

THE SPOONBILL

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Volume XXIV, No. 12
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PUBLISHED BY THE ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB, HOUSTON, TEXAS

COMING EVENTS

- Saturday
April 24 Visitors Day at the ONC Little Thicket Sanctuary, 10 AM to 3 PM. Bring lunch and water.
- Friday
April 3 ONC and Herpetology Group is sponsoring a lecture and demonstration by John Werler about "Poisonous Snakes of Texas", 7:30 PM, Fondren Hall of St. Paul's Methodist Church, 5401 So. Main Street. Birders, who are often in the fields and woods with their eyes up instead of down, should welcome the opportunity to attend this lecture by a world re-nowned authority on reptiles.
- Tuesday
May 4 Photography Group regular meeting, 7:30 PM, Bayou Manor Auditorium, 4141 South Braeswood.
- Saturday
May 8 Houston Audubon Society field trip to look for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman Sparrow in the Smart Fire Tower and Koontz area. Meet at 8:15 AM at Ramada Inn, Beaumont (11th Street exit from IH 10). Driving time from Houston approximately 1 3/4 hours. Bring lunch.
- Tuesday
May 11 ONC regular meeting, 8:00 PM Houston Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive. Speaker: John Werler.
- Sat. & Sun.
May 15 & 16 OG weekend field trip to Louisiana in search of the exotic Black Francolin (an introduced bird, now well-established), as well as other birds in the southwestern corner of Louisiana, well known as a very "birdy" area. Meet at 9:00 AM at roadside park, right hand side, just across the Louisiana line on IH 10, near the Information building. On Sunday we will return to Texas by the coast road from Cameron to Sabine Pass. Arrangement will be made for campers (only those who do not need hookups), others may make arrangements at the following motels in Cameron:
Gulf Motel AC318 775-5118
Broussard Motel AC318 775-5115
Rutherford Motel AC 318 452-8680
- Sunday
May 23 OG "June Meeting" picnic, with meeting to start shortly before noon, and conclude after lunch. But come early, and enjoy the Sanctuary. We have permission to camp Saturday night, so those who wish to do so, come Saturday. Bring food and water, and remember you must take away your refuse. And don't forget your insect repellent. Everybody come, especially you new members, and let's enjoy our annual outing. Take IH 45 north to Willis right on #1097, then right on #150, then right on #945, 2 miles to gate on left.

PAST EVENTS

On March 13 thirty-five people met in Angleton for a field trip to Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge, which is still closed to the general public. Jim Hargrove, who knows the refuge, kindly served as guide. Remembering that last year's trip was rained out, we were relieved to find the dirt roads firm. Our first good sighting was a pair of white-tailed kites, which seemed to be nesting. In the woods were a barred and a barn owl. Spring migration was being ushered in by tree and barn swallows, white-eyed vireo, black-and-white warbler, and some early chimney swifts. At the reed-filled marsh were a large flock of black-crowned herons and a long-billed marsh wren. There were good numbers of sandhill cranes, as well as the usual ducks, geese, shore birds and waders. Even though the day was windy, the group was rewarded with over ninety species. --Wes Cureton

On April 4th the OG field trip found about 55+ people exploring Smith Woods, and Boy Scout Woods on High Island. This was planned as a half-day trip to check for spring migrants, and help newcomers become acquainted with our favorite birding spot. Warblers were scarce, it took the whole group to scratch up 16 species, and the total number of species at the noon tally was 102. Dr. Novy of Michigan, the grand old man of bird banding, was there with his nets, and a good many of the people enjoyed seeing a bird in the hand instead of the bush. We had some visitors (including two from Oregon) some old members who were lured out by the appeal of High Island in the spring, some new members, and some regulars. Some more experienced birders, such as Paul Nimmons and others, assisted the leader, helping less experienced birders find what birds there were to be seen. The weather was beautiful (too good, we needed to have a "front"!), the people were many, but the birds were few.

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING, ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, APRIL 1, 1976

At 7:35 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Harry Brister. There being no corrections or additions to the Minutes of the February 1976 Meeting, motion was properly made, seconded and carried that these Minutes be accepted as published in THE SPOONBILL.

Accepted as read was the Treasurer's report for the period February 1 to March 31, 1976. Income was \$319.15, expenses were \$148.07, and balance on hand came to \$822.91.

Jim Lane's guide to Southern California should be on the market in May, but it was reported that the publisher is not sure about the date for Jim's guide to the Rio Grande Valley.

Dan Hardy reminded us to send in our material for the Clearing House so that he receives it by the 5th of the month.

Relative to the Rare Bird Alert, Margaret Anderson announced that the Purple Sandpiper, in spring plumage, is still being seen at Freeport.

Gladys Galbreath reported that she had sent out 18 publicity notices on OG activities and that at least one radio station and one newspaper used the material.

From our library, Avis Brister brought to the meeting all of our books on Louisiana birds in anticipation of the May field trip to that state. She also had on hand, several volumes on birds or birding in particularly popular summer vacation areas.

