



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME XIII, No. 10
February, 1965

* * * * *

* Comical Counterpart of Snow White's Dwarfs *

* We give you now the tiniest of all the *

* owls, no longer than an English Sparrow. *

* A round eyed, solemn, grayish-brown mite *

* with white "eyebrows," so comical in *

* appearance that you might take it for a *

* relative of Snow White's seven dwarfs. *

* All day it hides in a hole in a giant *

* cactus trunk, waiting for darkness to *

* come so it will feel safe to flit about *

* over the desert catching ants, grass- *

* hoppers, and beetles and excitedly *

* chattering chew-chew-chew-chew or whi- *

* whi-whi-whi-whi as earnestly as any orator. *

* Elf Owl - Our Amazing Birds by Lemmon *

* * * * *

PUBLISHED BY THE ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB, HOUSTON, TEXAS

COMING EVENTS

March 27-28 (Saturday and Sunday) Ornithology Group week-end field trip to George West led by Clayton Gilman. Meet Saturday morning at 7:30 AM at the Buenas Noches Motel in George West. The party will leave from there for a full day birding trip and return to the motel that night. Write or call the motel for your reservations for this weekend trip. See Harris' Hawks, Scaled Quail, Black-throated and Cassin's Sparrows, Cactus Wrens, and many more exciting birds to be found in numbers on this trip. **

April 10-11 (Saturday and Sunday) O.N.C.Trip to Hodges Gardens. The Motor Inn opposite the gardens needs reservations as early as possible for attendance is very brisk, especially in the Spring. Deposit of \$7.00 per person for bus fare round-trip and \$5.00 per room may be sent either to Mr.C.B. Gilman, 10110 Telephone Road, Houston, or Dr. Carlos D. Speck, leader of this week-end trip, 3709 Montrose Boulevard, Houston. Bus fare cannot be refunded for the club must still pay for a full bus. Two dollars (2.00) admission to the gardens covers entrance both Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Please send in reservations early if you care to make this trip.

** - For late comers, we will leave the motel at 8:00 AM, proceed North on Hiway 281 approximately 2 miles and turn left on a paved road. About a mile from this intersection (if memory serves me right) there are a couple of barns and a small lake to the right. This is the Houdmann Ranch and we hope, as in the past, to gain entrance. Thereafter, we plan to proceed west, staying on the road until we reach the Carone Ranch for lunch. (Clayton Gilman, leader)

HOUSTON CHRISTMAS COUNT - 1964 (January 2, 1965 Compiled by Harvey Patten)

A record-breaking 78 persons turned out for the Houston Christmas Count this past year and did a wonderful job amassing a total of 166 species. The following tabulation shows at a glance in what part of the count circle each species and the number of each species was observed. Although 166 species is about the regular potential we may expect for our area, at least with 50 or more observers in the field, several factors may be cited which may have attributed to our not observing more, namely the heavy fog which blanketed the coastal area until about 9:30 AM, the intense heat of the afternoon, which caused even the most hard of the "hard core" to slow down and marvel at the avian inactivity, and the continuation of the duck hunting season. I believe this last factor caused us to miss some ducks (Redhead, Ring-necked, Blue-winged Teal) and kept our total population estimate low (about 13,500 birds compared to last years 57,500).

Nevertheliss, some good birds were observed as you can see from the following list of exclusives for the parties. The Sandwich Tern and Common Nighthawk were observed for the first time on any Houston Count and raises the total number of species observed on all 30 Houston Counts to 259 species, a commendable figure by any standards. Because of the number of participants, I have only listed the area leaders and the exclusives in an effort to save time and space. However, the participation of each observer and recorder is duly recognized, and as your compiler and chairman I thank each of you for a job well done. My sincere apologies to Katrina and Bill for the pessimistic omission of the Solitary Sandpiper from the final official figures sent to the National Audubon Society. The "Sanitation Committee" too late determined the validity of the observation (the tenth Winter record). I apologize to the group if we lose a single place in the standings, especially for one species

Area leaders and exclusive species (total observers in parentheses)

- Area 1A: Leader - Bill Pettit (13)
Exclusives - American Bittern, Wood Duck, Common Gallinule, Canada Goose, White-faced Ibis, Wood Thrush, Palm Warbler
- Area 1B: Leader - L.A.M Barnette (7)
Exclusives - Dickcissel, COMMON NIGHTHAWK, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, Henslow's Sparrow
- Area 2: Leader - Jim Ellis (7)
Exclusives - Solitary Sandpiper omitted from list submitted to National Audubon Society
- Area 3A: Leader - Irving Greenbaum (7)
Exclusives - none
- Area 3B: Leader - Harvey Patten (8)
Exclusives - Fish Crow, SANDWICH TERN
- Area 4A: Leader - David Marrack (4)
Exclusives - Mallard, Harlan's Hawk, Sprague's Pipit, Dunlin, Wilson's Warbler
- Area 4B: Leader - Bob Deshayes (9)
Exclusives - Long-billed Dowitcher, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Clay-colored Sparrow, Philadelphia Vireo
- Area 5: Leader - Hardin Craig (5)
Exclusives - Bufflehead, Fox Sparrow
- Area 6: Leader - William Harwell (10)
Exclusives - Ferruginous Hawk, Barn Owl, Yellow Warbler
- Area 7: Leader - Linda Snyder (8)
Exclusives - Groove-billed Ani, Rusty Blackbird, American Goldeneye, Horned Grebe (1 albino !), Gull-billed Tern

