



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME XXII, NO. 5
SEPTEMBER, 1973

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

NEWS FLASH:

Possibly due to the unsettled weather, a Black-throated Gray Warbler was sighted on September 9th at Brannon's Woods, near the barn area, on High Island, by Noel Pettingell, Elric McHenry, and Ben Feltner.

NOW IS THE TIME TO KEEP YOUR EYES TO THE SKIES

Recent sightings include Mississippi Kites, Broad-winged Hawks, and Swainson's Hawks, and probably many more that have not been reported to us. Looks like fall migration is upon us!

REPORT ON THE NEW CHECKLIST

Noel Pettingell is working on the new checklist, and has reported that the preliminary work is finished, with the main part drawn up, and the accidentals are the next to be worked on. The main list came out to 332 species (the last checklist had 319), and it will include the new AOU changes, but will indicate the subspecies in parentheses. It will probably be ready for publication towards the end of the year.

.....AND MORE ABOUT THE RINGED TURTLE DOVES - by Margaret Jones

We are, by bits and pieces and hook and crook, finding out more about our Bellaire colony of Ringed Turtle Doves. It seems, according to Johnnie Fay Barnette, who did some detective work for me, that a neighbor of hers raised these birds in cages in his back yard. But, when he moved out of the state this spring, he released the birds. How many, we don't know. But, at least twelve birds have been seen recently, including five immatures, also two nests; so they must be in the process of establishing themselves in the wild. Just today, Sept. 2, we saw a female on the same nest where Marilyn Crane, Paul and I had seen a fledgling a week or so earlier. A pair of adults with an immature also were seen today in the vicinity of a second nest across the street. The two nests were both in Catalpa trees. These nests can be easily seen from the street; however, we believe there are others, perhaps in trees in back yards that we don't know about.

With the Bristers and Sarah Gordon we saw ten birds today, including several immatures. The bill and the back-of-the-neck ring are very black on the adult birds, while the bill of the immature is a dusky red and the ring is smudged and not clearly defined.

Apparently this is the first nesting here in the wild and it is going to be interesting to see what the next year brings. We are hoping that since these doves were reportedly raised in outdoor cages they will be acclimated and survive our winter. There are a number of people in that area that put out wild bird seed in feeders so the feeding problem should be minor.

CLEARING HOUSE, AUGUST, 1973

- Pelican, White:
(40)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Frigatebird, Magnificent:
(4)5, Galveston, "Rail Road", VE&DHH
- Heron, Great Blue:
(35)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Heron, Green:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Heron, Little Blue:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Egret, Cattle:
(50p)24, Chambers Co., RB &PJ
- Egret, Great (Common):
(14)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Egret, Snowy:
(50p)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Heron, Louisiana:
(25p)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Nightheron, Black-crowned:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Nightheron, Yellow-crowned:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Bittern, Least:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Stork, Wood:
(50p)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Ibis, White-faced:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Ibis, White:
(12)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Spoonbill, Roseate:
(26)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Treduck, Fulvous:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Duck, Mottled:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Pintail:
(50p)26, West Harris Co., DHH
- Teal, Blue-winged:
(6)24, Chambers Co., DHH
- Shoveler, Northern (Shoveler):
(2)26, West Harris Co., DHH
- Vulture, Turkey:
(15)24, Chambers Co., DHH
- Kite, Mississippi:
(6-10)26, 28, yard, DHH: (10)25,
River Oaks, San Felipe & Timber-
lane, JR
- Bobwhite:
(12)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Rail, Clapper:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Gallinule, Purple:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Gallinule, Common:
(15)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Coot, American:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Plover, Semipalmated:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Kildeer:
(10p)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Curlew, Long-billed:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Sandpiper, Spotted:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Willet:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Yellowlegs sp.:
(10)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Dowitcher sp:
(40p)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Sanderling:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Stilt, Black-necked:
(25)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Gull, Herring:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Gull, Laughing:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Tern, Gull-billed:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Tern, Forster's:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Tern, Royal:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Tern, Caspian:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Tern, Black:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Dove, Mourning:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- DOVE, RINGED TURTLE:
(9)18, Bellaire, RB&PJ
- Cuckoo, Yellow-billed:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Nighthawk, Common:
(10)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Kingfisher, Belted:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Woodpecker, Red-bellied:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Woodpecker, Red-headed:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Woodpecker, Hairy:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Woodpecker, Downy:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Kingbird, Eastern:
(14)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Wood Pewee, Eastern:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Flycatcher, Olive-sided:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Swallow, Rough-winged:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Swallow, Barn:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Jay, Blue:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Crow, Common:
(6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Chickadee, Carolina:
(12)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ;
(2)all month, Bellaire, P&MJ
- Titmouse, Tufted:
(4)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Wren, Carolina:
(2)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ;
(1)all month, Bellaire, P&MJ
- Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray:
(12)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Shrike, Loggerhead:
(NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Vireo, Red-eyed:
(1)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
- Warbler, Pine:
(5)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ

Meadowlark, Eastern:
 (NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
 Blackbird, Redwinged:
 (NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
 Grackle, Boat-tailed:
 (NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
 Grackle, Common:
 (NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ

Cowbird, Brown-headed:
 (NC-many)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
 Cardinal:
 (6)24, Chambers Co., RB&PJ
 SPARROW, HENSLOW'S:
 (5)5, Mykawa Rd., P&MJ; (8)3,9,
 (20)12, (3)15, (12)22, (7)31, SE
 Houston, NP-see notes

CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

VE Victor Emanuel
 RB&PJ Ron Bobowski and Paul Jones (Ron is a visitor from Canada and went birding for the day to Cove, White Memorial Park, Anahuac Refuge, High Island, and Bolivar)
 P&MJ Paul & Margaret Jones
 DHH Dan H. Hardy
 NP Noel Pettingell
 JR Jeanne Rutherford

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: All observations within same area as described in Aug. 1973 SPOONBILL, pp. 7-8. Most of the birds were adult males heard singing "sis-lick!" But on Aug. 12 immatures were observed uttering white-throat-like "tseet" calls. Apparently this is a resident population overlooked in previous years as 27 birds were heard singing by this observer on Sept. 1 (prior to 1973 there were no known records of this species in the Upper Texas Coast Area in August or Sept.), indicating the birds will probably remain in this locality as long as it is left relatively undisturbed. Henslow's Sparrows breeding to the north of Texas have never been known to arrive in our area until after the 3rd week of October. ---Noel Pettingell

Linda Snyder informs me of two items-

On July 26 an immature Jabiru was given to Linda Snyder by a man in Houston. It died on July 27 and the skin is at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. She has checked with local zoos and it appears probable that the Jabiru is wild.

An exhausted Sooty Tern was picked up in Bacliff on September 5 and given to Linda. The bird was banded, apparently in the Dry Tortugas. Details on these birds forthcoming.

TO REMEMBER ON YOUR STATE PARKS VISITS:

The following letter was received from Sim Oefinger, Jr., biologist, Interpretation & Exhibits Branch, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department:

"I am presently compiling sighting records for the purpose of printing individual park checklists. Records of sightings will be most helpful if they contain sighting dates, sighting locations (park only), relative frequency, abundance, and nesting occurrence. However, lists of sightings by park with dates only can be of help, especially when a number of lists are accumulated.

Eventually I hope to have bird lists in all appropriate parks, so sightings from any park will be used. The following is a list of state parks that I am developing checklists on now: Bastrop/Buescher, Fort Parker, Mother Neff, Hueco Tanks, Lyndon B. Johnson, Garner, Palo Duro Canyon, San Jacinto, Palmetto, Possum Kingdom, Lake Corpus Christi, and Huntsville.

Obviously some of these parks are quite far from the Houston area, but there may be a few individuals in your group who can help out anyway. Aid from interested birders such as yourselves is very helpful, if not essential, to developing park checklists. Whatever help you can supply will be greatly appreciated and put to the fullest use." The address is: Mr. Sim Oefinger, Jr., Biologist, Interpretation & Exhibits Branch, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, John H. Reagan Building, Austin, Texas 78701.