As is more or less our practice, the June meeting, a picnic, will be held this year on May 23. The locale will be ONC's Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary, with the meeting starting shortly before noon, followed by a picnic lunch, and concluded after lunch. Birding may be done both before and after the meeting. In addition, this being a special occasion, the sanctuary will be available for overnight camping Saturday the 22nd. We were reminded that we must carry out our garbage, since there is no way to dispose of it on the property, and to bring our own water. We were also cautioned to take along a flashlight on any hike begun after 3:00 PM, for it can get mighty dark on the trails after dark.

At Miss Galbreath's suggestion, Mr. Brister agreed to write a letter to John Tveten thanking him for the fine publicity he has given OG, as well as ONC, at his classes on birding.

Because Coke and Lone Star cans are now being made from extruded steel, which can be easily mistaken for aluminum (there being no seams), our aluminum chairman, Mrs. Baker requested that we exclude them from our collecting of aluminum cans. She said the simplest way to determine the difference between the two metals was to try and bend the cans. Those difficult to bend or crush are not aluminum.

In his report on the Christmas Count, Paul Nimmons mentioned that our records should out us in the top 20 of those listed in "American Birds". Upon reconsideration, Margaret Jones said she would publish in THE SPOONBILL the Count breakdown by areas.

The Chairman announced that there would be no further bird identification programs this spring.

Pat Sullivan stated there were at least 64 members and guest present. The guests were introduced, among whom were Dr. Williams (Steve Williams' father), Noel Pettin-gill, and Ben Feltner.

Bob Moulton stated that the survey made recently among our members showed that our interest was greatest in hawks; secondly in warblers; next in hummers, and then the blackbirds. He mentioned that these results were being taken into account in the scheduling and planning of next year's field trips and programs.

Mr. Brister explained that dues, both in OG and ONC, were now due; but that new officers in both organizations would not take office until after the next regular meeting of Outdoor Nature Club.

There being no further business, the meeting was then turned over to Bill Mealy, Program Chairman, who announced that circumstances had caused a change to be made in this evening's program. John O'Neill sent his regrets through Bill for his inability to present the program originally scheduled. In his place, Mr. Mealy presented Mrs. April Yellot, Director of the Raptor Preservation Fund, Houston Chapter. Mrs. Yellot, an experienced falconer, had with her, perched on her gloved right hand, a mature female Red-tail Hawk. She briefly explained the organization she represented, that of rehabilitating injured raptors and returning them to the wild. Fledglings are also taught to fly and hunt, birds are banded for the Wildlife Service, educational programs are given, and research is done on subjects such as pesticides. A highlight of their program is successfully doing bone grafts on the birds instead of pinning the fragile, hollow, broken bones. To date, the Fund has treated about 12 raptors locally and has released one bird. She keeps them on perches rather than in cages, so that their feathers won't get broken in cramped quarters. Pamphlets explaining this endeavor were available for those who wanted to pick them up after the meeting. Explaining that the Fund hoped that their educational program would eventually put them out of business, Mrs. Yellot answered questions about the acquisition, treating, feeding, handling, etc. of the birds the Fund tried to help. After almost an hour of queries and answers, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

The Group was so impressed with the speaker and the program that, very quietly, \$55 was collected and presented to Mrs. Yellot to help her carry on this work.

Respectfully submitted, Louise Rogers

AROUND AND ABOUT

** If you hear of an injured or abandoned raptor, Mrs. Yellot's number is 461-4927. Remember, her expertise is in raptor care, not birds in general, and she accepts only raptors.

** We have been reminded once again that, when birding at Kempner Park (and anywhere, for that matter), we should put all valuables in the locked trunk of our car. One of our members, at the park last week, had the window of her car smashed, and her purse stolen. Don't make it easy for a passerby who is on the lookout for something to steal.

** Holly Hobart reports that the Cliff Swallows are back at the Oyster Creek bridge on Hwy 59, just south of the Sugar Creek exit. Holly discovered last year that they were nesting under the bridge, the first reported nesting in the UTC Checklist area. He saw them for the first time this year on April 6. Two species listed on our new checklist as "nesting suspected but unconfirmed" had that nesting confirmed last year: the Cliff Swallows by Holly Hobart, and Long-billed Curlews (at Anahuac Refuge) by Mrs. Gladys Curns.

WINTER HUMMINGBIRDS - by Margaret Anderson

The winter of 1975-76 was especially good for hummingbirds in the Houston area, with at least 30 that I have heard about. Probably the reason it was so good was that many people put up feeders who had never maintained a feeder in the winter months before. We had one full male Anna's, one full male Black-chinned, numerous immature Rufous, one immature Allen's (apparently), and many unidentified birds. So, again, let me urge people to put up a feeder with red colored sugar water in it, starting at least by December 1. For a solution, I use 4 parts of water to one part of sugar.

Winter hummingbirds feed on the many insects in the air in Houston the year around. All winter I watched the hummers in my yard hawk insects every day that the sun shone. On a rainy day or a very cold, windy day they seem to sit still in a protected spot, only coming out for frequent drinks at the feeder. However, since we have many nice days in any month, I believe the hummers get sufficient protein and vitamins from the bugs they are able to catch all winter. I have lost only one hummingbird from my yard over a period of ten years, so they must get vitamins from some other source than the sugar water.