Species	1A	1B	2	3A	3B	4A	4B	5	6	7	Total
Anhinga	1	1									2
Ani, Groove-billed										5	5
Avocet, American							153			25	178
Bittern, American	1										1
Blackbird, Brewer's	6	2500	350	16	15				37	127	3051
Redwinged	10K	71	3375	2000	652	1500	79	160	230	124	18189
Rusty										25	25
Bluebird, Eastern	15	7			30	20	1	1			74
Bobwhite	9		9		1		3	6	8	2	38
Cardinal	150	31	50	68	156	95	96	56	92	64	858*
Catbird	2		23		6	1	3		2	3	40*
Chat, Yellow-breasted		1								1	2*
Chickadee, Carolina	41	33	35	42	56	5	35	7	23	56	333
Coot, American							9			3	13
Cormorant, Double-cr.					4		4	23	2	13	46
Cormorant, species			1								1
Cowbird, Brown-headed	1003	16	199	2	462	30K	6		86	9	31783
Creeper, Brown	5	3		5	3	2	11		8	3	40
Crow, Common	22	28	19	15	58	10	9	3	40	20	224
Crow, Fish					2						2*
Curlew, Long-billed					1	6	1				8
Dickcissel		3									3
Dove, Mourning	47	20	18	33	93	32	29	9	172	12	465
Dowitcher, species					15	14	100		200	500	829
Long-billed							10				10
Duck, Bufflehead								1			1
Canvasback					407		59				500
Gadwall						2			61	250	313
Goldeneye, Common										5	5
Mallard						16					16
Mottled									2	5	7
Pintail						350		4	182	100	636
Ruddy						80			3	2000	2083*
Scaup, Lesser					25	4	146	822	2200	250	3447
Shoveler	1				4	11			16	70	102
Widgeon, American			16			4			25	150	195
Wood	47										47*
Egret, Cattle	2						2			10	14
Common	13		89		2	10	15	4	72	6	211
Snowy			58		4	55	8	8	34	20	187
Falcon, Peregrine							1		1		2*
Flicker, Yellow-sh.	24	24	17	4	49	9	15	1	33	20	196*
Flycatcher, Vermilion			1				3				4
Gallinule, Common	1										1
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray	4	6	13	3	26	39	27	4	43	23	188
Goldfinch, American	113	35	105	17	233	87	84	15	251	78	1018
Goose, Blue	94				20	5	10		4		133
Canada	38										38
Snow	210		1		20	12	36		12	7	298
White-fronted	82	12				80					174
Grackle, Boat-tailed	4	54		5		2		2			67
Common	5260	100	1800	16	135	42	30			7	7390*
Grebe, Eared				1	1		5	3	9	57	76
Horned										2	2*
Pied-billed	5				4	6			7	3	25
Gull, Bonaparte's						9			15	47	71*
Herring			2		5	1150	4		15	114	1290*
Laughing			8		307	10	213	12	50	1400	2000*
Ring-billed	5		55		79	2500	1062	26	170	5086	8983*
Hawk, Cooper's		1			1	1					3
Ferruginous									1		1*
Harlan's						1					1
Marsh	20	4	21	5	1	7	6	1	5	3	73
Red-shouldered	6	5		1	5	4	3		2	7	33
Red-tailed	20		19	4	13	11	1	7	6	7	88
Sparrow	21	6	25	20	10	23	11	4	26	12	158
Swainson's			1			1					2
Heron, Great Blue	3	2	5		15	11	60	7	23	23	149
Little Blue							6	3			9
Louisiana			23		6	6	13	15	14		77
Black-cr. Night					24	4	101	3		6	138
Yellow-cr. Night							1				1

