

The SPOONBILL



Published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club
Houston, Texas Libby Price, Editor Ellen Red, Assistant Editor

VOLUME XVII, NO. 5
MAY, 1987

Coming Events

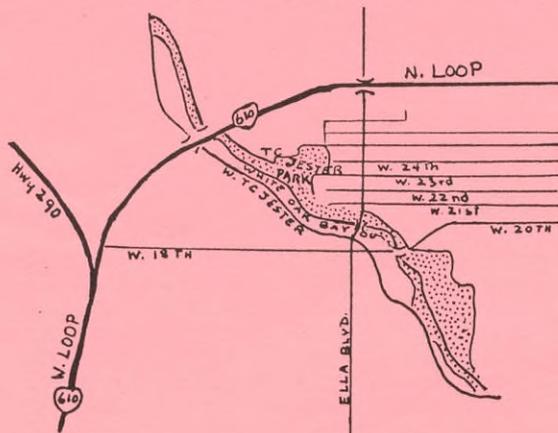
Wednesday, June 3: Deadline for Clearing House sightings for May.

Friday, July 3: Deadline for Clearing House sightings for June, and for Spoonbill material to appear in the June-July issue.

THERE WILL BE NO OG MEETINGS OR FIELD TRIPS IN JUNE OR JULY.

WHITE OAK BAYOU: AN INNER CITY RETREAT by Wesley Cureton

Since the fall of 1974 I have observed 179 species at the stretch of White Oak Bayou that is enclosed by Ella Blvd., T.C. Jester and the North Loop. The best part is a stream which leads into White Oak Bayou itself, which is paved. There are mostly willows, cottonwoods and ashes in the stream bottom, surrounded by higher land with pines, oaks and sweet gums. On the east side is a small city park and two rocky landfills, and on the west side are some open fields and thickets. The best way to enter is to turn west off of Ella on 22nd, 23rd or 24th and park at the dead end.



Because of its relatively small size and increasing fragmentation, White Oak Bayou's breeding list is small, and summer is the duller time. The woods serve mostly as a migrant trap. Thirty-four species of warblers have been recorded. The spring record for warblers in a single day is fifteen species (three times); the fall record is twelve species (one time). The most exciting warbler was a Black-throated Gray. Some mulberry trees attract thrushes, Catbirds and grosbeaks. Early May is usually better than late April, depending of course on the weather.

The older of the two landfills, although quite brushy around the edges, is bare and rocky in the middle, and apparently reminds some dry-country species of home. Here have occurred ground dove, Groove-billed Ani, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Lark and Clay-colored Sparrows.

White Oak Bayou formerly held the early spring record on the Upper Texas Coast for Louisiana Waterthrush (March 6) and early fall record for Slate-colored Junco (October 9), but these records have since been broken. It currently holds the record for Nashville Warbler (May 20) and Wilson's Warbler (May 22). It also has the late fall record for Cerulean Warbler (November 4) and ties the early fall record for Blue-winged Warbler (August 8). The rarest bird ever recorded there was the UTC's second Rufous-crowned Sparrow on September 15, 1979.

About six years ago I began observing at another section of White Oak Bayou, a little farther south from the original tract. It has more open space. Not as many species have been recorded here, but this area has contributed a few exclusives: Common Snipe, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Rufous Hummingbird and Sharp-tailed Sparrow. The last species is one of the few recorded away from the immediate coast.

Some interesting non-avian findings are possum, coon, armadillo, coral snake, snapping and soft-shelled turtles, marijuana seedlings, a stolen purse, a stolen car and motorcycle, and a dead man.

As is usually the case these days, the habitat at White Oak Bayou is deteriorating. The thicket that hosted the Rufous-crowned and so many other sparrows now has a building on it. The Bobwhite

(continued from page 1)

no longer exists there. The eastern buckthorn, some ferns and ladies' tresses orchids have been wiped out. The new landfill causes the stream to be clogged by much more litter than previously. For the time being, though, I will continue to observe the area where I have spent many a pleasant hour. White Oak Bayou has been my Walden Pond.

Noel's Niche Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

.....TEN YEARS AGO THIS MONTH
FROM MAY, 1977 SPoonBILL

"Migrant Fallout at High Island - by Jim Morgan

"On April 16 a mid-day thunderstorm followed by light intermittent rain produced a significant migrant fallout at High Island. After a dull morning the welcome rain brought down large numbers of birds all afternoon. Sightings of various birders observing this event showed a count of 25 species of warblers. Our party of Glenn and Penny Cureton and myself logged 20 species of warblers plus numerous other migrants. All estimates of numbers have been submitted to the Clearing House for publication. A brief list of the highlights includes 50+ Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, 200+ Red-eyed Vireos, 200+ Tennessee Warblers, 100+ Orchard Orioles, 175+ Scarlet Tanagers, 75+ Summer Tanagers and 100+ Indigo Buntings. Also significant was the sighting of 20+ Blackpoll Warblers. The total number of individuals was estimated at 1200+ migrants which includes only Smith's Woods. Including Boy Scout Woods would probably bring the total to 2000+ as reports from that area said that the fallout was exceptional there also. All estimates are felt to be conservative.

"But such a fallout produced excitement far beyond mere numbers to report. For instance, the viewing of 5 Scarlet and 2 Summer Tanagers through my binoculars while focused on one spot, or three Blackpolls in binocular view at one time, or the finding of generally low feeding warblers (such as Worm-eating Warblers) high in the trees, or finding the huge Live Oaks in the middle of Smith's Woods literally covered with Red-eyed Vireos and Tennessee Warblers which one had to sort through to find other species, or finding a Mulberry tree sprinkled with a variety of color produced by numerous Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Indigo Buntings and Orchard Orioles only to be enhanced when a male Northern Oriole zips in to get in on the feast. Such a fallout is a truly rewarding experience to view.

"In order to follow up on this fallout, Ted Eubanks, Jr. and I returned to High Island the next morning where we found the total number of individuals to be much less than the preceding afternoon, but the variety of species even better. We ran in to Paul and Margaret Jones who had seen 19 species of warblers by 8:00 a.m. (and 24 by 10:00--Ed.)! Ted and I logged 24 species of warblers that day plus all the migrant thrushes in good numbers, both cuckoos in quantities and large numbers of catbirds. This was truly a weekend that I (and others I am sure) will remember for a long time."

IF YOU DRINK, DON'T DISCARD!

by Ed Rozenburg

What is cylindrical, weighs about one ounce, comes in many colors and can help our finances? THE ALUMINUM CAN. Aluminum drink cans currently bring almost 30 cents a pound. There are about 18 cans to a pound. 18 cans can pay the postage on The Spoonbill to several members. If every member kept a bag in his or her car for cans, the resulting collection would help keep down litter, relieve solid waste problems and bring in a small but important income for our organization. (Remember, though, that Pepsi products come in steel cans.)

Peter Vennema says that aluminum has brought in up to \$250 a year for the OG. This is the amount spent to print an issue of The Spoonbill; it is the amount we donated to support the Texas Breeding Bird Atlas. Save those cans and bring them to OG meetings. They can help us pay our bills and still support worthwhile projects.

COSTA RICA NEW YEAR

by P. D. Hulce

On December 28th, 1986, Steve Schultz and I left Houston for two weeks of birding in Costa Rica. For the first week our hosts were Michael and Suzi Snow at their farm in the foothills of the Talamanca Mountains east of Siquirres, at an elevation of about 275 meters. The second week we were guests of Steve and Paula Friedman at their 75-acre reserve, Genesis II, in the Talamanca Highland Oak Forest, 35 miles south of the capital, San José, at an elevation of 2360 meters. For our in-country transportation we used a mixture of taxis, private vehicles and the often crowded "jungle train."

When we arrived at Michael's farm he was out on the trail with two other guests, Chuck and Roberta, from Florida. This was my second trip to Michael's, so Steve and I set out on our own and quickly got 40 to 50 birds, including Keel-billed Toucan, Mealy Parrot, Montezuma's Oropendula, and a new bird for me, the Thick-billed Euphonia.

