by 6 PM) For transportation and more details call Darris Massingill, FA-7766.

IN CONCLUSION: Your Editor wishes to thank all who contributed toward the publication of this issue and he trusts that your SPOONBILL will improve with age!

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NEW OFFICERS

Chairman, Armand Yramategui, 2520 Calumet Street (KE-9778)
 Vice-Chairman in Charge of Projects (Open)
 Vice-Chairman in Charge of Field Trips, Ella Wolfer, 3707 Reveille Road (MI-0322)
 Secretary-Treasurer, Betty Crowley, 4809 Fannin (JU-3182)
 Editor-Recorder, Noel Pettingell, 1814 Berry (MI-0983) (JU. 9425)
 Trip Coordinator, Darris Massingill, 314 Hutcheson (FA-7766)

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Members of the Outdoor Nature Club may join the Ornithology Group by sending \$1.00 registration fee to Secretary-Treasurer. If you are not yet a member of Outdoor Nature Club, please send \$3.00 to Mrs. Minor A. Hurst, 5219 Young, Houston 9, Texas - (this includes membership in Ornithology Group).

July 11, 1953
 Noel Pettingell, Editor



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