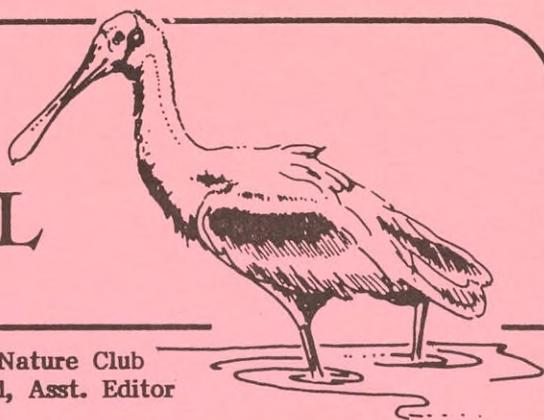


The SPOONBILL



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Houston, Texas, Libby Price, Editor; Ellen Red, Asst. Editor

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Coming Events

Tuesday, Jan. 9: Ornithology Group meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Bayland Park, off Bissonnet just west of Hillcroft. **N.B This is the 2nd Tuesday, not the 1st.** The program will be on birds of Papua, New Guinea, presented by Larry Shelton of the Houston Zoo. This program was to have occurred in November, but Dr. Shelton was called away to a conference.

NOVICE TIME at 7:00 will be a continuation of "Identifying Sparrows," led by David Bradford.

Thursday, Jan. 11: Outdoor Nature Club meeting at at the Houston Arboretum at 7:30 p.m. Joe Liggio will present "Ice Age Fossils of the UTC."

Saturday, Jan. 13: Ornithology Group field trip. There will be two OG field trips in January. The first will be to West Harris and Waller counties. Jim Morgan will lead this expedition for sparrows, hawks, waterfowl and other winter visitors. Meet at the Clay Rd. entrance to Bear Creek Park, in the parking lot at the northwest edge of the park near the golf course and picnic area at 7:00 a.m. Bring lunch and a drink. Jim will plan a stop or two for use of facilities. Jim states that it is an excellent sparrow year, and he already has good species located. The trip will last all day and should provide an excellent opportunity for looks at lots of birds with a top birder. Call John Buckman at 359-4685 if you need more information.

Monday, Jan. 13: Steering Committee meeting at 7:30 p.m. All members are welcome. The place is at Don and Lee Richardson's, 5475 Grape, ZIP 77096.

Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 27-28: Ornithology Group field trip to the Rockport area with a stop at Big Boggy NWR in Matagorda Co. on the way back to Houston on Sunday. The trip will include a cruise on Capt. Ted's boat for a look at the Whooping Cranes. Meet initially on Saturday at 7:00 a.m. at the Walmart parking lot on Route 35 in the Fulton-Rockport area. Our leaders, Nancy and Jerry Patrick, will take us to local hot spots for a morning's birding

in the Rockport area. We will then board the boat for the Whooping Cranes at 12:45 p.m. (cost \$16-\$20; see below). For those staying Saturday night in the Rockport area, we will bird Sunday in areas missed on Saturday, then return to Houston with stops along the way, including one at Big Boggy NWR.

The logistics for the trip are a little complex, and we request that you call Nancy or Jerry Patrick at 461-4975, or John Buckman at 359-4685 to confirm your intention to participate. If we have 30 people, we will be given exclusive use of the boat and a \$16 per person rate; if fewer participate, the boat trip will be open to the public, and a \$20 rate will prevail. Please note, however, that this trip will go regardless of the number of participants. Nancy and Jerry know this area well and plan extensive scouting before the trip, so do join us for a great time and some different birds.

Saturday, Feb. 17: Ornithology Group field trip to Bear Creek Park and the Addicks Dam area, led by Sterling Essenmacher. This trip will cover a different area from the January 13 trip, and we will see different birds.

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

SEND bird sightings for Clearing House to: Clearing House (OG), P.O. Box 271374, Houston TX 77277.

TEXAS RARE Bird Alert Tape, sponsored by Piney Woods Wildlife Society and Houston Audubon Society: (713) 821-2846.

FOR LOCAL nature societies' meetings and field trips call the Audubon Society's "Voice of the Naturalist" tape: 932-1392.

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.