In the evening a friend of Michael's and one-time acquaintance of mine, Vladimir Burcouscaia, stopped by to visit. He speaks Russian and Spanish, I speak Russian and English, and Michael speaks Spanish and English. An interesting and often hilarious evening of trilingual puns and jokes quickly passed by, during which a Black-and-white Owl called and a Kinkajou climbed in a banana tree next to the porch.

The next morning we awoke at 5:30 to the sounds of Little Tinamous and Laughing Falcons calling. Michael was going to take us to a newly opened area by the nearby schoolhouse, and on the way he soon heard a Long-billed Gnatwren calling. A little patience and we were able to see it, and Steve taped a good recording of it. We also saw two Three-toed Sloths and a lovely Coral Snake as it hurriedly crossed the road. Three King Vultures soared by at the schoolhouse, and White-collared Manakins were vigorously popping their wings and

giving their peculiar "raspberry" call at a number of spots. On the way back Steve and I settled down and sat by a small stream in a jungle ravine in an area that Michael calls "Hummingbird Alley." Within the next hour we got absolutely amazing looks at Rufous and Broad-billed Motmots, Slate-colored Grosbeak, White-tipped Sicklebill and Slaty Ant-Shrike. Then we headed back to the house for one of Suzi's fantastic meals.

We awoke the next day to the sound of a Striped Owl, as well as the Little Tinamou, which called every morning and evening. We started a big trek down to the Madre de Dios River, a descent of about 300 meters. Along the way we added such birds as Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Blue Dacnis, Black-headed Tody Flycatcher and Cinnamon Becard to our lists. Just after we reached the river a nearly unbelievable Sunbittern flew and landed right in front of us. As we moved along he continued to fly ahead of us, as if to show off the spectacular patterns on his wings. Another Sunbittern then flew in, as well as a flock of Dusky-faced Tanagers. A White-necked Jacobin sat quietly and let us inspect him. In the same area a pair of Long-tailed Tyrants were flycatching. Egrets, kingfishers and tropical dickey birds were everywhere. It was a long walk back to Michael's for a late lunch, but no one complained.

We spent the afternoon birding from the front porch, and added another 20 birds to the day's list, including Green Honeycreeper, Slaty-tailed Trogon, and after dark, a Grand Potoo which called for over an hour. What a great way to wind up 1986!

On January 1st, Chuck and Roberta were leaving, and gave us all a ride to the highway so that we could bird a deep canyon that led to Michael's from another direction. Black-cowled Orioles, Chestnut-backed Antbirds, Scarlet-rumped Caciques and a multitude of others abounded. Another King Vulture and a Black Hawk-Eagle passed by several times. It wasn't until nearly 5:00 PM that I managed to get a new lifer when a beautiful pair of Dot-winged Antwrens preened and fluttered for 20 minutes right in front of us. That evening on the porch we had Pauraque and a Least Pygmy Owl calling for some time.

The next day we made our longest hike of the week, a round trip of about 10 miles, which included several good birding areas. Interesting new birds were Short-tailed Nighthawk, Stripe-breasted Wren, Fasciated Antshrike and Purple-crowned Fairy. We also had excellent looks at the Green Shrike-Vireo, Swallow-tailed Kites and Short-tailed Hawk. In all we saw 87 different species for the biggest day of our whole trip.

January 3rd was to be our last day in the lowlands. We headed out in spite of a threatening sky and got caught in a two-hour cloudburst that barely dampened our enthusiasm. We waited out the rain under a tree full of White-faced Monkeys, and then headed back for "Hummingbird Alley" to sit and watch for antbirds. We were rewarded with a Dull-mantled Antbird which came quite close and another look at the White-tipped Sicklebill, a bizarre humming bird. Back at Michael's we found the Grey-chested Dove right where he said to look for it.

Our bird list for one week at Michael's came to 150 species, over 70 of which we saw or heard from his front porch. Michael is an excellent naturalist who probably knows 200 birds by their calls alone.

On January 4th Steve and I took the "jungle train" to Cartago, where Steve Friedman was to pick us up for our week of highland birding. By the time we reached his beautiful home, surrounded by 100-foot tall Black Oaks, it was 4:00 PM. The next hour of birding produced only 11 different species, but 9 of them were new to Steve and me. Birds such as Collared Redstart, Spangle-cheeked Tanager and Fiery-throated Hummingbird were everywhere. After a week in the hot, humid lowlands it was a pleasant surprise to encounter such cool evenings and cold nights up in the mountains.

At 5:30 the next morning we were awakened by the repetitious call of the Dusky Nightjar, a sound we were to hear every day of our stay with Steve Friedman and his wife, Paula. We spent the day walking just a few of the world-class trails that Friedman has made on his property, and all were beautiful. Practically every bird we saw was new, including Prong-billed Barbet, Collared Trogon, Barred Becard, Buffy Tuftedcheek and Slaty Flowerpiercer. At about 4:00 PM, within sight of the house, I saw a large bird of prey light on a treetop. We found a window through the foliage and for over a minute were able to study a magnificent slate blue Solitary Eagle. After one day and one hour in the highlands we had found 27 new birds.

Clouds settled in that night, but they didn't stop the Dusky Nightjar and a Bare-shanked Screech Owl from calling the next morning. The fog slowly burned off until we had a beautiful day, and still new birds continued to appear, such as Scintillant Hummingbird, Sulphur-winged Parakeets, the elusive Wrenthrush and a single Streak-breasted Treehunter. We traced down a loud, piping song to a rare Costa Rica endemic, the Ochraceous Pewee, and Steve got an excellent tape of another good bird. As we returned to the house with the evening light slowly failing, Paula announced that the quetzals were calling in the area. We listened and taped until dark, but didn't manage to see one.

We were on the trail early the next day when suddenly, there sat a Resplendent Quetzal, just 20 feet ahead of me, calmly waiting to be stared at. Photographs and paintings fail to do justice to this most beautiful of all American birds.

Within the next five minutes we saw a pair of Emerald Toucanets and another Collared Trogon. Other good birds that day included Dark Pewee, White-fronted Tyrannulet and Maroon-chested Ground Dove.

There was frost on the ground the next morning and Friedman took us on a side trip to the town of Copey, at about 5000 feet. It was downhill all the way, and we coasted in his convertible, adding new birds left and right. Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher and Torrent Tyrannulet were two of them. We dined in the little town of Santa Maria and returned to the house in the late afternoon. Not content to sit and rest, we headed out for the

river trail and finally got a good look at another endemic, the Black Guan, a sleek and elusive bird.

We spent the following day birding the trails again, and managed to add a single Black-thighed Grosbeak and the Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, another skulker, to our trip list. We also saw more Quetzals and two more Black Guans.

A side trip to Cerro de la Muerte, the highest point on the Inter-American Highway at 11,000 feet, was to be our last full day of birding in the highlands. Friedman knew a place where the four groups stopped to find quetzals. When we stopped there we saw several, as well as another Ochraceous Pewee, a pair of Spotted Wood Quail and much more. Driving on up the highway we suddenly stopped to see a Sooty Robin perched by the roadside. Upon reaching the high point of the highway we had a great view of the Caribbean and Pacific Oceans at the same time. Within 15 minutes here we had great looks at the two birds normally found only at this altitude, the Timberline Wren, which sang and came right up to us, and the Volcano Junco, which calmly fed right out in the open. When we returned to the Friedmans' we saw more quetzals, trogons and other birds.

On our last morning we were awakened by the Andean Pygmy Owl, and of course, the Dusky Nightjar. We had to pack to leave that afternoon, but still managed to add a Magenta-throated Woodstar, our 19th hummingbird of the trip. During our week in the highlands we brought our trip total up to 237 species, 85 of which were lifers for me.

Mike Snow and Steve Friedman are interesting hosts offering excellent accommodations and food. In conjunction with them Steve Schultz and I are tentatively planning one or two Christmas bird counts for the 1987-88 season. Anyone interested can contact us at 520-3294, days, at Miller Theatre.