Neither have I ever lost a hummingbird because of the cold. If the water starts to freeze, I increase the sugar content to keep it unfrozen. And if the hummers have sufficient food they seem to be able to tolerate cold down to at least 20° without any harm.

My four winter residents are still here on March 26, although they are feeding on

flowers part of the time and no doubt will soon leave. They have also been joined at the feeders by a male migrant hummingbird.

The most common hummingbird in the winter in this area is the Rufous, followed by Anna's (this winter), then Black-chinned, Ruby-throated and Buff-bellied.

If any of you decide to put up a feeder next winter, please keep it clean and in good order even if you are not seeing any hummers around. It is impossible to know at what minute a hungry hummingbird of any species may see your feeder and zoom in for a drink!

TO BE OR NOT TO BE, or, What is a Plover?

A recent incident points up the necessity of careful observation while making field notes of birds, especially when there are numerous birds in view.

In March, a Dallas birder reported 100 Mountain Plovers in a field near Bay City, Texas (a few miles from the southern edge of our checklist area). Some local birders went to see these plovers, since they are a very unusual species in this area.

Reports were varied, ranging from acceptance (with later doubts, upon reflection and consultation), acceptance of some of the birds in the field on the basis of field notes made on the spot, to complete non-acceptance of the presence of any Mountain Plovers.

The field was a large burned-over fallow rice field where more than a hundred birds were feeding. Golden Plovers were sighted among them by most observers. Some birders are convinced there were no Mountain Plovers among them because authenticated records are so few in the upper Texas coast, or the Mountain and Golden Plovers in winter plumage are very difficult to differentiate. (Fred Collins, an ornithologist, says the tail pattern is the distinguishing feature).

There is danger in saying that all the birds in this large field were one species or the other unless every bird was carefully observed, or in saying that birds that were seen in the morning couldn't possibly have been there because they were not seen that evening or the next day. Also there is the risk of identifying a bird on the basis of expecting it to be there. This is not to say that both Mountain Plovers and Golden Plovers were present in that field, yet good, precise field notes by all observers could have helped determine exactly what was there.

Early in the 1960's, there was a spate of reports of Mountain Plovers in the upper Texas coast area, however later reflections and study seemed to disprove these reports. When Ben Feltner and Noel Pettingell were so laboriously and painstakingly compiling our 5th edition of the Upper Texas Coast Checklist, they came to the conclusion that there were only 2 acceptable records since 1953, both of these in 1971.

Dan Hardy, editor of the Clearing House, has been urging readers of THE SPOONBILL reporting to the Clearing House, to make careful and precise field notes on all rare and unusual species. One or two diagnostic marks should not be the determining factor, as they might be shared by similar species. Field notes should be made about every aspect of the bird, such as: size, bill, legs, markings on head, breast, back, tail, while sitting, standing, walking, and flying, if possible. Sometimes a field mark noted at the time observation may not be mentioned in some of the books, and can be a clincher in determining a species when the notes are reviewed by other birders or ornithologists.

In this instance, it seems safe to say there were not 100 Mountain Plovers in that field, but unless every bird in it was carefully checked out, can it be said there were none there? The birds are gone, but the doubt is not. We must learn to observe with greater care and to precisely record what we see.

PLACES TO GO LAST MINUTE FLASH! A Rough-legged Hawk (reported by Holly Hobart) was seen on Wilcrest, app. 1/4 mile south of Westheimer, as well as the Caracara, which has been seen there since January.

** Use the Clearing House to find locations. (Reprinted from the September, 1974 SPOONBILL). For the benefit of new members and subscribers it should be pointed out that the Clearing House is not just a record of birds sighted, but also a prime source of good birding spots. If you note the sighting of a bird you would like to see, the person reporting the item would be able to give you more specific directions than can be put in the Clearing House. A great many of the sites are old familiar "stomping grounds" to our members, but there are always new ones popping up. So, don't just read it, or skip over it, use the Clearing House.

** Warbler time is here, so remember City Hall, those of you who work downtown. Early Sunday morning is about the only time others can find a parking place. A favorite place for many to look for warblers is a long block (1300-1400) on North and South Boulevards, which is bounded by Parkway and West Boulevard. This is just a few blocks west of The Museum of Fine Arts, and one block north of Bissonnet. Also close in are two cemeteries on Washington Avenue just east of the rice mill, Glenwood and Washington Cemeteries. Glenwood is well kept, Washington is a tangle of vines, briars and shrubs under the trees. These two places are side by side, and, like the places mentioned above, could be a blank or could be teeming with warblers. Take a chance and try them!

** Tom Collins wants to add another place to his list on the map shown last month of the Freeport area. He and Sherry, and Larry and Martha Ballard, experienced their first "wave" of this spring when they had, in one hour, nine warbler species, and the next day, a tenth--a Blackburnian. This is the Freeport Municipal Park, near the Brazosport High School.

** And, on your way down to Freeport, pause at Juliff (app. 26 miles south of the intersection of Hwy 288 and 610 South Loop). .3 of a mile past the Juliff road sign turn right onto a gravel road (this is Miller road, but the sign is not at the intersection, but across the railroad track). A dead end road, this is good for painted buntings and other late spring and early summer roadside birds.