COMING EVENTS

- Saturday
September 29 OG Field Trip. Steve Williams will lead a trip to East Galveston, Bolivar Flats, and High Island. Meet at the east end of the Galveston Seawall at 8 A. M. Bring lunch and insect repellent.
- Tuesday
October 2 Regular Photography Group meeting - 7:30 P.M., Bayou Manor Auditorium. Miss Dorothy Sorrells will present a slide show based on her recent tour of Russia. Remembering the quality of her previous shows is assurance enough that we have a good program in store.
- Wednesday
October 3 ONC Nature and Wildlife film - 8 P.M. at the auditorium of Great Southern Insurance's Building on Buffalo Speedway. Mr. John N. Booth will narrate "Golden Kingdoms of the Orient", an extensive travelogue including Java, Borneo, Bali, and Sumatra.
- Thursday
October 4 Regular OG Meeting - 7:30 P.M., Downtown Recreation Center. Dr. Frank Hsu and Dr. Pat Sullivan will present a program on "African Birds", showing slides of birds of East Africa.
- Sunday
October 7 OG Field Trip. Ben Feltner will lead a field trip to Anahuac and surrounding area. Meet at Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge at 8:00 A.M. Bring lunch and insect repellent.
- Sat. & Sun.,
Oct. 20 and 21 ONC Field Trip. Mrs. L. A. M. Barnette will lead the trip, "Beauties and Wildlife of the Colorado River," at Gorman Falls, San Saba County (near Bend, 15 mi. west of Lampasas.) The Barnettes recommend this charming spot on the Colorado River. Beautiful scenery, interesting and unusual animals and birds, shells in the river bed, fossils in the rocks - there is something of special interest to members of all ONC Groups. Contact Mrs. Barnette for details on lodging, meeting times, etc.
- Tuesday
November 6 Regular Photography Group meeting - 7:30 P.M., Bayou Manor Auditorium.
- Wednesday
November 7 Audubon Wildlife Film - 8 P.M., Music Hall. This film is entitled: "The Living Jungle."
- Saturday
November 17 Audubon Field Trip. Meet 8 A.M. at the Main Entrance to Palmetto State Park for a trip led by Fred Webster. As Palmetto is about 3 hours from Houston, you may want to stay in one of the good motels in Luling or Gonzales. Excellent pre-reading is Fred's chapter in OG's Good Birding Trips entitled "Fred Webster's Winter Nature Notes on Palmetto State Park." Bring lunch.
- Wednesday
November 28 ONC Nature and Wildlife film - 8 P.M. at the auditorium of Great Southern Insurance's Building on Buffalo Speedway. Mr. John Fowler will be your film guide to "Mexico's Sea of Cortez."
- Saturday
December 1 OG Field Trip. Arlie McKay will lead us to Chambers County and the Cove area. Meet at the roadside park on the north side of IH 10 just this side (west) of the Trinity River bridge at 8:00 A.M. Bring lunch and insect repellent.

WE LOSE ANOTHER VALUED MEMBER

It is with deep regret that we learned just before going to press of the death of Edna (Mrs. Henry T.) Fielding today, September 11, 1973. We understand she died peacefully in her sleep. All of those who were associated with Edna in her many activities will miss her deeply. The Outdoor Nature Club will be the poorer for her passing.

ITEMS ON THIS PAGE GLEANED FROM THE PHALAROPE, MIDLAND, TEXAS

TWO NEW BIG BEND BOOKS

Ro Wauer, familiar as the former Park Naturalist in Big Bend National Park, has published two books on Big Bend: BIRDS OF BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK AND VICINITY and NATURALIST'S BIG BEND.

The bird book is not an identification manual - any of the usual books provide all that is needed to identify Big Bend birds. What Ro's book offers is a complete listing of all birds ever seen in the park, giving their abundance, dates of arrival and departure, and where to find them in the park. He occasionally comments on the birds of nearby areas such as the Davis Mountains or Balmorhea Lake. There is a map locating all areas mentioned as well as a complete chapter discussing birding localities and what species are likely to be found at each one in various seasons. This book is as essential as a field guide for anyone visiting the Big Bend. It was published by the University of Texas press and sells for \$4.95.

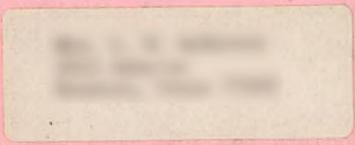
NATURALIST'S BIG BEND has chapters on trees and shrubs, wildflowers, cacti, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, fish, insects and other invertebrates. Such a small book cannot discuss all the flora and fauna of a land of such diversity, but most of the plants and animals that the non-specialist visitor is likely to notice are commented on. The book is illustrated with black and white photographs and a section of drawings of the most abundant plants. This book is \$3.65 and is available for Peregrine Productions, Box 5373, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 (postpaid).

The Lubbock Audubon Society has just published a new check list of the birds of Lubbock county. It was printed for them by the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce!! It is free for the asking. Just send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to CHECKLIST, 2518 38th St., Lubbock, Texas 79413. Like all check-lists, it was out of date as soon as published, for they promptly found a Black-crested Titmouse, a species not listed.

Hummingbird fanciers will be interested in the newsletter published by Woodsworld, 600 Olive Springs Road, Santa Cruz, California 95060. Free for the asking, it is full of "hummingbirding" ideas and news. But beware, they will tempt you with hummingbird feeders, a hummingbird pin, hummingbird note paper, hummingbird postcards, hummingbird scarves, and hummingbird books!



OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB
 (ORNITHOLOGY GROUP)
 1746 WROXTON COURT
 HOUSTON, TEXAS 77005
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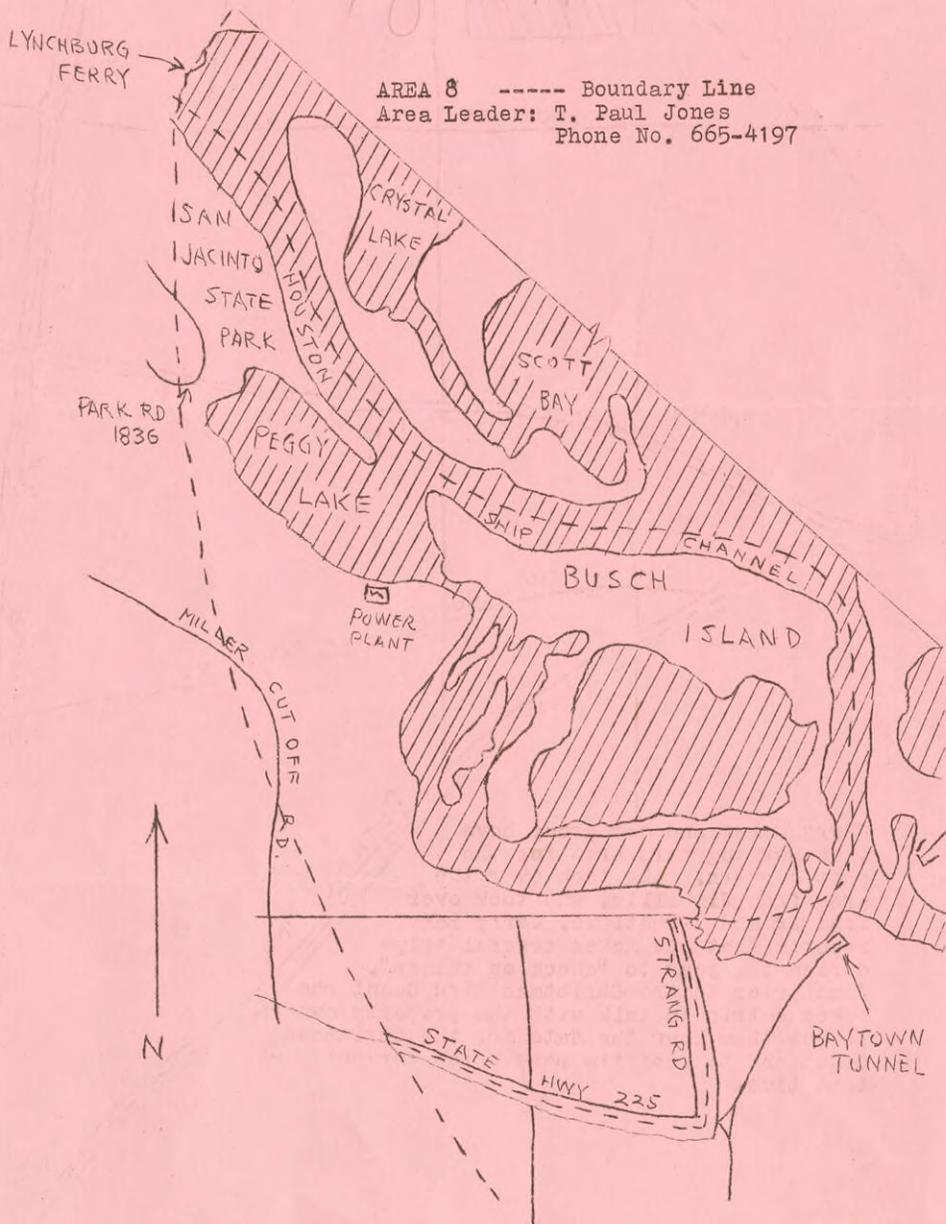
- Chairman: Miss Marilyn Crane, 3601 Allen Parkway, #214
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- Clearing-House: Mr. Dan Hardy, 10215 Chatterton,
Houston 77043 468-2748
- Rare Bird Alert: Mrs. L.W. (Margaret) Anderson, 2913 Amherst,
Houston 77005 668-6405