Species	1A	1B	2	3A	3B	4A	4B	5	6	7	Total
Ibis, White-faced	13										13
Jay, Blue	24	15	18	4	52	14	7	19	59	88	300
Junco, Slate-colored		20			4	12			12		48
Killdeer	75	54	175	35	87	56	31	24	100	150	787
Kingfisher, Belted	1	2	4		5	4	4	4	5	1	30
Kinglet, Golden-crowned	2	3			3	1	1	2		13	25
Ruby-crowned	76	13	71	34	83	111	54	15	87	87	631*
Loon, Common					1					1	2
Meadowlark, Eastern	447	37	160	50	60	93	70	24	77	320	1338
Mockingbird	35	20	51	22	109	45	63	28	62	61	496
Nighthawk, Common		1									1
Nuthatch, Red-breasted		1									1
Owl, Barn									1		1
Barred	5							1	1		7
Great Horned	2					1					3
Screech									2	2	4
Pelican, White					34	11	161	37	224	200	667
Phoebe, Eastern	37	8	10	16	36	21	9	4	7	7	155
Pipit, Sprague's						15					15
Water	2	15	29		23	4			14	100	187
Plover, Black-bellied					5		2		4	11	22
Semipalmated					1			11		15	27*
Rail, Clapper					3	1	6			2	12
King								1	1		2*
Sora						1			1		2
Robin	463	321	200	132	287	730	1465	1	65	100	3764
Sanderling					2	1	1	5		17	26
Sandpiper, Dunlin						950					950*
Least					28	3					31
Semipalmated							4		25		29
Spotted					4			3	10	2	19
Western			1		45	100					146
Sapsucker, Yellow-b.	75	13	12	29	17	11	16	1	54	10	238*
Shrike, Loggerhead	43	10	41	50	24	23	21	7	41	23	283
Siskin, Pine		3									3
Skimmer, Black						2			1		3
Snipe, Common	19		1	10			57	4	15		106*
Sparrow, Chipping				15	1			4			20
Clay-colored							1				1
Field			7		1	22	2		3	2	37
Fox								1			1
Henslow's		3									3*
House	114	49	125	150	26	15	25	2	100	90	696
Lark		2					1				3
LeConte's			10			7		4		3	24
Lincoln's	2		7	6	16	3	3	6	72	40	155*
Savannah	152	4	17	15	24	32	14	3	13	150	424
Seaside					9		40		1	2	52*
Sharp-tailed					5		5				10*
Song	13	2			12	4	5		3	11	50
Swamp	151		1		29	1	7	1		62	252*
Vesper	8		2		1	1	1			1	14
White-crowned	4			30	20	3	18		12		87
White-throated	2070	112	370	50	688	280	555	50	463	545	5183*
Spoonbill, Roseate						108				2	110*
Starling		21	125	3	259	3000	16	9	55	135	3623
Teal, Green-winged						870			5		875
Tern, Caspian			12		19	101	3	22	2	11	170*
Common					12	6	1			3	22
Forster's			3		22	600	33	10	29	1000	1697*
Gull-billed										2	2
Royal			5		3	10		6		30	54
Sandwich					1						1
Thrasher, Brown	292	17	29	25	128	59	141	23	43	64	821*
Thrush, Hermit	22	3	4	15	15	7	10	5	10	8	99
Wood	3										3*
Towhee, Rufous-sided	19		2	2	9		6	2	2	4	46
Titmouse, Tufted	44	11	29	30	21	2	18	4	10	23	192
Vireo, Solitary	2			3		3	1		1		10
Philadelphia							1				1*
White-eyed	1						2				3

Species	1A	1B	2	3A	3B	4A	4B	5	6	7	Total
Vulture, Black	1	1		1		13			1		17
Turkey	11	4	8		22	9	14		2		70
Warbler, Myrtle	7	42	109	4	100	88	32	3	113	168	666
Orange-crowned	6	3	8	5	8	5	9	1	5	34	84
Palm	1										1
Pine	20	5	7	13	19	35	6	1	3	4	113
Wilson's						1					1
Yellow									1		1*
Yellowthroat	7				5	2			1	2	17
Waxwing, Cedar	55	31	4		245	52	62	34	135	270	888
Willet					4	3	10		3	7	27
Woodcock, American	2			1		1		1		2	7
Woodpecker, Downy	8		2	7	10	1	6		2	3	39*
Hairy	1						2		1		4
Pileated	12		1	1	1						15
Red-bellied	17	7	10		2	4		6	25	16	87*
Red-headed	6							2			8
Wren, Bewick's	1			1							2*
Carolina	30	20	22	7	44	28	10	6	30	44	241
House	4	1	2		12	5		1	5	20	50
Long-billed Marsh					4	2				1	7
Short-billed Marsh					4	4	4	3		2	17
Winter	1	1				1		1	1	3	8
Yellowlegs, Greater	6				7	10		1	16		40
Lesser			2		33				9	1000	1044*
Duck species	50		750		3				4000		4803
Hawk species		2	12	3		1			6		24
Blackbird species	900		150K	1800	335		20		200		153K+
Small Sandpiper species			8	5	88		1000		2000		3101
Heron species				1						1	2
Total species	84	59	68	51	99	104	93	74	97	103	166
Total individuals	22,637	3840	158,805	4832	6130	43,854	6525	1611	12,435	16,233	276,902

Concluding Commentary by Noel Pettingel, member, "Sanitation Committee"

Houston's total of 166 species was the 3rd highest list since the first count in this area over 50 years ago. All-time high was 192 in 1963 and 2nd highest was 168 in 1961. This year the "Sanitation Committee", after much collaboration and deliberation, reluctantly deleted some 6 species (including 3 sandpipers) from the official list submitted to the National Audubon Society for publication in the April 1965 "Audubon Field Notes". Unfortunately, as previously noted by Compiler Patten, the Solitary Sandpiper was found to be a valid species too late for inclusion in the official list. Then there was the bird which Dr. Tveten and the writer considered "by elimination" to be a Reddish Egret, but which was dutifully reduced to a non-specific "Heron (sp.)". Other species which didn't make the "sanitary" list due to lack of convincing details: Black Duck, Osprey, Pectoral and White-rumped Sandpipers.