THE SPOONBILL STAFF

Editor	Libby Price
Assistant Editor	Ellen Red
Art Editor	Linda Feltner
Layout Artist	Connie Clark
Typing	Libby Price
Labels	Peggy Milstead
Mailing	Connie Schimbor
Checklist Committee	Ron Braun
	Noel Pettingell and Jim Morgan

FOR OG information, checklists, maps, contact Maxine Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston 77096, 723-8559.

SEND bird records for Clearing House to Ron Braun 1302 Berrywood Ln., Houston 77077, 496-3108.

RARE Bird Alert Tape, sponsored by Piney Woods Wildlife Society: 821-2846.

SEND material for Spoonbill to Editor, Libby Price, 3715 Sunset, Houston 77005, 665-1159.

SEND dues, subscriptions and address changes to Jerry Patrick, 814 St. Francis, Houston 77079. Members' annual dues: \$15 (ONC \$5, OG \$10). Spoonbill subscriptions for non-members: \$13.

Clearing House - APRIL, 1987

The Clearing House is a monthly record of bird sightings made on the Upper Texas Coast. How to read the CH: Location--(how many) date, observers. Common, widely distributed species on the UTC during the reported month are listed as follows: number of reports, (lowest # - highest #; total # of individuals seen), e.g. 8 reports (1-20;82). Noteworthy sightings will be underlined, capitalized, or both, according to their status. Birds with very rare, vagrant, accidental, or no status on the Checklist at the date of sighting require details. Sightings needing details but submitted without them will not be included in the regular Clearing House. All observations affecting the species' status on the current UTC Checklist must be accepted by the Checklist Committee. Documentation is a must for consideration by the Committee.

ABBREVIATION CODES

AB = Armand Bayou	King = Kingwood
ANWR = Anahuac NWR	LC = Lake Charlotte
BBCR = Bob's Bait Camp Rd	NWH = NW Houston
BBSP = Brazos Bend SP	OB = Offats Bayou
BF = Bolivar Flats	PP = Pitman Park
BHV = Bunkerhill Village	RP = Rollover Pass
BNWR = Brazoria NWR	SJSP = San Jacinto SP
Bolv = Bolivar Peninsula	SMP = Smith Point
CC = Chambers Co.	SO = Sun Oil
CLC = Clear Lk City	SR = Sheldon Reservoir
EG = E. Galveston	SWH = SW Houston
FBC = Ft. Bend Co.	TC = Texas City
FM = Freeport Marsh	TCD = Texas City Dike
Frndwd = Friendswood	TR = Trinity River
Galv = Galveston	WGI = W. Galveston Is.
GC = Galveston Co.	WHC = W. Harris Co.
H = Houston	WMP = White Memorial Park
HI = High Island	WOB = White Oak Bayou
HWM = Houston (Willow Meadows)	
JC = Jefferson Co.	WU = W. University

257 Species reported for April, 1987

Loon, Red-throated: Galv-(1)24, BJH (Notes, ed.)
 Loon, Pacific: OB-(2)7, DM; (2)10, RT (Notes, ed.)
 Loon, Common: 6 reports (1-12; 27)
 Grebe, Pied-billed: 11 reports (1-60; 151)
 Grebe, Eared: TCD-(6)37, DM; OB-(3)57, DM; EG-(10)7, DM;
 FBC-(2)9, DM
 Pelican, American White: 15 reports (2-250; 948)
 Pelican, Brown: BF-(1)23, BGG (Notes, ed.)
 Cormorant, Double-crested: 13 reports (1-120; 263)
 Cormorant, Olivaceous: 7 reports (2-30; 55)
 cormorant, sp.: TR-(2)26, RMB
 Anhinga: 4 reports (1-18; 27)
 Bittern, American: 6 reports 5th thru 24th (1-4; 11)
 Bittern, Least: 7 reports (1-2; 9)
 ANWR-(2)12, BMa; (1)13, (2)25, DM; WGI-(1)16, JJH;
 CC-(1)23, BGG; (1)26, MA; JC-(1)26, RMB
 Heron, Great Blue: 13 reports (1-12; 64)
 Egret, Great: 18 reports (1-25; 133)
 Egret, Snowy: 17 reports (1-300; 643)
 Heron, Little Blue: 12 reports (1-80; 160)
 Heron, Tricolored: 13 reports (1-14; 53)
 Egret, Reddish: WGI-(1)21, JJH; BF-(2)25, DM
 Egret, Cattle: 17 reports (1-320; 112)
 Heron, Green-backed: 17 reports (1-13; 43)
 Night-Heron, Black-crowned: 9 reports (1-40; 61)
 Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned: 9 reports 8-25 (1-22; 51)
 Ibis, White: 13 reports (1-135; 240)
 Ibis, White-faced: 12 reports (2-85; 238)
 Spoonbill, Roseate: 20 reports 3rd thru 30th (1-25; 130)
 Whistling-Duck, Fulvous: 8 reports (1-34; 105)
 CC-(10)4, (1)28, DM; (8)26, MA; ANWR-(1)5, (34)25, DM;
 (30)12, BMa; (7)21, JC; HI-(4)26, MA
 Whistling-Duck, Black-bellied: 5 reports (1-12; 19)
 BBSP-(1)9, DM; (1)24, GG; FBC-(3)21, DM; WHC-(12)27, DM;
 Hockley-(2)29, JC (Notes received, ed.)
 Duck, Wood: BBSP-(5)9, DM; LC-(4)12, (15)25, DM;
 WHC-(2)27, DM
 Teal, Green-winged: 7 reports (4-60; 184)
 DUCK, AMERICAN BLACK: SJSP-(2)6, RU (Notes, ed.)
 Duck, Mottled: 14 reports (1-39; 145)
 Teal, Blue-winged: 23 reports (2-500; 2002)
 Teal, Cinnamon: BNWR-(7)4, CM; ANWR-(2)5, DM; FBC-(2)9, DM
 Shoveler, Northern: 11 reports (3-200; 521)
 Gadwall: 9 reports (2-125; 310)
 Wigeon, American: 4 reports (2-12; 23)
 Canvasback: CC-(6)4, (2)12, DM; ANWR-(1)5, DM; (1)12, BMa
 Scaup, Lesser: TCD-(28)7, DM
 Scaup, sp.: Bolv-(1)11, HV
 Bufflehead: TCD-(2)7, DM
 Merganser, Red-breasted: WGI-(5)5, RU; EG-(135)7, DM;
 GC-(12)9, MH; BF-(2)25, DM
 Duck, Ruddy: CC-(22)4, DM; TCD-(122)7, DM; FBC-(2)9, DM;
 LC-(1)25, DM
 Vulture, Black: 5 reports 4th thru 11th (2-30; 57)
 Vulture, Turkey: 11 reports (1-60; 117)