** Continuing down Hwy 288, veer right at FM 521 (9.8 mi. ^{/from Miller road}), and proceed approximately another 9.8, then turn left. There will a slough on the right side of this lane, in which have been found wood ducks, white ibis, etc. After about a mile, the road curves back into 521, just about 1/2 mile north of Hwy 35. Hedgerows and tall trees line the lane, with some open spaces, and you should find passerines here, as well as the ducks. Look for the wood ducks across the water in among the roots and branches of the vegetation on the opposite side.

** The Henslow Sparrows have started singing, so we'll repeat the directions from the July, 1975 SPOONBILL. From South Loop 610, turn south on Mykawa road, and go 4 1/2 miles to Willardville Street. Turn off Mykawa and park, then cross road and railroad, and follow the spur line that goes east. You may have to walk quite a way down the spur, looking and listening for the sparrows. Most birding recently has been confined to the area south of the spur because of clearing for new spurs north of the main spur; however, the Henslow has been found in the past in most areas of the field. Of the distinctive song of the Henslow, Peterson says: "One of the poorest vocal efforts of any bird; throwing back its head, it ejects a hiccupping *tsi-lick*". Pough says: "The song is a short explosive, double noted buzz--*flee-sic*. It lasts about 2/5 of a second and probably holds the record for shortness. It is delivered from the top of a tall weed or fence post and carries well". If you go out into the field (sometimes the bird can be seen from the spur, but if you go out into the field, wear sturdy pants and sturdy shoes or boots (stickery vines and shrubs). When you think you hear the song, before galloping off in pursuit, stand and check the small woody shrubs around you. This bird is quite a ventriloquist, and usually he is some fifteen or twenty feet from you, when you believe him to be just a few feet away. Dickcissels are also usually present, but their song is "*Dick-cis-cis-cis*". Morning seems the best time, and do watch for the switching trains.

CLEARING HOUSE, March, 1976

(How to read the C-H: Name of bird: (how many), date, location, observers. Abbreviations this month: Texas City Dike--Dike; San Jacinto Battlegrounds Park--S-J Park; Baytown Tunnel--Baytown T.; Baytown Civic Center Park--CC Park; Exxon Research Center Baytown--Exxon; High Island--H.I.)

Loon, Common: (15)20, Dike, D&JD, G&WC; (1)7, Quintana Jetty, TC.
 Grebe, Horned: (1)18, Dike, TG; (4)15, Quintana Jetty Area (1 of them in breeding color)
 L&MB
 Pelican, White: (44)23, Freeport, TC; (25+)20, Dike, (25+)20, 27, Bolivar Flats, D&JD, G&WC;
 (10+)21, S-J Park, D&JD.
 Cormorant, Double-crested: (25+)21, (75+)27, Baytown T., (5)21, S-J Park, D&JD
 " , Olivaceous: (10+)21, (25+)27, Baytown T., D&JD
 Anhinga: (8)18, Maner Lake, P&MJ
 Egret, Reddish: (3)20, Bolivar Flats, (2)27, Port Bolivar, D&JD, GC; (8-10)29, W. Galveston, MJ
 Bittern, American: (1)28, Galveston, S&TC; (1)31, Bolivar, TBF&ER
 Ibis, White-faced: (22)17, Freeport Marsh, S&TC; (70)13, Brazoria Refuge, OG
 " , White: (15)13, Brazoria Refuge, OG
 Spoonbill, Roseate: (10)31, Bolivar, TBF&ER; (10)20, Dike, (8)23, Baytown T., (1)27, Port Bolivar, G&WC, D&JD; (4)13, Freeport Marsh, L&MB; (20)21, Freeport M., S&TC