Veteran Chambers County expert Arlie McKay (area 4A) found 4 species (including Sage Thrasher!) during the count period but not on count day and Harvey Patten found a Sharp-shinned Hawk which was missed on count day.

Comparison of exceptionally high individual total for 1964 Houston Count with previous record highs:

* Previous highest count by a single North American locality

Species	Previous High (year)	1964	Remarks
Brown Thrasher	442 (1963)*	821	
Catbird	14 (1963)	40	
Ruddy Duck	500 (1961)	2083	
Wood Duck	10 (1959)	47	
Herring Gull	116 (1963)	1290	
Ring-billed Gull	3766 (1960)	8983	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	462 (1960)	631	Freeport 1504 in 1964
Yellow-bel. Sapsucker	118 (1963)*	238	
Common Snipe	65 (1963)	106	
White-throated Sparrow	3157 (1961)	5183	
Forster's Tern	1225 (1961)*	1697	
Wood Thrush	1 (1949, 55, 60, 62)	3	equals *
Lesser Yellowlegs	242 (1963)	1044	

Clear, cool and a group of consecrated birders. What more could be desired except birds to watch? But they were also in evidence, which makes for a perfect day for the observation and study of our feathered friends.

There were nine cars in the group that met at the Baytown tunnel and, under the capable leadership of Linda Snyder (with husband J. A. acting as chauffeur), headed for the great open spaces - also the woods.

The first stop of consequence was at a ranch between Trinity and Old River, south of Interstate 10 where Cardinals, Robins and Myrtle Warblers were seen in quantities. It was here, also, that a Solitary Sandpiper was found.

The next principal area to be inspected was the woodland off Texas 61 and south of Interstate 10. This is an interesting area with a great variety of trees and shrubs, as well as a bayou. A number of birds were added here, including Fish and Common Crows, Cooper's Hawk, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Pine Warbler.

Time was getting on, so we hastened to the park at Anahuac for lunch, and where the Yellowthroat was found. We were also pleased to be joined by two ladies from Beaumont who told us they greatly enjoyed birding with our group.

To the writer, the high-light of the day was a visit to the Barrow Ranch. We were greeted by the ranch manager, Mr. Joe Lagow, who displays a great interest in conservation and nature study. Mr. Lagow's home is at the edge of the most beautiful grove of Live Oaks to be found (to the best of my knowledge) in Texas. To walk in is comparable to entering a great cathedral, and a cloak of peace seems to envelope one as he gazes at the canopy of green with the blue of the sky filtering through.

Mr. Lagow retrieves crippled ducks and geese during the hunting season, so has quite a considerable population in a small pond near his home. All the common geese species and many of the duck. Quite a number recover their ability to fly, but cannot bring themselves to leave a good home.

Mr. Lagow led us through a section of the ranch to two large artificial ponds where we found an assortment of ducks, including the beautiful Cinnamon Teal. The ranch consists of some 26,000 acres and Mr. Lagow invited us back for a visit to another section in the Spring.

The day was waning, but we took off for the Anahuac Wildlife Refuge. There is a limited area that can be covered by car, but it is becoming a fine location for the observation of shore and wading birds, geese, ducks, sparrows and, of all things, owls. No less than four species of owls were seen, so one can readily understand that it was well after dark before the most persistent of the birders called it a day and wended their weary way homeward.

In all, 102 species were identified. Besides those mentioned above, they were: Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Bluebird, Bobwhite, Carolina Chickadee, American Coot, Brown Creeper, Long-billed Curlew, Mourning Dove, Long-billed Dowitcher, Canvasback, Gadwall, Mallard, Mottled, Pintail, Lesser Scaup, Shoveler and American Widgeon Ducks, Common and Snowy Egrets, Purple Finch, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Empidonax Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, American Goldfinch, Blue, Canada, Snow and White-fronted Geese, Boat-tailed and Common Grackle, Pied-billed Grebe, Bonaparte's, Laughing and Ring-billed Gulls, Marsh, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed and Sparrow Hawks, Great Blue, Little Blue, Louisiana and Black-crowned Night Herons, Blue Jay, Killdeer, Belted Kingfisher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Horned Lark, Eastern Meadowlark, Mockingbird, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Barn, Burrowing, Great Horned and Short-eared Owls, White Pelican, Eastern Phoebe, Water Pipit, Black-bellied Plover, Clapper Rail, Sanderling, Dunlin and Semipalmated Sandpiper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Loggerhead Shrike, Common Snipe, House, Savannah, Seaside, Swamp and White-throated Sparrows, Starling, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teals, Forster's Tern, Brown Thrasher, Hermit Thrush, Tufted Titmouse, Solitary Vireo, Black and Turkey Vultures,

Orange-crowned Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, Willet, Downy, Pileated, Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers, Carolina and Short-billed Marsh Wren, Greater Yellowlegs and Harlan's Hawk.