Osprey: BNWR-(1)4,CM; AB-(5)8,DM; LC-(1)11,HV;(1)12,DM
 Kite,Black-shouldered: 5 reports (1-1;5)
 CC-(1)11,HV;(1)17,DM;(1)18,JB; WGI-(1)21,JJH;
 H-(1)26,MA
 Kite,Mississippi: FBC-(2)9,DM; SJSP-(5)14,DM
 Harrier,Northern: 9 reports (1-4;15)
 Hawk,Sharp-shinned: HI-(1)4,5,DM; WU-(1)15,LP
 Hawk,Red-shouldered: 6 reports (1-4;13)
 Hawk,Broad-winged: 6 reports (1-40;63)
 AB-(6)8,DM; BBSP-(5)9,DM; CC-(40)9,MH;(3)11,HV;
 (1)18,JB; SJSP-(8)14,DM
 Hawk,Swainson's: 17 reports 5th thru 27th (1-16;78)
 WHC-(2)5,HOP;(15)27,DM; BBSP-(16)9,DM;(2)19,RU;
 CC-(1)9,MH;(2)12,18,22,(6)17,(14)25,DM;(1)18,JB;
 (3)22,WC;(3)26,MA; SJSP-(4)14,DM; FBC-(1 dk ph)15,JC
 (Notes, ed.); ANWR-(3)18,UP; JC-(1)22,WC
 Hawk,Red-tailed: 7 reports (1-3;12)
 CC-(1)5,25,DM;(3)9,MH; FBC-(1)9,DM; WGI-(2)16,JJH;
 WHC-(3)18,WC; BBSP-(1)19,RU
 (Hawk,Krider's): CC-(1 imm)26,MA
 Caracara,Crested: FBC-(1)29,JC
 Kestrel,American: 6 reports (1-2;9)
 Manvel-(1)1,RU; HI-(2)5,DM; SJSP-(2)6,RU;
 Bolv-(1)7,DM; FBC-(2)9,DM; CC-(1)9,MH
 Merlin: HI-(2)4,RT; SJSP-(1)4,DM
 Falcon,Peregrine: CC-(1)26,MA
 Bobwhite,Northern: 13 reports (1-15;43)
 Rail,Yellow: ANWR-(12)13,DM;(6)29,JB
 Rail,Clapper: WGI-(3)5,RU;(12 inc 9 chicks)21,JJH;
 BF-(4)7,DM; ANWR-(1)9,MH
 Rail,King: 8 reports (1-5;21)
 Rail,Virginia: ANWR-(2)13,DM
 Sora: 11 reports (1-16;43)
 Gallinule,Purple: ANWR-(1)12,BMA;(6)25,DM; BBSP-(4)24,GG
 Moorhen,Common: 12 reports (1-160;565)
 Coot,American: 14 reports (1-2000;4293)
 Plover,Black-bellied: 10 reports (1-200;256)
 Golden-Plover,Lesser: 11 reports (1-80;229)
 Plover,Snowy: BF-(1)7,DM; FBC-(2)9,DM
 Plover,Wilson's: 7 reports (1-6;27)
 Plover,Semipalmated: 6 reports (1-130;272)
 Plover,Piping: EG-(8)7,DM; BF-(120)7,(1)25,DM;
 Bolv-(2)18,UP
 Killdeer: 7 reports (1-30;118)
 Oystercatcher,American: TCD-(2)7,DM; BF-(2)17,RT;
 (2)29,RT; RP-(3)25,DM
 Stilt,Black-necked: 19 reports (1-45;229)
 Avocet,American: SJSP-(10)6,RU; BF-(4000)7,DM;
 (25)23,GBG; Bolv-(30)18,UP
 Yellowlegs,Greater: 14 reports 4th thru 30th (1-250;377)
 Yellowlegs,Lesser: 16 reports (5-215;714)
 Sandpiper,Solitary: 10 reports (1-4;27)
 Willet: 16 reports (2-50;144)
 Sandpiper,Spotted: 12 reports (1-3;18)
 Sandpiper,Upland: 17 reports 5th thru 28th (1-25;105)
 inc. this unexpected location- Gessner@US290-(4)10,VL
 Whimbrel: 7 reports (1-50;117)
 BF-(6)7,DM; CC-(1)12,BMA;(9)17,(46)25,DM;
 (4)24,GBG;(50)26,MA; HI-(1)29,JB
 Curlew,Long-billed: 11 reports (1-16;51)
 Godwit,Hudsonian: 6 reports (4-60;169)
 CC-(6)17,(15)18,(4)25,(52)28,DM;(26)18,JB;(12)26,MA
 Godwit,Marbled: 5 reports (2-35;58)
 WGI-(16)5,RU; BF-(35)7,DM; BBSP-(3)11,HV;
 Bolv-(2)18,UP; RP-(2)25,DM
 Turnstone,Ruddy: 11 reports (1-25;71)
 Knot,Red: BF-(30)25,DM
 Sanderling: 6 reports (2-140;246)
 Sandpiper,Semipalmated: 7 reports (1-150;265)
 FM-(1)4,CM; WGI-(150)5,RU; GC-(2)12,BMA;
 HI-(60)17,(40)18,DM;(4)18,JB; CC-(8)26,MA
 Sandpiper,Western: 7 reports (4-650;696)
 Sandpiper,Least: 13 reports (1-50;151)
 Sandpiper,White-rumped: CC-(2)27,BB;(1)28,DM
 Sandpiper,Baird's: 9 reports (1-10;40)
 SJSP-(3)73 (Notes, ed.); (8)14,DM; HI-(4)11,HV (No
 notes, ed.); (10)17,(8)18,DM;(3)18,JB; SO-(1)17,DM;
 CC-(2)26,MA;(1)28,DM
 Sandpiper,Pectoral: 16 reports (1-400;614)
 Dunlin: 9 reports (10-425;1460)
 Sandpiper,Stilt: GC-(1)12,BMA; HI-(2)17,25,DM;
 WGI-(1)21,JJH
 Sandpiper,Buff-breasted: 6 reports (1-300;339)
 CC-(1)12,BMA;(30)26,MA;(6)28,DM;(1)29,JB;
 BF-(1)23,GBG (Unusual location, ed.); WHC-(300)27,DM
 Dowitcher,Short-billed: 6 reports (1-1800;2019)
 WGI-(1800)5,RU; BF-(25)7,DM; ANWR-(23)9,MH;
 GC-(150)12,BMA; CC-(20)26,MA; HI-(1)29,JB
 Dowitcher,Long-billed: 6 reports 9th-29th (10-600;1456)
 dowitcher.sp.: 5 reports (20-150;295)
 FM-(50)4,CM; SJSP-(150)6,RU; BBSP-(40)11,HV;
 CC/GC-(35)18,UP; WGI-(20)21,JJH
 Snipe,Common: 8 reports 4th thru 23rd (1-5;16)
 Phalarope,Wilson's: 5 reports (1-45;75)
 TC-(45)7,DM; CC-(1)18,JB;(3)18,(20)28,DM;(6)26,MA
 Gull,Laughing: 14 reports (1-2500;3971)
 inc. NWH-(1)10,VL (Very unusual location, ed.)
 Gull,Franklin's: 5 reports (2-50;68)
 FBC-(8)9,DM; CC-(2)12,BMA;(2)25,DM; HWM-(6)16,DM;
 SR-(50)17,JF
 Gull,Bonaparte's: HI-(600)5,DM; BF-(2)7,DM; GC-(1)9,MH
 Gull,Ring-billed: 11 reports (1-240;602)
 Gull,Herring: 6 reports (1-18;36)
 Tern,Gull-billed: 8 reports 11th thru 26th (2-10;30)
 Tern,Caspian: 8 reports (1-24;47)
 Tern,Royal: 7 reports (10-200;452)
 Tern,Sandwich: BF-(20)7,DM; GC-(1)9,MH; Bolv-(3)18,UP;
 JC-(20)26,RMB
 Tern,Common: BF-(5)25,DM
 Tern,Forster's: 10 reports (1-185;290)
 Tern,Least: 10 reports (1-500;688)
 Tern,Black: SO-(10)17,DM
 Skimmer,Black: WGI-(30)5,RU; EG-(615)7,DM; SO-(4)17,DM
 Dove,Rock: 7 reports (1-25;67)
 Turtle-Dove,Ringed: NWH-(6)1-30,VL; WU-(1)4,LP;
 Bellaire-(4)16,DM
 Dove,White-winged: Galv-(8-10)-30,JJH; HI-(1)13,DM
 Dove,Mourning: 19 reports (1-100;254)
 Dove,Inca: 12 reports (1-50;105)
 Cuckoo,Black-billed: HI-(1)22,23,28,DM;
 Bellaire-(1)27,MJ
 Cuckoo,Yellow-billed: 8 reports 22nd-28th (1-8;22)
 Roadrunner,Greater: Alvin-(1)11-15,JCav (Notes, ed.)
 Ani,Groove-billed: 7 reports (1-4;15)
 Barn-Owl,Common: 5 reports (1-3;10)
 Algoa-(1)1-15,DW (See CH Editor's Notes);
 HI-(3)22,23,(1)29,DM; Bolv-(2)25,DM
 Screech-Owl,Eastern: Algoa-(2)1-30,DW (See CH Editor's
 Notes); WOB-(1)26,WC
 Owl,Great Horned: LC-(1)25,DM
 Owl,Barred: Manvel-(1)1,RU; BBSP-(10)9,DM; LC-(2)25,DM;
 Algoa-(1)27,DW
 Nighthawk,Common: 12 reports (1-14;47)
 Chuck-will's-widow: Algoa-(1)5,15,DM; HWM-(2)16,DM;
 HI-(2)23,DM
POORWILL,COMMON: BHV-(1 h)11,MBM (Notes, ed.)
 Swift,Chimney: 10 reports (3-150;272)
 Hummingbird,Ruby-throated: 17 reports (1-30;107)
 Kingfisher,Belted: 18 reports (1-5;30)
 Woodpecker,Red-headed: 7 reports (1-8;21)
 Woodpecker,Red-bellied: 10 reports (1-16;48)
 Sapsucker,Yellow-bellied: HI-(3)4,(1)13,18,22,DM
 Woodpecker,Downy: 9 reports (1-6;24)
 Woodpecker,Hairy: CC-(1)11,HV
 Flicker,Northern: JC-(2)9,MH
 Woodpecker,Pileated: 9 reports (1-10;31)
 Flycatcher,Olive-sided: HI-(1)28,DM
 Wood-Pewee,Eastern: 11 reports 13th-29th (1-8;28)
 HI-(2)13,(1)17,22,(3)18,23,(5)28,(8)29,DM;
 (1)26,MA;(1)29,JB; JC-(2)26,RMB; WMP-(1)26,MA
 Flycatcher,Acadian: 5 reports (1-6;12)
 HI-(1)15,(6)16,BDW;(2)17,23,DM;(1)26,MA
 Flycatcher,Traill's-type: WU-(1)30,LP (Notes, ed.)
 Empidonax,sp.: 6 reports (1-3;9)
 HI-(1)12,BMA;(2)18,(3)29,JB; Algoa-(1)17,19,22,DW
 Flycatcher,Great Crested: 13 reports (1-4;24)
 Kingbird,Western: Bolv-(1)16,MK (Notes, ed.);
 SWH-(1)20,26,BH
 Kingbird,Eastern: 17 reports (2-65;362)
 Flycatcher,Scissor-tailed: 12 reports (1-45;109)
 Lark,Horned: Bolv-(2)11,HV; SO-(5)17,DM; BF-(2)23,GBG
 Martin,Purple: 10 reports (1-26;90)
 Swallow,Tree: 9 reports (2-750;1228) inc. JC-(750)26,RMB
 Swallow,Northern Rough-winged: CC-(6)9,MH;(3)26,MA;
 SJSP-(1)14,DM
 Swallow,Bank: WHC-(4)18,WC; HI-(1)26,MA
 Swallow,Cliff: OYCr-(40)19,RU;(25)19,BH; FBC-(150)21,DM
 Swallow,Barn: 10 reports (1-50;93)
 Jay,Blue: 13 reports (1-20;79)
 Crow,American: 13 reports (1-80;155)
 Crow,Field: JC-(1)9,MH;(2)26,RMB
 Chickadee,Carolina: 8 reports (1-60;90)
 Titmouse,Tufted: 9 reports (1-40;83)
 Nuthatch,Brown-headed: King-(1)4,19,JB; CC-(2)26,MA
 Wren,Carolina: 12 reports (1-30;83)
 Wren,House: 7 reports (1-4;17)
 HI-(1)74,(2)5,13,DM;(1 h)25,RP (Notes, ed.);
 CC-(3)11,HV;(4)12,DM; HWM-(3)16,DM; WGI-(2)16,JJH
 Wren,Sedge: 5 reports (1-12;20)
 AB-(1)8,DM; ANWR-(3)9,MH;(12)13,DM;(1)26,MA;
 SO-(3)17,DM
 Wren,Marsh: 5 reports (1-15;30)
 ANWR-(1)5,(15)13,DM;(7)9,MH;(2)12,BMA; BBSP-(5)9,DM
 Kinglet,Ruby-crowned: 13 reports (1-35;110)
 HI-(30)4,(10)13,(4)17,(1)22,DM;(1)16,BDW;(1)26,RMB;
 (1)26,MA; AB-(12)8,DM; BBSP-(35)9,DM; Algoa-(1)10,DW;
 HWM-(10)16,(2)27,DM; WOB-(2)17,WC
 Gnatcatcher,Blue-gray: 18 reports (1-90;211)
 Bluebird,Eastern: CC-(1)12,(2)25,DM
 Veery: 13 reports 16th thru 29th (1-68;183)
 Thrush,Gray-cheeked: 11 reports 17th-29th (1-60;179)
 Thrush,Swainson's: 23 reports 13th-30th (1-62;363)
 Thrush,Hermit: 5 reports (1-5;10)
 Thrush,Wood: 25 reports (1-80;318)
 Robin,American: Pasadena-(2)1,DM; NWH-(2-10)1-5,VL;
 BBSP-(1)9,DM; HI-(1)17,DM
 Catbird,Gray: 23 reports only (1) before 13th (1-55;223)
 Mockingbird,Northern: 16 reports (1-40;148)
 Thrasher,Brown: 11 reports (1-10;23)
 Pipit,Water: FBC-(3)9,DM; ANWR-(1)9,MH
 Waxwing,Cedar: 18 reports (1-150;465)
 Shrike,Loggerhead: 14 reports (2-40;145)
 Starling,European: 17 reports (2-50;312)
 Vireo,White-eyed: 29 reports (1-50;311)
VIREO,BELL'S: WU-(1)15-16,WJR (Notes, ed.)