MORE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT AREA MAPS

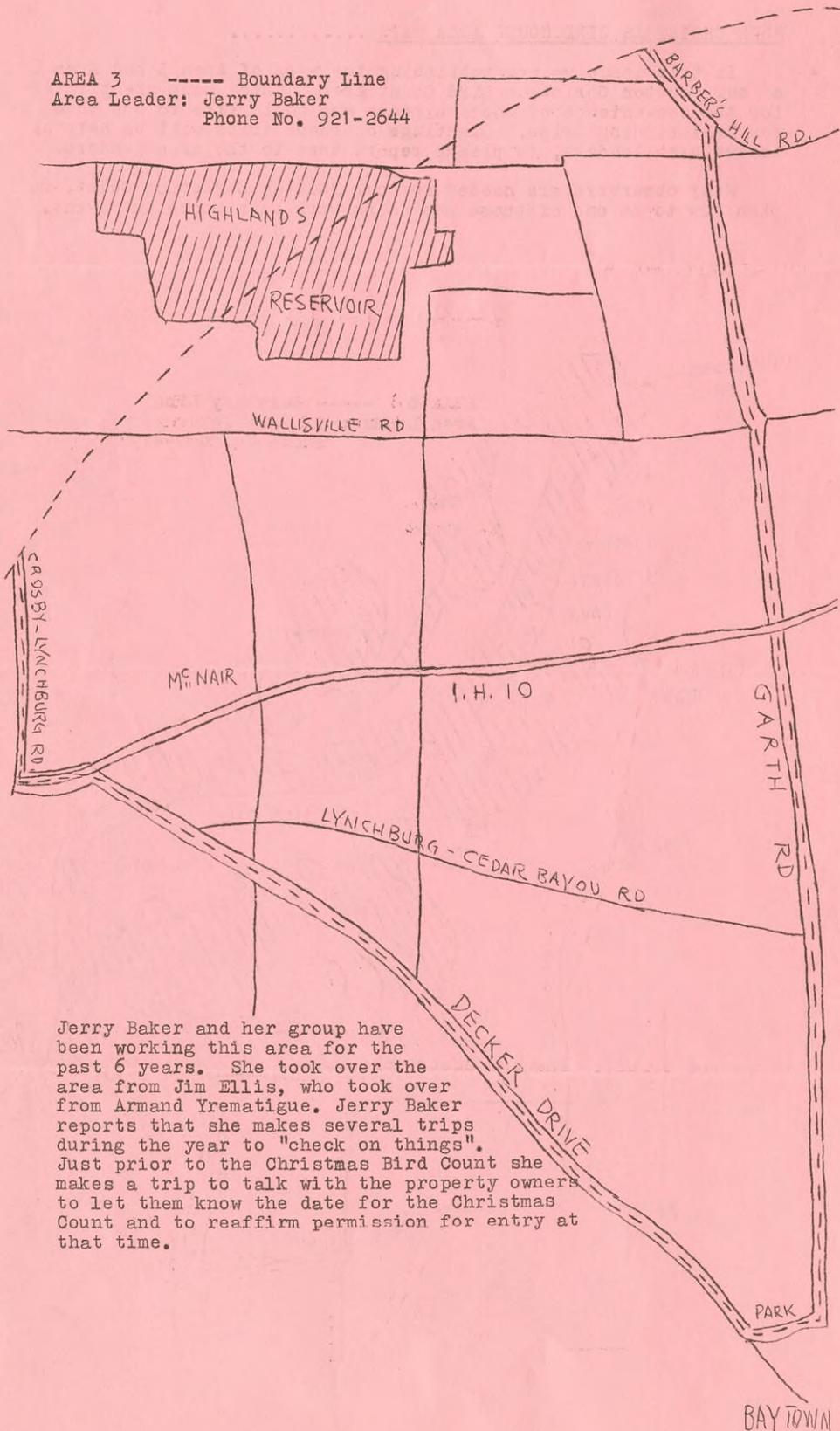
In this issue we are publishing the maps of Area 3 and Area 8 of our Houston Christmas Bird Count Area. These maps are printed for the convenience of those birders who would like to use them for Fall birding trips. Sightings on these trips will be helpful to the area leaders, so please report them to the area leaders.

Many observers are needed for our Houston Christmas Count, so plan now to be one of those who helps with this important event,

Sept. 1973



AREA 3 ----- Boundary Line
Area Leader: Jerry Baker
Phone No. 921-2644



Jerry Baker and her group have been working this area for the past 6 years. She took over the area from Jim Ellis, who took over from Armand Yrematigue. Jerry Baker reports that she makes several trips during the year to "check on things". Just prior to the Christmas Bird Count she makes a trip to talk with the property owners to let them know the date for the Christmas Count and to reaffirm permission for entry at that time.