WHAT A DAY!!

BIRDING EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI

John Tveten

Since notes on Western birding trips seem to be popular, I thought I'd add a few on an Eastern trip. On January 16-17 I birded the area around Wilmington, Delaware with Prof. C. S. Marvel of the University of Arizona and some of the local birders. Unfortunately a six inch snow fall with five to ten degree temperatures and high winds forced us to forsake our journey to the New Jersey coast, but we did manage to cover a substantial area each day--fortified with warm clothes and snow shovels.

The first day we worked the area around Philadelphia and the Tinicum Refuge. Although we missed the Iceland and Glaucous Gulls which had been seen earlier, we saw quite a few species including: numerous ducks with large numbers of Black Ducks, Ring-necked Pheasant, Great Black-backed Gull, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Black-capped Chickadee, Purple Grackle, Purple Finch, Slate-colored Junco and Tree Sparrow.

The next day we went to Bombay Hook Refuge in Delaware to find large flocks of geese and ducks, Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagle, Barn Owl and many of the sparrows and other small winter birds. Further down the coast I braved the wind and cold to walk out on the sand dunes of Cape Henlopen and add the Ipswich Sparrow and Snow Bunting to my life list. Then in late afternoon we reached Indian River Inlet in search of Eiders and Harlequin Ducks. Because of the high waves the search of the ocean proved impossible, but I did add the Brant and Purple Sandpiper as lifers as well as seeing numerous Oldsquaws and Common Scoters.

Although the memory of the weather (admittedly unusual for Delaware) will sustain me through a long, hot summer, winter is certainly the time to visit the East Coast for some of the more desirable northern birds. Perhaps next time the weather will be more cooperative and we'll find the birds we missed this time. After all, the expectation is half the fun.

CLEARING HOUSE January, 1965

- Common Loon: (1)1 Cove AKM; (10)31 Galveston JH BH; (50)3 Tex.City Dike, (20)30 Tex.City Dike JLT GAT; (7)15 Galveston MA PS PE.
 Eared Grebe: (1)1 Cove AKM; (30)3 Tex. City Dike JLT GAT.
 Horned Grebe: (1)3 Tex. City Dike JLT GAT.
 Pied-billed Grebe: (5-21)2,4,14,29 Cove AKM; (5)30 Galveston JH BH.
 White Pelican: 8 days, (1200)1 Cove AKM; (200)30 Gilchrist JLT.
 Double-crested Cormorant: (1-6)1,10,18,24,29 Cove AKM; (20)30 Galveston JLT.
 *Great White Heron: (1)17 Galveston NS JBS; (1)20,30 Galveston JH BH; (1)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Great Blue Heron: (NC)20,30 Galveston JH BH.
 Little Blue Heron: (10)30 Galveston JH NH; (3)30 Galveston JLT.
 Cattle Egret: (1)5, (9)6, (5)18 Cove AKM; (9)30 Galveston JH BH; (5)30 Galveston JLT.
 Reddish Egret: (1)30 Galveston JLT; (4)30 Galveston JH BH; (2)15 Galveston MA PS PE.
 Common Egret: (NC)20,30,31 Galveston JH BH.
 Snowy Egret: (20)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Black-crowned Night Heron: (2)30 Gilchrist JLT.
 Roseate Spoonbill: (2)2, (33)10 Cove AKM.
 White-fronted Goose: 9 days, (150)24 Cove AKM.
 Snow Goose: (8)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Mallard: (2-22) 8 days Cove AKM; (2)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Black Duck: (8)30 Anahuac Refuge JLT.
 Mottled Duck: (4-35) 4 days Cove AKM; (NC)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Gadwall: 5 days, (50)29 Cove AKM; (5)15 Galveston MA PS PE.
 Pintail: 7 days, (2000)10 Cove AKM; (15)30 Galveston JH BH.