Vireo, Solitary: 15 reports (1-5;33)
 Vireo, Yellow-throated: 23 reports (1-12;87)
 Vireo, Warbling: 6 reports (1-8;20)
 HI-(8)16, BDW: (3)17, (2)18, 29, DM; (4)29, JB;
 ANWR-(1)25, RT
 Vireo, Philadelphia: HI-(1)22, (5)29, DM
 Vireo, Red-eyed: 23 reports (1-100;582)
VIREO, BLACK-WHISKERED: HI-(1)4, RT; 4, 5, DM (Notes, ed.)
WARBLER, BACHMAN'S (7): HI-(1)26, MA
 (See "Mystery Warbler" Notes, ed.)
 Warbler, Blue-winged: 17 reports 13th-29th (1-10;66)
 HI-(7)13, (6)17, (8)18, (2)22, (6)23, (4)28, 29, DM;
 (5)15, (10)16, BDW: (1)18, JB; (1)26, MA; WGI-(5)16,
 (1)21, JJJ; Galv-(3)17, JJJ; WU-(1)18, LP;
 WOB-(1)26, (1 hybrid)20, WC (Notes, ed.)
 Warbler, Golden-winged: 9 reports (1-4;16)
 HI-(2)16, BDW; (4)18, (1)23, 28, (2)29, DM; (1)26, MA;
 WOB-(1)26, WC; HWM-(3)27, DM; WU-(1)30, LP
 (Warbler, Brewster's): HI-(1)24, WH (Notes, ed.)
 Warbler, Tennessee: 21 reports 4th-29th (1-6;308)
 HI-(1)4, (5)13, (30)17, (35)18, (60)22, (40)23, (25)28,
 (50)29, DM; (8)15, (6)16, BDW; (4)18, JB; (1)26, MA;
 (8)26, MA; WOB-(1)14, WC; Bolv-(12)25, DM; SWH-(1)25, PM;
 JC-(4)26, RMB; WU-(3)26, LP; (1)27, LP; (1)28, LP;
 HWM-(12)27, DM
 Warbler, Orange-crowned: 5 reports (1-4;11)
 HI-(1)4, (4)13, DM; AB-(2)8, DM; BBSP-(3)9, DM;
 WOB-(1)18, WC
 Warbler, Nashville: 5 reports (1-2;8)
 HI-(1)15, (2)16, BDW; HWM-(2)16, DM; SO-(1)17, DM;
 WOB-(2)17, WC
 Parula, Northern: 18 reports (1-22;121)
 Warbler, Yellow: 13 reports 18th-29th (1-15;63)
 HI-(2)16, (1)22, (15)25, (5)28, (14)29, DM; (1)18, (2)29, JB;
 (2)26, RMB; (1)26, MA; SWH-(1)25, PM; JC-(15)26, RMB;
 ANWR-(3)26, MA; HWM-(1)27, DM
 Warbler, Chestnut-sided: 11 reports 18th-29th (1-10;33)
 HI-(1)18, (2)22, (6)23, (4)28, (10)29, DM; (1)26, MA;
 (1)29, RT; (2)29, JB; WU-(1)20, LP; WOB-(1)26, WC;
 HWM-(4)27, DM
 Warbler, Magnolia: HI-(1)23, (2)29, DM; WOB-(1)30, WC
 Warbler, Cape May: HI-(1)18, DM
 Warbler, Yellow-rumped: 21 reports, only 3 individuals
 after 21th (1-105;354)
 Warbler, Black-throated Green: 13 reports (1-35;91)
 Warbler, Blackburnian: 9 reports (1-16;56)
 HI-(1)17, (14)22, (16)23, (5)25, (13)28, (3)29, DM;
 (1)29, JB; JC-(1)26, RMB; ANWR-(2)26, MA
 Warbler, Yellow-throated: 10 reports (1-7;24)
 HI-(7)4, (1)13, 22, 23, (4)17, (5)18, DM; (1)16, BDW;
 WGI-(1)16, JJJ; ANWR-(2)18, UP; BBSP-(1)24, GG
 Warbler, Pine: 9 reports (1-7;30)
 Warbler, Palm: ANWR-(1)18, UP; HI-(1)23, DM
 Warbler, Bay-breasted: 9 reports (1-10;33)
 HI-(2)16, BDW; (10)22, (5)23, 28, (2)25, 29, DM; (1)26, MA;
 ANWR-(4)25, RT; HWM-(2)27, DM
 Warbler, Blackpoll: 6 reports (1-2;9)
 HI-(1)15, BDW; (1)22, (2)23, 25, 28, DM; (1)29, JB
 Warbler, Cerulean: HWM-(1)16, DM
 Warbler, Black-and-white: 20 reports (1-24;154)
 Redstart, American: 13 reports, only 1 individual before
 16th (1-13;35)
 Warbler, Prothonotary: 19 reports (1-8;56)
 Warbler, Worm-eating: 23 reports (1-25;114)
 HI-(3)4, 25, (6)13, (25)17, (13)18, (5)22, (11)23, (2)28,
 (10)29, DM; (1)12, BMA; (4)15, (15)16, BDW; (3)18, (1)29, JB;
 (1)18, UP; (2)26, MA; Bolv-(1)11, HV; WGI-(1)16, JJJ;
 WOB-(1)18, WC; Algoa-(1)21, 27, DM; JC-(1)26, RMB;
 HWM-(3)27, DM
 Warbler, Swainson's: 13 reports 15th-28th (1-10;36)
 Ovenbird: 18 reports 5th-29th, with only 2 individuals
 before 13th (1-50;193)
 Waterthrush, Northern: 12 reports 13th-29th (1-8;39)
 Waterthrush, Louisiana: 12 reports (1-4;22)
 HI-(2)4, 17, 28, (1)5, 22, 23, (3)13, DM; (1)9, MH; (1)12, BMA;
 (2)15, (4)16, BDW; BBSP-(2)9, DM
 Warbler, Kentucky: 19 reports (1-30;122)
 Warbler, Mourning: WOB-(1)26, WC
 Yellowthroat, Common: 22 reports (1-20;99)
 Warbler, Hooded: 28 reports (1-50;268)
 Warbler, Canada: HI-(1)17, (5)29, DM; WOB-(1)25, WC
 Chat, Yellow-breasted: 17 reports 16th-30th (1-10;48)
 Tanager, Summer: 28 reports (1-38;257)
 Tanager, Scarlet: 27 reports 5th-29th, with only 1
 individual before 9th (1-60;463)
 Tanager, Western: PP-(1)26, NB
 Cardinal, Northern: 17 reports (1-90;219)
 Grosbeak, Rose-breasted: 21 reports 15th-29th (1-60;259)
 Grosbeak, Blue: 15 reports 15th-29th (1-20;91)
 Bunting, Indigo: 22 reports 4th-29th, only 7 individuals
 before 13th (2-120;762)
 Bunting, Painted: 10 reports 16th-29th (1-5;17)
 Dickcissel: 10 reports 18th-27th (1-50;105)
 Sparrow, Chipping: Manvel-(1)1, RU; WOB-(1)17, WC
 Sparrow, Clay-colored: WGI-(1)17, WJR (Notes, ed.)
 Sparrow, Lark: HI-(1)25, DM
 Sparrow, Savannah: 13 reports (1-40;158)
 Sparrow, Le Conte's: AB-(1)8, DM; SO-(1)17, DM
 Sparrow, Sharp-tailed: BF-(14)7, DM