- GOOSE, ROSS': (3)13, W. Harris Co., VE, CN--see notes
 Treeduck, Fulvous: (50+)18, FM 1462, Ft. Bend Co., P&MJ; (12)20, Bolivar Flats, D&JD, G&WC
 Teal, Cinnamon: (8)27, Anahuac Refuge, FT
 Duck, Wood: (3)18, off FM 521, Brazoria Co., P&MJ; (2)28, yard, JM; (2)21, 23, 26, yard, ER
 Redhead: (3)18, Freeport Marsh, L&MB; (3)18, Brazoria Co. Road #25, P&MJ
 Scaup, Greater: (2)6, Freeport Marsh, S&TC
 Goldeneye, Common: (10)6, Galveston Bay (near ferry) JM
 Bufflehead: (2)20, Dike, (3)21, Baytown T., D&JD, G&WC
 Scoter, Surf: (7)13, Surfside Beach at Boilers, L&MB--see notes
 Duck, Ruddy: (200+)27, 21, Baytown T., (500+)27, HL&P Cooling Ponds, D&JD
 Merganser, Hooded: (7)7, Quintana Jetty, TC
 " , Red-breasted: (2)20, Dike, (8)27, Port Bolivar, G&WC, D&JD; (20)21, Freeport, BH
 Kite, White-tailed: (1)6, Lake Jackson, L&MB; (1)8, 25, Bay Area Blvd., RK; (1)21, Rosharon, J&BH; (4)13, Brazoria Refuge, OG
 Hawk, Red-tailed (Harlan's): (1)31, W. Harris Co., PJ--see notes
 Hawk, Swainson's: (1)29, Johnson Space Center, RK; (1)22-31, Exxon., D&JD--see notes; (1)31, W. Harris Co., PJ
 Eagle, Bald: (1)29, Exxon, D&JD--see notes
 Osprey: (1)24, Anahuac, TBF, ER; (1)26, Exxon, (1)27, Port Bolivar, GC, D&JD; (1)14, Armand's Bayou, RK
 Kestrel, American: (50+)all month, E. Harris-W. Chambers Co., D&JD
 Prairie Chicken, Greater: (1)6, north side of Clay Road, just beyond Barker-Cypress Road, Sue & Joel McConnell; (3)21, Katy Rice fields, TG
 Crane, Sandhill: (47)4, W. Harris Co., TBF; (300+)18, FM 1462, Ft. Bend Co., P&MJ
 Rail, King: (10)27, Anahuac R., FT
 " , Clapper: (2)27, Anahuac R., FT
 " , Virginia: (3)27, Anahuac R., FT; (2)12, near Bryan Beach Bridge, L&MB
 " , Sora: (6)27, Anahuac R., FT; (1)31, Bolivar, TBF, ER; (1)27, Kempner Park, GC, D&JD, Bob Norris
 " , Yellow: (estimated, 19)27, Anahuac R., FT
 Oystercatcher, American: (3)20, Bolivar Flats, G&WC, D&JD
 Plover, Piping: (4)31, Bolivar, TBF, ER
 " , Snowy: (1)31, Bolivar, TBF, ER
 " , Wilson's: (2)31, Bolivar, TBF, ER
 " , American Golden: (8)20, Dike, RK
 Turnstone, Ruddy: (12)15, Quintana Jetty, L&MB; (3)7, Quintana Jetty, S&TC
 Whimbrel: (3)28, Galveston, 8-mile Road, S&TC; (2)28, Dike, RK
 Sandpiper, Upland: (32)20, Dike, RK; (2)31, Bolivar, TBF, ER
 " , Purple: (1)6, Quintana Jetty, L&MB; (1)8, 11, Surfside Jetty, S&TC; (1)9, Surfside Jetty, MJ, MA, Avis Brister, Sue McConnell; (1)21, Quintana Jetty, J&BH--see notes
 Avocet, American: (1,000)20, Bolivar Flats, (2)27, Rollover Pass, W&GC, D&JD; (5,000)9, Bolivar Flats, VE, CN, DR
 Stilt, Black-necked: (2)21, Baytown T., D&JD; (2)13, marsh near Surfside Bridge, L&MB; (8)24, Freeport Marsh, S&TC; (3)19, Galveston St. Park, RK; (6)13, Freeport, WC, J&CM; (30)21, Freeport Marsh, J&BH
 Phalarope, Wilson's: (1)28, E. Beach, Galveston, RK--see notes
 Gull, Glaucous: (1)9, Bolivar Flats, VE, CN, DR--see notes
 " , Bonaparte's: (200)11, H.I. to Sabine Pass, VE, CN
 Tern, Gull-billed: (2)20, Dike, G&WC, D&JD; (1)19, Sportsman's Road, Galveston, RK
 " , Royal: (200+)27, Rollover Pass, GC, D&JD
 " , Caspian: (1)20, Dike, G&WC, D&JD
 " , Black: (1)20, Dike, G&WC--see notes
 Skimmer, Black: (1)20, Dike, (100+)27, Rollover Pass, G&WC, D&JD; (500)11, Gilchrist cut, VE, CN
 Dove, White-winged: (1)27, Kempner Park, (20+)20, Galveston County Courthouse (15 occupied nests), D&JD, W&GC
 " , Ground: (3)17, Freeport, TC; (1)26, W. Galveston, DHH, ME
 " , Inca: (2)30, yard, D&JD; (4)daily, yard, ER
 Ani, Groove-billed: (1)31, Bolivar, TBF, ER; (1)24, Freeport, L&MB
 Owl, Barn: (1 a, 4 imm. near nest)22, Cedar Bayou, D&JD; (2)26, Galveston I. St. Park, DHH, ME; (1)nightly, yard, ER
 " , Screech: (1)9, Little York, (1)28, Ella Blvd., WC
 " , Barred: (2)17, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER
 Whip-Poor-Will: (1)18, White Oak Bayou, GC
 Swift, Chimney: (1)27, Kempner Park, GC, D&JD; (1)20, Smith Woods, (1)20, Chambers Co., WC; (2)20, Brazoria Refuge, MA, Field Trip; (1)16, South Houston, NP
 Hummingbird, Ruby-throated: (1)17, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER; (1)13, Cemetery, Angleton, JM
 " , Black-chinned: (1)23, yard, MJ--see notes
 " , ALLEN'S: see notes
 Woodpecker, Pileated: (1)14, 22, 23, 26, CC Park, D&JD; (1)12, 21, 22, 23, yard, ER
 " , Hairy: (1)14, Arboretum (Memorial Park), JM
 Kingbird, Eastern: (3)24, Anahuac, TBF, ER; (1)18, Cemetery, Big Slough, Brazoria Co., P&MJ

- Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed: (1)28, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD; (2)31, Clute, L&MB; (1)24, Freeport, TC
 " , Great Crested: (1)16, Freeport, TC
 Phoebe, Eastern: (1)20, 27, Smith Woods, D&JD, WC
 Lark, Horned: (5+)20, 27, Bolivar Flats, W&GC, D&JD
 Swallow, Tree: (2)13, Cemetery, Angleton, JM; (1)27, Kempner Park, GC, D&JD; (20+)6, Freeport Marsh, S&TC
 " , Rough-winged: (10)13, Cemetery, Angleton, JM
 " , Barn: (2)27, Bolivar, (2)27, H.I., GC, D&JD; (1)18, Freeport, TC
 Creeper, Brown: (1)6, H.I., P&MJ; (1)8, 22, (2)28, White Oak Bayou, G&WC; (1)28, H.I. DHH, MM
 Wren, House: (1)17, Freeport, TC
 " , Winter: (1)17, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER
 Catbird, Gray: (1)21, H.I., JM; (1)27, 28, Boy Scout Woods, (1)20, 28, Smith Woods, D&JD, G&WC
 (1)21, Johnson Space Center, RK
THRASHER, CURVE-BILLED: (1)26, Galveston, Nottingham Ranch Rd., DHH, ME (this individual has been present here for 2 years)
 Thrush, Hermit: (1)17, 23, CC Park, (1)20, Kempner Park, (1)20, 27, Boy Scout Woods, GC, D&JD
 Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: (3)14, (25+)26, CC Park, D&JD
 Pipit, Sprague's: (1)20, Dike, D&JD, G&WC; (2)20, Dike, RK
 Waxwing, Cedar: (46)1, Freeport, L&MB
 Vireo, White-eyed: (5)17, Compton's Woods, (20)31, H.I. TBF, ER; (1)21, H.I., JM; (2)14, CC Park, (1)20, Smith Woods, (1)27, Kempner Park, (25+)28, Boy Scout Woods, G&WC, D&JD; (1)16, Freeport, TC; (1)22, 28, White Oak Bayou, G&WC
 " , Yellow-throated: (1)31, H.I. TBF, ER; (1)14, Lake Jackson, TC; (1)28, Kempner Park, RK; (1)24, White Oak Bayou, WC
 " , Solitary: (2)20, Bellaire, P&MJ; (4)21, H.I. JM; (1)31, H.I. TBF, ER
 " , Red-eyed: (1)18, Cemetery, Big Slough, Brazoria Co., P&MJ; (1)28, Galveston, 13 mi. Road, SC; (1)31, H.I. TBF, ER
 Warbler, Black-and-white: (5)17, Compton's Woods, (7)31, H.I. TBF, ER; (4)21, H.I., JM; (2)17, CC Park, (2)27, Kempner Park, (3)27, (5)28, Boy Scout Woods, (3)27, Bolivar, (2)28, Smith Woods, D&JD, GC; (2)2, Lake Jackson, (3)17, Freeport, L&MB; (1)14, Lake Jackson, TC; (2)14, Armand's Bayou, RK; (1)18, 22, 26, White O. Bayou, G&WC
 " , Prothonotary: (1)28, Kempner Park, RK; (2)27, H.I., FT; (3)29, W. Galveston, MJ
 " , Swainson's: (5)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)31, West Galveston, Fred Collins
 " , Worm-eating: (3)31, H.I. TBF, ER; (1)27, Bolivar, (1)27, (4)28, Boy Scout Woods, (1)28, Smith Woods, D&JD, GC; (1)28, Galveston, TC
 " , Blue-winged: (10)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)28, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD; (1)28, Galv., SC
 " , Tennessee: (1)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)21, H.I., JM
 " , Orange-crowned: (2)21, H.I., JM; (5+)27, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD, GC
 " , NASHVILLE: (2)14, CC Park, D&JD--see notes
 " , Northern Parula: (2)6, H.I., P&MJ; (15)17, Compton's Woods, (9)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)21, H.I., JM; (1)27, Kempner Park, (2)27, (15+)28, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD, GC; (2)17, Freeport, L&MB; (5)14, Lake Jackson, TC; (1)14, Armand's Bayou, RK; (1)12, Boy Scout Woods, GC; (5)22, (1)24, (2)28, White Oak Bayou, G&WC
 " , Audubon's: (1)29, W. Galveston, MJ
 " , Yellow-throated: (2)17, Compton's Woods, (3)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (5)21, H.I., JM; (5)31, Freeport, L&MB; (7)31, Freeport, S&TC; (1)9, H.I., VE, CN, DR
 " , Prairie: (1)28, Bolivar, DHH, MM--see notes
 Ovenbird: (1)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)29, W. Galveston, PJ
 Waterthrush, Northern: (1)17, Compton's Woods, (3)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)28, H.I., D&JD
 " , Louisiana: (1)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)13, Cemetery, Angleton, JM; (1)20, (2)28, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD; (1)28, Galveston, S&TC; (1)7, 12, 14, 15, 17, White Oak Bayou, WC; (1)27, H.I., FT; (1)23, West Blvd., MJ et.al.
 Warbler, Kentucky: (30)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)28, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD; (2)31, Freeport, L&MB; (2)28, Galveston, S&TC
 Yellowthroat, Common: (20)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)27, Kempner Park, GC, Bob Norris, D&JD; (1)27, 28, H.I., GC, D&JD; (2)31, Freeport, L&MB
 Warbler, Hooded: (7)17, Compton's Woods, (200)31, H.I., TBF, ER; (1)20, 26, 28, yard, (3)21, H.I., JM; (2)14, 22, (1)21, (4)26, CC Park, (25+)27, 28, Boy Scout Woods, (5+)27, Kempner Park, (1)20, (5+)27, Smith Woods, G&WC, D&JD; (1)17, (3)31, Freeport, L&MB; (6)17, Freeport, S&TC; (1)21, Johnson Space Center, RK; (1)14, yard, Bellaire, P&MJ
 " , Wilson's: (2)6, H.I., P&MJ; (2)21, Johnson Space Center, RK; (1)14, 17, 23, CC Park, (2)27, Boy Scout Woods, GC, D&JD
 Oriole, Orchard: (80)31, H.I., TBF, ER
 Tanager, Scarlet: (1)28, Boy Scout Woods, D&JD
 " , Summer: (1)27, 28, Boy Scout Woods, GC, D&JD; (1)20, Smith Woods, WC
Grosbeak, Rose-breasted: (1)27, Kempner Park, (1)27, Smith Woods, GC, D&JD--see notes; (1)29, W. Galveston, P&MJ
 " , Blue: (1)29, yard, JM
 Bunting, Indigo: (2)31, High Island, TBF, ER
 Towhee, Rufous-sided (Eastern): (7)17, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER; (1)heard daily, yard, ER; (1)20, South Blvd., P&MJ