- Green-winged Teal: 8 days, (1500)10 Cove AKM; (20)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Blue-winged Teal: (2)10, 29 Cove AKM; (6)30 Galveston JH BH; (2)15 Galveston MA PS PE.
 American Widgeon: 6 days, (1000)10 Cove AKM; (500)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Shoveler: 4 days, (125)29 Cove AKM; (15)30 Galveston JH BH; (30)15 Galveston MA PS PE.
 Wood Duck: (2)23 Sheldon JLT GAT.
 Redhead: (50)29 Galveston "A".
 Ring-necked Duck: (9)29 Cove AKM.
 Canvasback: 6 days, (150)29 Cove AKM.
 Greater Scaup: (10)30 Galveston JLT.
 Lesser Scaup: 4 days, (250)1 Cove AKM; (NC)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Common Goldeneye: (25)1, (43)18, (5)24 Cove AKM; (1)10 Galveston BB; (8)15 Galveston MA PS PE; (6)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Bufflehead: (14)1, (2)18 Cove AKM.
 Common Scoter (See Notes) AKM.
 Ruddy Duck: (10-50) 5 days Cove AKM.
 Hooded Merganser: (1)1 (reported to Arlie by S. L. Griffith) Cove AKM.
 Red-breasted Merganser: (10-15)1, 18, 24 Cove AKM; (15)3, (6)30 Tex. City Dike JLT GAT; (3)15 Galveston MA PS PE; (6)24 Galveston JE PE.
 White-tailed Kite: (2)10 Galveston BB **
 Sharp-shinned Hawk: (1)18 Cove AKM.
 Red-tailed Hawk (Krider's): (1)30 Kemah JLT; (1)24 Gulf Freeway JE PE.
 Red-tailed Hawk: (4)17 Houston, (1)20 Gulf Freeway, (2)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Harlan's Hawk: (2 or 3)2, (1)10 the 2nd one was my 3rd record, the 3rd was an uncertain immature Cove AKM.
 Red-shouldered Hawk: (1-3) 5 days Cove AKM; (1)17 Houston JH BH; (1)24 Galv. County Park JE PE.
 White-tailed Hawk: (1)10 Gulf Freeway BB.
 Rough-legged Hawk: (1)24 Western Harris Cty. JLT GAT.
 Bald Eagle: (1)23 Sheldon JLT GAT.
 Marsh Hawk: (3)20 Gulf Freeway, (5)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Pigeon Hawk: (1)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Sparrow Hawk: (NC)17 Houston, (10)20 Gulf Freeway, (5)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Sandhill Crane: (5)24 West. Harris Cty. JLT GAT.
 Clapper Rail: (1)30 Galveston JLT.
 Virginia Rail: (3)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Common Gallinule: (1)30 Galveston JH BH.
 American Coot: 4 days, (200)29 Cove AKM.
 American Oystercatcher: (2)15 Galveston MA PS PE; (3)29 Galveston "A"; (2)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Semipalmated Plover: (3)18, (6)24 Cove AKM.
 Piping Plover: (1)24 Cove AKM; (3)30 Galveston JLT; (8)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Black-bellied Plover: (3)1, (1)18, (4)24 Cove AKM; (NC)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Ruddy Turnstone: (1)18, (6)24 Cove AKM.
 American Woodcock: (1)29 Cove AKM.
 Common Snipe: (14)4, (5)14, (150)18, (3)29 Cove AKM; (3)30 Galveston JH BH; (3)30 Galveston JLT.
 Long-billed Curlew: 5 days, (300)29 Cove AKM; (6)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Spotted Sandpiper: (1)15 Galveston MA PS PE; (1)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Willet: (3-11)4 days Cove AKM.
 Greater Yellowlegs: (1-6)4 days Cove AKM.
 Lesser Yellowlegs: (1)18, 29 Cove AKM.
 Dunlin: (16)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Short-billed Dowitcher: (75)1, (14)2, (40)24 Cove AKM.
 Western Sandpiper: (4)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Marbled Godwit: (4)29 Galveston "A".
 Sanderling: (1)2, (3)24 Cove AKM.
 American Avocet: (199)1, (1)10, 24, (2)18 Cove AKM; (200)31 Galveston JH BH; (25)10 Jones Bay (off West Bay) BB; (200)30 Galveston, (800)30 Bolivar JLT.
 Bonaparte's Gull: (9)2 Cove AKM; (4)30 Bolivar JLT.
 Black Skimmer: (1)2 Cove AKM; (15)17 Bolivar NS JBS; (75)24 Tex. City Dike PE JE.
 Inca Dove: (2-3) daily in yard JH BH; (5)30 Galveston JLT.
 Short-eared Owl: (1)17 Bolivar NS JBS; (1)30 Anahuac Ref. JLT; (1)24 Galveston JE PE.
 Barred Owl: (1)20 Galveston Cty Park JH BH; (1) most days Baytown JLT GAT.
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird: (2)13 Baytown JLT GAT.
 Belted Kingfisher: (1)2, 30, (2)4, (3)29 Cove AKM.
 Yellow-shafted Flicker: (1-10) 7 days Cove AKM.
 Red-bellied Woodpecker: (1)13 in yard, (3)20 Galv. Cty. Park JH BH.
 Red-headed Woodpecker: (1)4 Cove AKM; (1) daily in yrd. JH BH.
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (1-9) 13 days Cove AKM; (1)27 in yard JH BH.