Noel's Niche Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

10 YEARS AGO/FROM DEC., 1979 SPoonBILL

"Some General Problems of Field Identification, by Lawrence G. Balch (From the Illinois Bulletin #179, Winter 1976-77--reprinted with permission)

It seems to me that most, if not all, field identification problems can be related to three factors: lack of knowledge, observational factors, and psychological influences. Any birder can minimize (but never entirely eliminate) his field identification problems. All that is required is work and an awareness of these factors.

"Psychological factors..A particularly dangerous psychological phenomenon, and one that I find I have to guard against, is that of 'seeing' what you expect to see. If you know that an unusual bird has been seen in a certain area, it somehow becomes much easier to mistake a more common species for the rarity. Such a phenomenon was at work in the case of the Spotted Redshank mentioned previously. It can also manifest itself in other ways. Thus there is a tendency to agree with the judgment of the group one is with. Or sometimes a whole group of birders can be swayed by the pronouncements, right or wrong, of one individual who has a reputation as an expert. I have seen all of these things happen in the field more times than I would like to remember. Finally, although I am not a psychologist, I would imagine that there are uncommon cases where an individual's personal psychological needs interfere with his field identifications. From desire or need to tick off another species, standards are either consciously or unconsciously relaxed, or in some other way an incorrect identification is accepted by the individual.

"Dealing with these psychological factors is part of developing the critical attitude which I mentioned earlier. Set high standards for your own observations, and maintain them. Be prepared to say, 'I don't care what others say that bird is, I want to identify it myself, and unless I see everything that I want to, I'm not going to count it.' The right attitude toward rarities is also important. Remember, by definition a rare bird is one that you are most unlikely to see. So think, 'Just a moment--this bird isn't supposed to be here. I'd better see everything that I can and not accept the identification unless everything fits in.' By adopting these statements as part of your general attitude toward field identification, you will become a better and more reliable observer. Accepting only those identifications which you can make with certainty, even if you have to let some birds go, is preferable to trying to identify every bird.

"The road to success in field identification requires knowledge, experience and a critical attitude. Only the first of these comes from a book. And the last is the most important. Without it, even a knowledgeable and experienced observer will never be an expert observer."

OG FIELD TRIP, NOV. 18, 1989

How many were there? One and one is two, Noel. OK. Got it.

Counting can be confusing, but identification was no problem for OG members who answered the call to help Texas Parks and Wildlife count birds for a checklist for our new state park at Sheldon Reservoir on November 18. Fifteen hardy souls braved the cold, intermittently wet and windy day to track down 73 species at Sheldon in the morning and at San Jacinto Park in the afternoon. Morning highlights included a Pileated Woodpecker, Anhinga, thousands of Snow Geese flying overhead and a pair of Sandhill Cranes feeding in the leased pasture adjacent to the park along with hundreds of Snow and white-fronted Geese. Also spotted was one Grasshopper Sparrow which stayed and stayed--until we couldn't stay any longer. Our large group even managed to sneak up on eight Wood Ducks for a good, close look.

Moving on towards San Jacinto Park we stopped to observe at a pond with 250 scaup, 30 Ruddy Ducks, a pair of Ospreys and some tree sparrows, revolving, appearing to arrive at one side of the field before they had quite left the other side. And, just as promised, we spotted 25 Hooded Mergansers at San Jacinto Park. Nearby were 17 Olivaceous Cormorants all in a row. Finally, another, but very shy Grasshopper Sparrow appeared briefly in the shrubs near the water.

If you wish to contribute to the Sheldon checklist, please send your sightings with dates and observers to Noel Pettingell, 18290 Upper Bay Rd., #16, Houston, Texas 77058. The ranger would appreciate your putting a note in the windshield that identifies you as an OG member so that he will know what you are doing. You may then enter and park on the north side near the buildings.

COMPLIMENTS ON OUR CHECKLIST

Our new checklist edition received a wonderful writeup by John Tveten in his column, "Nature Trails," in the Houston Chronicle of November 25, 1989. Its value, various uses and where to buy it were all discussed. It's nice to get that kind of notice and we appreciate John's fine article.