Sparrow, Sharp-tailed: (10)26, Galveston I. St. Park, DHH, ME
" , Lincoln's: (1-5)7-28, White Oak Bayou, GC

CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

MA - Margaret Anderson; L&MB - Larry & Martha Ballard; S&TC - Sherry & Tom Collins; GC - Glenn Cureton; WC - Wesley Cureton; D&JD - David & Jan Dauphin; ME - Mark Elwonger; VE - Victor Emanuel; TBF - T. Ben Feltner; TG - Tony Gallucci; DHH - Dan H. Hardy; J&BH - Jean & Bill Harwell; RK - Randy Korotev; CM - Charlene May; JM - Jackie May; MM - Mark Miller; JM - Jim Morgan; CN - Chuck Neil; NP - Noel Pettingell; ER - Elaine Robinson; DR - Donald Runck; OG - Ornithology Group field trip; FT - John Tveten's class field trip.

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

ROSS' GOOSE: Two birds were observed with a small flock of Snow Geese that were feeding in a spread out fashion in a plowed field about 75-100 yards from FM 529 just east of Katy-Hockley Cut-off road. We observed the birds off and on for at least 10-15 minutes with individual observations of 1-1 1/2 minutes. Key Marks: stubby, all pink bill, short thick neck, rounded forehead (vs. sloping forehead in Snow Goose) and small size. --Victor Emanuel

Surf Scoter: Group of seven birds flying very low and rapidly over water in a loose line formation; bodies black with one or two white splotches on head, heavy looking bodies with relatively short necks; flew parallel to beach into a very strong NNE wind; flying low above the waves; weather conditions--overcast; light--fair; sighted at about 3:45 and observed for about 5 minutes at a range of about 65 yards at the closest point; observed with 8x50 binoculars. --Larry and Martha Ballard

Swainson's Hawk: This medium-sized buteo was observed with unaided eye several times during the afternoon. The bird was circling low over a tractor mowing a field and was seen to descend upon unidentified prey several times. Description: appeared two-toned--dark flight feathers, light wing linings, dark breast, light belly; overcast; closest approach, about 200 feet. A buteo believed to be this species from size and behavior was observed briefly on Marsh 24 near same location. --Randy Korotev

Swainson's Hawk: I have seen this bird every day since the 22nd. It is roosting atop a gasoline storage tank, not on the ground. Used 7x35 binoculars in poor to excellent light from 150 to 25 yards at rest and overhead. Dark breastband, light wing-linings, and very dark flight feathers. --David and Jan Dauphin

Bald Eagle: This bird was seen by some almost all day as it circled above the ship Channel and Research Center. I saw the bird at 100 yards with 7x35 binoculars in medium light. Bird was very large adult with white head and tail and very dark body. Seen perched atop electrical transmission tower. --David and Jan Dauphin

Purple Sandpiper: Had returned to our truck parked at Quintana Jetty from looking for Jaegers on Jetties. We were ready to leave when we noticed a very dark stocky shorebird land on an exposed rock near Jetty. He had flown from the rocks further out on the jetties. He started pecking on the rocks around then walked on to area about 15 feet from our truck, looked at the truck, turned around and walked back to the rock. He had blackish gray on the crown of the head, black tipped beak with yellowish base, white streak above eye, black streak extended from bill to back of crown. He appeared to have an eye ring. His back was a very dark slaty gray with a fine chain-like chain pattern on it. His breast was dark blackish gray with a white stomach. He had stocky pale yellowish legs. He then flew to Surfside side of Jetties. Distances observed: 15-60 feet; time observed: 5:55 to 6:06 PM. Weather and light: overcast and windy; binoculars used: 7x35 and 8x50. --Larry and Martha Ballard