Sparrow, Seaside: 5 reports (1-25;54)
 BNWR-(1)4, CM; BF-(3)7, DM; ANWR-(5)9, MH; (25)13, DM;
 HI-(20)18, UP
 Sparrow, Lincoln's: 11 reports (1-3;13)
 Sparrow, Swamp: 10 reports (1-10;30)
 ANWR-(10)5, (3)12, 13, DM; (1)9, MH; (3)18, UP; (1)26, MA;
 AB-(4)8, DM; BBSP-(3)9, DM; Bolv-(1)11, HV; CC-(1)11, HV
 Sparrow, White-throated: 7 reports (1-6;19)
 Blackbird, Red-winged: 13 reports (10-300;1535)
 Meadowlark, Eastern: 11 reports (1-19;76)
 Blackbird, Yellow-headed: WGI-(1)10, RT
 Blackbird, Brewer's: FBC-(2)21, DM
 Grackle, Great-tailed: 12 reports (2-50;319)
 Grackle, Boat-tailed: 8 reports (1-50;156)
 Grackle, Common: 10 reports (1-20;62)
 Cowbird, Brown-headed: 11 reports (1-200;327)
 Oriole, Orchard: 19 reports (1-110;302)
 Oriole, Northern: 16 reports (1-40;108)
 Siskin, Pine: BHV-(3-8)13-30, MBM (Present at feeder
 since February, ed.)
 Goldfinch, American: NWH-(2)1-6, VL; AB-(2)8, DM;
 WOB-(1)24, WC
 Sparrow, House: 13 reports (1-200;300)

The following reports, requiring details, were submitted
 without them:

Hermit Thrush: SWH-(1)25, 26, PM; Algoa-(1)29, DW
 Warbler, Black-throated Gray: Bellaire-(1)26, PMJ
 Magnolia Warbler: NWH-(1-2)1-5, VL (Early spring date)

CONTRIBUTORS - APRIL, 1987

BB=Bob Behrstock; BDW=BB, Jon Dunn, Wings Tour; BH=Bob
 Honig; BJH=Bill & Jean Harwell; BM=Barbara Milwee Fide
 MJ; BMA=JB, Mark Magruder; CM=Caroline Callery, Kendall
 Murphy; DM=Derek Muschalek; DW=Diane Wise; EMO=Ellen &
 M. L. Owens; GGG=GG, BB; GG=Linda Graetz, Saul & Ester
 Graetz; HOP=BH, Richard Orr, Frank Peace; HV=BH, Peter
 Vennema; JB=John Buckman; JC=Jerry Caraviotis; JCV=John
 Cavalier Fide DW; JF=Joe Farrell; JJJ=Jane & John
 Hamilton; LP=Libby Price; MA=Mike Austin; MBH=Mary Ann &
 Bob Moore; MH=Art Mackinnon, Dorothy Holmes; MJ=Margaret
 Jones; MK=Mark Kulstad; NB=Norma Barnes Fide MJ;
 PM=Peggy Hiltstead; PMJ=Paul & Margaret Jones; RMB=Ron &
 Marcia Braun; RP=Randy Pinston; RT=Robert Thacker;
 RU=Richard Uzar; UP=RU, Jean Palmquest; VL=Vanessa Luce;
 WC=Wesley Cureton; WH=Bill Harwell; WJR=Will & Jan
 Risser