HOSKINS MOUND WETLANDS MAY BECOME REFUGE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife, in a Gulf Coast Joint Venture Project of the North American Waterfowl Management plan is proposing to acquire 30,000 acres of land, the Hoskins Mound area, adjoining the north boundary of Brazoria NWR. Texas coastal marshlands have been destroyed at the rate of 1750 acres a year, and the prospect of saving this much coastal prairie and wetlands (60% of the proposed area) is heartening to those of us who have seen with horror the result of so much development along our coast. Not only would this area be saved, but the additional feed for waterfowl could prevent "eat-outs" on Brazoria NWR that occur when too many birds try to winter there.

Your editor has a copy of the Draft Environmental Assessment if you would like to read it. There is no question that we all favor this project, and should support it if called upon.

Clearing House - NOVEMBER, 1989

November Editors: Lynne Aldrich & Peter Gottschling

NOVEMBER, 1989 CLEARING HOUSE: LYNNE ALDRICH/PETER GOTTSCHLING (AG) EDITORS
 The rare birds from Brazos Bend (Ringed Kingfisher, Harris' Hawk, Say's Phoebe, Ferruginous Hawk) brought more birders and reports from that location than we have seen. Several other good finds were reported there... a roost of Yellow Crowned Night Herons in the third week of November which the UTC checklist records as rare (not expected more than once or twice per season at that time of year) but which the Brazos Bend checklist records as fairly common for that time of year. Perhaps we have simply re-discovered a formerly known locale. As you bird this area, be certain to keep alert for this bird and submit your findings to us. Incidentally, any unusual observations you note while in the field can be sent on to the Clearing House with your lists. (i.e. large hawk migrations, warbler fall-outs, dead birds, unusual habitat for birds, etc.) This information is not easily gleaned from the data base itself, unless the Editors are constantly in the field making these observations themselves (we'd like to be, but to support ourselves and the computer, paper, etc. we use for this publication we need to work).

So, at the same time unusual birds are being reported other birds appear to be altering their pattern somewhat. Sparrows in abundance have arrived on the UTC. (See the graphs for details). Robins seem to have made a come back. While 1987 reported 61 individuals and 1988 only 37 in the month of November, this year we had a report on 759 individuals. In addition, they were reported all month long (from the 4th through the 25), while they were reported only in the last week of the previous two years. A decade long decline was reported for Lesser Scaup in 1987 (only 20 individuals) with 36 individuals in 1988. However, there were 1,031 individuals reported this year, with the largest concentration appearing to occur the beginning of the third week. We can follow this bird to see if this trend continues. On the other hand, Black Bellied's were down (410 in 87, 300 in 88 and 212 this year while Fulvous Whistling Ducks had increased (2 in 1987, none in 88 and 20 this year). In addition, this latter species was not reported until the middle of the second week this year. Snow Geese reports have increased over the past two years, but Canada Geese still seem to be reported in small numbers during this month. All reports on all ducks have increased dramatically over the past two years, however it is important to remember that last's years birds were seriously affected by Avian Cholera. The hawks continued to be found in large numbers, with 45 Harriers reported on 11/11 (CJ), 30 on 11/15 (EU) and 80 on 11/24 (UM). Red Tailed Hawks were also reported in large numbers. 80 on 11/11 (CJ), 175 on 11/24 (UM). 300 Kestrels were reported on 11/12 (GL), 30 on 11/15 (EU), 25 on 11/19 (MBU) and 35 on 11/24 (UM). Although these observers thought the sandhill Crane flocks were not what we had seen in the past, the reports on individuals was higher than in the past two years. There were 610 reported this year (1989) with the largest number reported in the second week (11/10). Last year (1988) there was a flock of 100 reported on 11/6 (a total of 110 that year). The previous year had only 26 individuals reported. Of note is the fact that a large concentration of Brown Pelicans was observed the first week (11/5) with 200 being reported (EM). You will have your own favorite bird to look up in this report. Old issues of the Clearing House reside in the library and can be browsed through for comparative purposes, or you may keep your own collection. The present editors of the Clearing House hope to be in a position to compile data from all submissions as time progresses. This will allow us to provide you with information on trends of specific species. Meanwhile if you have research, personal and/or other interests which make you desire a print out of all the information incorporated in the data base for this month (this can be done on a weekly basis if desired, with some minimum statistical information...we

are unable to provide you with individualized research requests) please let either us (AG) or Richard Uzar (RU) know. This information can be printed at a small cost to you.