Hairy Woodpecker: (1)10,16 in yard JH BH.
 Downy Woodpecker: (1)1,2,18,29, (2)24 Cove AKM.
 Eastern Phoebe: (1)10 in yard, (1)30 Galveston JH BH.
 Vermilion Flycatcher: (1-4) 8 days Cove AKM.
 Horned Lark: (4)20 Galveston JH BH; (100)30 Texas City JLT.
 Tree Swallow: (2)3 Cove AKM.
 Brown Creeper: (1)1,4,24, (2)2,29 Cove AKM; (2)10 Baytown JLT GAT.
 House Wren: (1)1,18 Cove AKM.
 Winter Wren: (1)24 Western Harris Cty. JLT GAT.
 Bewick's Wren: (1)1 Cove AKM.
 Long-billed Marsh Wren: (3)2 Cove AKM.
 Short-billed Marsh Wren: (1)1, (3)2 Cove AKM.
 Robin: 16 days, (2500)18 Cove AKM.
 Hermit Thrush: (1) most days Baytown JLT GAT.
 Eastern Bluebird: (1-21) 18 days Cove AKM; (3)23 Sheldon JLT GAT.
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: (1-6) frequently Cove AKM.
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet: (1)1,2 Cove AKM; (1)2,13 in yard JH BH.
 Water Pipit: 10 days, (75)24 Cove AKM; (1)20 Galv. Cty. Park JH BH.
 Sprague's Pipit: (15)2, (1)3 Cove AKM.
 Cedar Waxwing: (25)2, (3)24, (900)29 Cove AKM; (20)17 Houston, (50)26
 Spring Valley, (50)28 in yard JH BH.
 Solitary Vireo: (2)2 Cove AKM.
 Orange-crowned Warbler: (2)1, (5)2, (3)3, (7)18, (4)24, (1)30 Cove AKM;
 (1-2)1, 13 in yard JH BH.
 Myrtle Warbler: 10 days, (50)1, (40)24 Cove AKM; (1-4) daily in yard JH BH.
 Pine Warbler: (2-20)5 days Cove AKM; (1-2) daily in yard JH BH; (2)10
 Baytown JLT GAT.
 Palm Warbler: (2)29 my first January record Cove AKM.
 Yellowthroat: (2)1, (1)2 Cove AKM.
 Wilson's Warbler: (1)2 Cove AKM; (1)27 in yard JH BH.
 Baltimore Oriole: (1)24 Cove AKM.
 Bullock's Oriole: (1)17,26,27,28,29,30,31 at feeder in yard JH BH.
 Rusty Blackbird: (1)1 Cove AKM; (150)17 Galv. Cty. Park MA PS PE;
 (200)24 JE PE; (250)16 Galv. Cty. Pk. NS JBS; (150)16
 LaPorte NS JBS; (1)24 in yard NS.
 Dickcissel: (1)6 in yard JR.
 LeConte's Sparrow: (5)2, (1)23 Cove AKM; (1)3 LaPorte JLT GAT.
 Henslow's Sparrow: (2)23 Cove AKM.
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow: (2)1 Cove AKM.
 Seaside Sparrow: (5)1, (2)24 Cove AKM.
 Vesper Sparrow: (10)1, (2)18, (3)29 Cove AKM; (10)24 West. Harris Cty. JLT GAT.
 Lark Sparrow: (2)18 Cove AKM.
 Bachman's Sparrow: (1)29 Cove AKM.
 Slate-colored Junco: (6)2, (2)29 Cove AKM.
 Chipping Sparrow: (20)4, (5)18, (12)29 Cove AKM.
 Field Sparrow: (4-10) 4 days Cove AKM.
 Harris' Sparrow: (2)1 Cove AKM.
 White-crowned Sparrow: (15)1, (1)2 Cove AKM; (1)10 Baytown JLT GAT.
 Fox Sparrow: (2)24 West. Harris Cty. JLT GAT.
 Lincoln's Sparrow: (1)1,4,18,29 Cove AKM.
 Swamp Sparrow: (5)1, (1)2,29 Cove AKM.
 Song Sparrow: (4)1, (1)29 Cove AKM; (1)30 Galveston JH BH.

AKM Arlie Mckay	BH Bill Harwell	JBS Jerry Strickling
BB Bob Braden	JE Jim Ellis	NS Nancy Strickling
JLT John Tveten	PE Pat Ellis	JR Jane Robinson
GAT Gloria Tveten	MA Margaret Anderson	"A" MA, PS, NS
JH Jean Harwell	PS Peggy Smith	

Notes from Clearing House Reports

*Common Scoter. S.L. Griffith presented me with head and wings of one on Jan. 22. It and another were killed about Dec. 20. Other than a flock from which Z.F. Moley killed several over forty years ago, I have no other record.
AKM.