Purple Sandpiper: Stocky, dark slaty-gray bird. Bill straight; dark-tipped, lighter toward base; breast streaked same color as back; belly white with clean break between breast and belly; legs dull colored--light yellowish; was seen with Ruddy Turnstones on end of Surfside Jetty; when it flew the dark back and rump plus wing stripe were seen; distance seen was about 50 yards with 32X B&L scope; sun was bright and to our backs. --Sherry and Tom Collins

Purple Sandpiper: Observed with 7x50 binoculars from distances of 25-100 ft. Seen flying and feeding on rocks near end of jetty. Cloudy, windy day; bird viewed for 30 minutes; it was approximately the size of the Sanderlings with which it was seen; legs shorter, yellow; bill slightly decurved, two-toned; head and neck dark; rump was dark in center with white at sides; faint wing-stripe. --Jean and Bill Harwell

Wilson's Phalarope: Approximate size of Lesser Yellowlegs; light gray unstreaked back, white underside; very thin bill approximate length of Lesser Yellowlegs; no red ob-

served; bird was seen spinning in and walking along the side of a shallow tide pool. 20X scope at less than 100 feet, approximately 3 minutes; overcast sky.--Randy Korotev

Glaucous Gull: Bird was observed sitting on the Bolivar Flats among 100's of Herring, Ring-billed and Laughing Gulls. Plumage: all white; bill: pink with dark tip. Size: noticeably larger than Herring Gulls that were beside it in direct comparison--also bill was much more massive than Herring; distance: 75-100 yards through 20X scope and binoculars; light: fair--late evening; time: 6:15-6:30 PM.--Victor Emanuel

Black Tern: Seen from car for a few seconds as it flew across dike; dark wings, white head with a dark facial pattern; no binoculars, 35 ft.; weather: cool, cloudy. --Wesley and Glenn Cureton

ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD: The following information was supplied by Tony Gallucci in a letter to the C-H Editor) ...most exciting is the recovery of an adult male specimen of an Allen's Hummingbird. The bird was found dead after being observed with another for almost three months at the Riecher's residence in west Houston. It was obtained by Randy Beavers of the Vines Science center in Spring Branch and has been forwarded to Dr. Arnold in College Station. As you know the Allen's was still on the hypothetical list and this specimen constitutes the first positive ID. He apparently has not received or seen the photograph's of the bird at the Pettingell's residence. --Tony Gallucci

NASHVILLE WARBLER: Two males in Spring plumage seen at 10 yards. Birds were in tree about 12 feet up and two feet apart with Hooded and White-eyeds. Gray head with white eye ring, yellow throat and below, olive back and definite brown patch seen on crown as birds went almost to the ground in Youpon bush. --David and Jan Dauphin

Prairie Warbler: I found this bird at the same location as the Prairie that was seen in 1974. Description: Brilliant yellow underparts; green upperparts; black stripings confined to sides of underparts; yellow stripe above eye; black line through eye and a black line below the eye that met the eye-line between the eye and bill; the black stripe at the shoulder was wider than the other stripes; white tail spots; observed through 7x35 binoculars in misty weather. --Dan Hardy
D

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Kempner Park bird seen at 7 feet high and 10 yards distance as it would show itself in the dry growth above fence. Smith woods bird seen at 20 yards with 10x50 binoculars. Both birds seen were females with streaked breasts, white line above eye, white wingbars, and large conical bills. --David and Jan Dauphin

Redtail (Harlan's) Hawk: Sighted a white looking chunky hawk sitting on the ground while traveling along FM 529 near Stockdick road in W. Harris Co. Stopped and looked at bird for about 3 or 4 minutes before it flew behind a dirt embankment. It was sitting about 50 yards from edge of road. Head was white with some faint mottling on a small spot of the top, dark area around eye. Wings were dark gray while folded. Breast white with several dark streaks along side of breast and neck. White extended around back of head and upper back. Lower portion of legs yellow, "pantaloon" clear white. Bird was about 16" in size. When it flew over the embankment the wings were large thick buteo type wings, very light underneath, and tail appeared whitish gray. Had a very brief glimpse of the bird in flight. Weather: cold north wind at about 18-20 mph, gray overcast sky; March 30 at 9:10 AM. 7x50 Binoculars. --Paul Jones

BAYTOWN AREA BIRDING INFORMATION

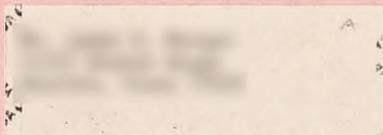
This information, furnished by David Dauphin, was promised this month, but the editor apologizes, and it will be in next month's issue.

THOSE DUES ARE DUE!

Please note that your dues, if you have not already paid them, are due by May 1. For your convenience, you may send one check for both ONC and OG dues (\$5.50) to Mrs. J.M. Gillette, 5027 Longmont, Houston, Texas 77056. Mrs. Gillette will then forward your ONC dues to the ONC treasurer. Non-member subscribers should send their checks for \$3.00 to the same address. All checks should be made payable to "Ornithology Group". A return form was in last month's SPOONBILL.

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