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - APRIL, 1987

Red-throated Loon: 4/24/87 by William S. Harwell
 Loon found alone in Crash Basin at north end of 6-Mile
 Rd, across the road from N end of city golf course. In
 bright sunlight, at 40-50 yds. Observed for 30 min
 through 30X, & 60X Baiscopes. Bird did not dive during
 this time. A loon of smaller size & bulk than Common
 Loon. Bill most striking, in that it was smaller, & the
 upper & lower mandibles were asymmetric -- i.e., the
 upper margin on the upper mandible was straight, while
 the anterior lower margin of the lower mandible angled
 upward, giving the bill an "upturned" appearance.
 Forehead, crown, & back of neck, & back brownish gray.
 Brown on the head came down to the eye, but there was
 white about the eye. Lower face, chin, anterior throat,
 breast white. Did not see any white speckling on back.

Pacific Loon: 4/7/87 by Derek Muschalek
 AT Offats Bayou in Galveston. Feeding amongst a flock
 of Common Loons. Field marks noted: small straight
 bills; small heads with no peaked forehead; white throat
 & foreneck made sharp contrast with hind neck & throat;
 crown & nape much paler than back; no white showing
 around eye as in Common Loon. Overall much smaller than
 Common Loon, appearing more snake-like in water. Used
 60X Nikon ED at 200 yd for 35 min.

Pacific Loon: 4/10/87 by Robert P. Thacker
 Two birds much sleeker than up to 25 Common Loons among
 which the Pacific Loons were feeding. Had smaller bills
 than Common Loon. Bills held level. Profile from bill
 to top of head was sleek & "streamlined" as compared to
 the "block headed" Common Loons. Back of neck was paler
 gray than rest of bird. Neck was white in front, gray
 in back with a distinct line of demarcation between the
 front & back with no white & gray intermixing as in
 Common Loon. One bird showed a faint "chin strap" which
 was a faint line under the chin. Both birds smaller
 than Common Loons.

Brown Pelican: 4/23/87 by Bob Behrstock
 We (Bob, Linda, Sol, Ester Graetz) noted an imm. Brown
 Pelican in shallow water adjacent to the Bolivar Flats.
 Tide was low, time ~2 pm. Bird was observed in several
 scopes while it was ~500 ft distant. Characteristics
 noted included dull brown head, neck, back. Pale brown
 beneath, & pale blue skin at base of gular pouch, white
 body & long bill. All familiar with the species & huge
 Pelican as well.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK:

4/6/87 No April UTC Records
by Richard Uzar
2 Black ducks startled into brief flight from marsh along ferry road about 150m from landing. Showed white wing lining & deep violet speculum. Birds re-settled quickly at about 50m & immediately began swimming to place themselves behind grassed areas. Dark bodies, saw 1 mottled duck 1/2 hr earlier, suggested black duck. Also noted difference in bill coloration: 1 yellow the other green/yellow.

Swainson's Hawk (dark phase): 4/15/87 by Jerry Caravotis
I spotted this bird at about 4:00 p.m., just outside the city of Kendallton in Ft. Bend County. When I first saw the bird at a distance I thought it was a vulture. It flew in closer & I noticed that the undersides of the wings were totally dark & that the head was wide & feathered; the bird was a hawk. The whole underside of the bird was dark, about the color of dark chocolate. The tail appeared lighter in color, but dark at the end forming a dark terminal band. As I watched the bird I discovered it was flying in association with four other, light phase Swainson's Hawks. Compared to them it had the same morphology, including the long, tapered wings. The bird was observed with the unaided eye for over ten min at distances from directly overhead to almost out of sight.

Baird's Sandpiper:

4/3/87 by Derek Muschalek
The prettiest sandpiper in the USA! Occurs more regularly on the UTC than as indicated on current checklist. Field marks: a very long winged calidrid that appears to be stretched horizontally. Splotchy back pattern; golden-brown wash on head & breast, ending abruptly in pectoral region; black legs & bill; feeding on mud flats by picking not probing. The sun at my back made these birds almost glow like gold. I have nicknamed it the Golden-Hued Sandpiper. Seen at San Jacinto S.P. on both occasions for 1 hour with 60x Nikon ED.

Greater Roadrunner:

4/11-15/87 fide Diane Wise
Seen on April 11-15 on 3 acres extending to banks of Mustang Bayou in Alvin at private residence by John Cavalier. Bird was "brownish" with "feathers in good condition". Tail was normal size, but he felt bird in general was somewhat smaller than he is used to seeing at his daughter's near San Antonio. Crest was not raised, but it made "bobbing" motion with neck, & made "calling" noises. Bird was quite wary but ate scratch & other scraps. When frightened by dog, cat, or person getting too close, it ran to a brush pile. Seen repeatedly over 5-day period & photographed.

COMMON POORWILL:

NO ACCEPTED UTC RECORDS
APRIL 11, 1987 by Mary Ann & Bob Moore
Bird called twice outside bedroom window, then moved on behind the house (to the north) calling 9 or 10 times more, growing fainter in volume, then disappeared. We are familiar with the call, having heard it numerous times in Texas & Arizona.

'Traill's-type' Flycatcher:

4/30/87 by Libby Price
Emid seen flycatching in a live oak, never returning to the same perch. Gray head & back, definite brownish cast to tail & outer edge of greater wing coverts when perched. Wings short with two buffy wing-bars. Eyering at first not evident. In good light at 35 ft. a very thin one seen. Underparts very light overall, not yellowish, only slightly grayer on sides of throat & upper breast. Lower mandible was large, long, triangular & definitely orange. No tail-flipping seen. Did not vocalize. Observed off & on for 30 min with 7x35 binocs, 5:25-5:55 pm, 35-50 ft. Sunny, bird in sun once. I have spent an hour or two watching & listening to singing Willow Flycatchers in migration in San Jac. Co. 3 different years. I have not seen Alder to be sure of it (suspects were silent).

Western Kingbird:

Early spring arrival date is 4/21/50
4/16/87 by Mark Kulstad
Kingbird perched on wire with gray on throat & breast, yellow lower breast & belly. Clear thin white stripes on outer tail feathers showed as tail was spread in flight. Rear lighting, ca. 40 yds, 10X binocs & 22X Spacemaster, ca. 1 min.

House Wren:

4/25/87 by Randy Pinkston
Peter Vennema & I heard the familiar fuss notes of a House Wren in Smith Oaks Sanctuary. As for myself, I am very familiar with these calls from several winters' birding on the UTC. We heard it only once & never saw the bird, though we made no attempt to see it.

NOTICE

The Piney Woods Wildlife Society, sponsors of the Texas Coast Rare Bird Alert, wish to state that, contrary to any rumor you may have heard, the Rare Bird Alert is active, and has been all along, so keep calling to give and get reports. 821-2846

BELL'S VIREO:

4/15-16/87 VAGRANT - 5 Accepted UTC Records
by Will Risser
Superficially like a ruby-crowned kinglet, but longer & slimmer-looking, with a longer tail & a thicker, longer bill. More active than a red-eyed vireo, but less active than most warblers, pausing for a few seconds frequently while feeding. Less active than a kinglet. Never vocalized. Foraged in lower & middle branches of a large oak tree. Length about 5 inches. Slightly smaller than Yellow-rumped warbler. Pileum, hindneck, & sides of head gray; narrow but obvious complete dull white eye ring around dark eye. Narrow dull white supraloral stripe from eye ring to bill. Back, scapulars olive-gray. Tail & wings dark brown. Wings with two narrow, dull-white wingbars; lower one was more conspicuous. Underparts pale yellow, especially obvious on flanks, sides, undertail coverts, & center of breast. Throat paler yellow. Olive wash making center of chest darker, except for very narrow central yellowish line. Wing linings pale yellow. Upper mandible dark brown, with paler lower mandible, especially at base. When seen from side, bill slightly thicker than that of most warblers. Bill noticeably broad at base when seen from below. Legs gray. Seen briefly on 4/15; studied for 30 min on 4/16 feeding in tree at distances of 10-30 ft. Seen in sun (side-lighting) & in bright shadow. binocs 10x40 Zeiss Dialytics. Weather sunny, calm.

BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO:

VAGRANT - 2 Accepted UTC Records
4/4/87 by Robert P. Thacker
In general, appearance of a Red-eyed Vireo with 2 black whisker marks. On first observation, bird appeared larger than Red-eyed Vireo. Bill was vireo shaped, grayish crown, white eyebrow, dark reddish eye, black eyeliner, dark black whisker on each side of throat, whiskers appeared broader toward lower throat, breast whitish, vent & undertail area pale yellowish wash over white, back dark olive green. Bird observed on April 4 & 5th, 1987 in Smith Woods for a total time of 2 & 1/2 hrs. Bird always associated with about 5 Red-eyed Vireos. Three observers who were familiar with this species in Florida agreed this was a Black-whiskered Vireo.

4/4/87

by Derek Muschalek
Found by Mark Magruder, along with Don & Dave Ryan at 11:15. Later (1 hr) seen by Rob Thacker, who showed the bird to me & Tommy Michael. The bird was then showed to Ron & Carol Bookout & Bob & Lynn Forster. On Sunday

April 5, the bird was verified by David & Jan Dauphin & Gary Clark.
Habitat: hackberry & oak motte at Smith Oaks. Behavior: foraging slowly & deliberately with a small flock of Red-eyed Vireos. Weather: clear skies; frost early in the morning! Description: a very large Vireo with an olive back. No wing bars. Blue-gray crown. White eyebrow bordered above & below with black. Ruby red eye visible in good light. Bold black whisker present on each side of throat. Whitish underparts with an indistinct yellowish wash on sides & flanks. Very large, heavy bill, somewhat thicker than Red-eyed, when in direct comparison. The black whisker "marks" eliminate Red-eyed Vireo, Yucatan Vireo, & Yellow Green Vireo. Used 10x50 binocs from 10' to 60' for 3 hours in fair to excellent light.

Mystery Warbler:

No Accepted UTC Records for Bachman's Warbler
4/26/87 by Mike Austin
Warblers are my favorite family of birds. I've been watching spring migrant warblers for 30 yrs, now, & have seen all N. Am. species except 1 (probably), but have never seen a bird like that on April 25. At about 1:15 pm, James Beard & I were approaching the N end of the drainage ditch at Smith Oaks Sanctuary at High Island when we observed a small, active warbler in the crown of a budding oak. We were directly under the bird which was partially back-lit. We observed it for perhaps 10-15 sec. each, BUT...
The bird appeared to be pale yellow on the face & from chin to vent. When first observed it was preening & appeared to have a black crescent-shaped patch on the upper breast. It had a thin, decurved bill with some flesh color on the lower mandible. I quickly moved to a position directly under the bird & thought I saw fine flank streaks. Jim & I could not agree on this point but independently remarked on the unusual breast smudge. The bird moved quickly to another oak, gave a short, high pitched "chip" & departed. An hour of frantic, intensive searching failed to turn up the bird. We were both flabbergasted & exasperated, & very loathe even to suggest we might have observed N. Am.

rarest songbird. What was it -- a moulting female Hooded (why in the top of an oak), a preening Canada which had just bathed (why the yellow face) or Magnolia under the same circumstances? We never saw the dorsal surface of the bird which would, of course, have narrowed the possibilities. The bill seemed too heavy & flesh-colored for the rare bird, yet an article in the May, 1982 *American Birds* depicts marked plumage variation in male Bachman's Warbler not depicted in standard field guides. Was it a hybrid of some sort perhaps? Or just an all yellow bird, preening after a bath with the dark base to its yellow breast feathering exposed? I guess it's an unanswered question I'll take with me to my grave! But, maybe, just MAYBE...

Hybrid Warbler: 4/20/87 by Wesley Cureton
This bird was almost completely like a bluewing, except that its wings were solid in color, with no wingbars. The song, although buzzy, was quite different from a bluewing's, so that I didn't recognize it until I saw the bird.

Brewster's Warbler: 4/24/87 by William S. Harwell
This bird was seen in low bushes along back fence (north east corner) of Smith Oaks woods, just above eye-level, at about 12-15 ft, in filtered sunlight, with 8x40 binocs, for less than 1 min. It had a yellow forehead & anterior half of the crown, the posterior half gray. The face was gray, with a black lore-line. Body & wings gray: light yellow wing-bars. This bird (I doubt another one) was later caught in a mist-net set up by a man from Orange, Tex. I don't know his name. The bird was photographed (not by me).

Clay-colored Sparrow: 4/17/87 by Will Risser
Clean-looking small sparrow, 5-6 inches long. Crown finely streaked with black, with lighter central stripe. Nape & sides of neck gray. Broad buffy white superciliary & malar stripes; brown ear patch distinctly bordered with dark brown. Back, scapulars, & rump buffy brown; back & scapulars streaked with black. Tail moderately long & notched. Wings brown with two narrow whitish wingbars. Underparts white washed on breast & sides with buff. Seen in sun with sun behind observer for 5-10 min at 10-20 ft with 10x40 Zeiss Dialyte binocs on Nottingham Ranch Rd., Galveston Island.

CH EDITOR'S NOTES - APRIL, 1987

OWL FEVER:

Diane Wise sent the following observations concerning her nesting owls:

"Barn Owl - In box daily until 10th. Left box on first of extremely hot days. Returned on 15th when cooled off. Left again when record breaking temps began. Seen once in tree on 19th. Since we had babies in this box last year, am assuming heat disrupted nesting."

"Screech Owl - Two adults, seen daily 1st-25th. Female in nest fox & male in small tree about 20' away. Male disappeared on 26th. Female hangs half way out of house several times a day & appears to 'pant'. She leaves box each night about 8. At this time I can hear several chicks if I climb close on a ladder. The box is recommended size for screech owls, but it must be stifling with mother & several babies in there at once in this unusual heat! Am afraid to open box to actually count for fear of disturbing/hurting them."

OH, THOSE MYSTERY WADERS!

The following from Mike Austin is just one of two unusual birds he saw in April:
"Orangeshank: James Beard, my birding companion on April 25th, first spotted this unusual wader in a muddy ricefield on the west side of TX 124 about one mile north of FM 1941. I then set up the Questar & we took turns watching the bird from first 200 yd., then 300 yd in perfect light with the 40x eyepiece. What was unusual about the bird was the body & leg color. The back, nape & crown were dark chocolate brown with a hint of golden speckling to the wing coverts. The underparts were pale buff except the flanks & undertail coverts which were orangish-buff. There was faint flank streaking, vertical & blackish. The legs were a deep orange. The bill was straight & black. The bird was markedly darker than adjacent Greater Yellowlegs in the same scope field, both above being deep brown rather than pale gray & below, being buffy orange rather than white. The bird flushed once, while we were changing places with the scope, gave a strident "kew-kew-kew" call & apparently showed no striking white rump or tail. Structurally, the bird was pure Greater Yellowlegs. Compared to Spotted Redshank (I've seen one) it was chunkier overall with a much shorter, straighter, thicker bill. I guess it could best be called a melanistic Greater Yellowlegs. Makes me wonder about the mystery wader seen in W. Harris Co. in Jan., 1984. Was it such a bird?"

ORNITHOLOGY GROUP (Outdoor Nature Club)
c/o Peggy Milstead
10810 Burdine
Houston, Texas 77096

(RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED)

SOLICITED MAIL
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY

Nonprofit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Houston, Texas
Permit No. 1063