**Bob Braden's White-tailed Kites were seen along Stewart Road opposite the airport hovering into strong north wind. Excellent look; adult birds. (Another White-tailed Kite was observed in the same general vicinity, a little east of Braden's spot, on Feb. 7 by John Tveten. Keep your eyes peeled in this area. Eds.)

BIG WHITE BIRD ON GALVESTON ISLAND Jerry Strickling

On Sunday, January 17, 1965, at 2:30 pm, my wife and I were at the jetty at the east end of Galveston Island. We saw a large white egret with what appeared to be a dark mandible and bluish-gray legs. It turned and flushed when we were at about 50 yards and we saw that the back of its legs were yellow. We pursued the bird to the sandbar on the channel side of the jetty and studied it for about an hour and a half at ranges as close as 50 yards with our Bal scopes. In size, the bird was equal to or larger than a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea Herodias*) that was as near as 30 yards to the bird in question. The bird was solid white with several occipital plumes. The feathering on the neck was relatively shaggy. The eye was straw colored with a dark pupil. The loreal area was bluish-gray. The mandible was as heavy or heavier than the Great Blue's. The upper mandible was bluish-gray with some light (whitish) blotches near the base. The base half of the lower mandible was the color of the upper mandible. The end half of the lower mandible was yellow. The left side of the lower mandible had more yellow on it than the right side. In flight the bird was labored and ungainly and frequently flew with its neck extended. Our observation seems to fit the description of a juvenel Great White Heron (*Ardea occidentalis*) per page 383 of the Handbook of North American Birds, Volumn I.

(Since the original sighting, the bird has been seen by the Stricklings on other occasions, by Jim Ellis on three occasions, latest on Feb. 7, by Pat Ellis twice, and by Bill and Jean Harwell, Peggy Smith, Margaret Anderson, Linda Snyder, John and Wanda Schmidt, Ruth and Peter Isleib, James Hancock, and Noel Pettingell. This list is certainly not complete, however, these are the people we know for sure have seen the bird. Mr. James Hancock, a visiting Englishman, took several pictures of the bird under adverse light conditions with a 300 mm fl lens on a 35mm camera. The results are unknown. Eds.)

VARIED THRUSH AND OTHER MATTERS Jim Ellis

Saturday, February 13, 1965, Elric McHenry found a Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) in Galveston County Park. Elric came back to Houston to inform others of this extraordinary find and the bird was seen later that day by Marie and Trevor Feltner, Bill and Gene Pettit and Nancy and Jerry Strickling. Pat and I found the bird early the next morning and observed it leisurely for about two hours with seven power binoculars and a twenty power telescope in good light, feeding on the ground at distances as close as 50 feet. The bird is a Robin Sized thrush. It was seen feeding on the ground in the company of Robins. The bird has a uniform gray back with a gray band across the breast. The underparts are rusty orange from the throat to the lower breast-upper belly, posteriorly white. A rusty-orange stripe extends from the eye to the nape. The wings are basically the color of the back with two rusty-orange wing bars with many irregular markings of the same color lower in the wings. White markings in the corners of the tail visible only in flight. Dark mandible. Legs light yellow or pinkish. This bird is generally lighter in tone than Peterson's illustrations in his field guides and the eye-stripe extends farther toward the base of the neck. Others who saw the bird on Sunday are Peggy and Jack Smith, John Schmidt, Jim and Iris O'neill, Doris McHenry, Linda Snyder, Clayton and Eva Gilman, Norma Oates, Leota Stilwell, Thelma Smith, Ruth Moorman, Jane Robinson, Charlotte Johnson, Noel Pettingell and Margaret Anderson. As above, this is almost surely an incomplete list. The last sighting (as this is being written, Feb. 16) was by Steve Williams and Pat Ellis on Feb. 16.

The addition of "and other matters" in the title of this article is not meant to detract from Elric's fine record, but this bird and the propagation of the news about it brings up another subject. Since the initiation of the bird call, the news of rarities in the area has been spread in a broader and more orderly manner. We have a good thing going here and we can make it a little better. There have been a few instances of the bird call breaking down and some people not getting the word. If you are supposed to call someone and that person does not answer, please take it upon yourself to call the people that are supposed to be called by the person that you are supposed to call and who did not answer. Now if you can't figure out the last sentence, call me and I will explain it to you. If your first call does not succeed, do not give up after one call or even after one day. How would you have liked to have missed a Varied Thrush. We live in the best bird-watching area in the A.O.U. area and when the rarities hit town, get the word out.

Change of Address

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New Subscriber

Mrs. Myrtle McLaran, 6701 Roos Road, Houston 77036

Officers Elected

The slate of officers nominated by the nominating committee and as reported in the last SPOONBILL were elected by acclamation at the last meeting of the OG. The April issue of the SPOONBILL will be the last by the current editors, thereafter address contributions to Bill and Betty Wright, 6734 Neff Street, Houston, Texas.

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