HOW TO READ THE CLEARING HOUSE: For common birds and birds with four or more reports, the early and late dates for each bird is reported. The total number of reports and the total number of birds for each species is reported. Within each county, the total number of reports and the total number for that species on each bird reported for that county.

EXAMPLE:

SPECIES	DATE	TOTAL	BRAZ	CHAM	FBEND	GALV	HARR	JEFF	WALL
Sparrow, Swamp	4-26	18/334	2/7	1/3	4/33	4/214	5/52		2/25

Rare, unusual and/or accidental birds and birds with three or less reports are reported with specific (all) information i.e. bird name, early & late date/total reports & total number of birds followed by details on each sighting i.e. County & location if given/number/date, observer.

EXAMPLE:

SPECIES	DATE	TOTAL	
KINGFISHER, RNGD	3-5	3/1	F-BB(1)5,EM; F-BB(1)3,RU; F-BB(1)4,RH

Very rare on date are underlined; vagrant or no previous sighting on date capitalized; no previous sighting on the UTC underlined & capitalized.

If you find this information easy to read, please let us know. If you have ideas on how to make it easier for you to read please let us know.

THIS MONTHS REPORT

216 Species, 255,069 individuals, 31 observer codes with 33 separate reports. There were 15 writeups on rare and/or early/late bird sightings. Unfortunately, space requirements may limit those appearing in this issue. There are 1,800 entries residing in this months data base (yes, your editors do enter all this information personally)

SPECIES	DATES	TOTAL	BRAZ	CHAM	FBEND	GALV	HARR	JEFF	WALL
Loon, Common	4-4	1/3		J-(3)4,RC					
loon, sp.	15-15	1/1		U-(1)15,EU					
Grebe, Pied-bill	3-25	21/208	3/42	1/6	5/42	3/72	7/30	--	1/1
Gannet, Northern	15-15	1/13		U-(13)15,EU					
Pelican, Amer Wht	4-26	19/3346	3/144	--	2/180	5/1520	7/452	--	--
Pelican, Brown	5-25	7/669	3/25	--	--	3/219	--	--	--
Corm, Dbl-crested	3-26	23/1216	3/15	--	6/40	4/447	7/222	--	--
Corm, Olivaceous	4-25	9/182	1/6	--	--	5/138	3/38	--	--
Anhinga	3-24	8/164	--	--	4/44	1/90	3/30	--	--
Bittern, American	4-24	3/5		B-(3)5,UD; C-(1)4,RC; F-BB(1)24,DR					
Heron, Great Blue	3-26	25/210	3/34	1/2	6/20	5/69	6/46	--	1/2
Egret, Great	3-27	26/277	3/45	1/3	5/19	5/74	8/81	--	1/12
Egret, Snowy	3-25	19/245	3/31	1/5	3/7	5/70	5/106	--	1/6
Heron, Little Blu	3-25	16/55	2/4	1/4	5/8	4/18	4/21	--	--
Heron, Tricolored	4-25	17/54	3/13	1/1	4/8	4/19	4/12	--	--
Egret, Reddish	5-25	8/50	3/27	--	--	3/12	1/1	--	--
Egret, Cattle	3-25	18/570	2/28	--	3/153	5/31	5/232	--	1/75
Heron, Grn-backed	4-12	4/5	1/1	--	2/3	1/1	--	--	--
Nt-Heron, Blk-crn	4-24	6/59	1/2	--	2/16	1/15	1/23	--	--
Nt-Heron, Yel-crn	2-25	5/28	1/6	--	1/19	1/1	2/2	--	--
Ibis, White	3-26	16/319	3/43	1/6	6/60	5/204	--	--	1/6
Ibis, White-faced	3-26	13/400	2/35	1/86	3/170	2/16	2/43	--	1/15
Spoonbill, Roseate	5-25	4/62	2/10	--	--	2/52	--	--	--
Whsl-Duck, Fulvs	5-24	3/20		B-(10)6,DB; G-(8)5,EM; H-WHC(2)24,UM					
Whsl-Duck, Blk-bd	11-24	3/212		F-BB(12)12,GL; H-(20)11,HAS; H-WHC(180)24,UM					
Goose, Gr Wht-Ern	3-26	15/1862	--	1/980	6/3537	1/60	6/12045	--	--
Goose, Snow	3-26	17/948502/140		1/370005/2685	1/300	6/49525	--	--	--
Goose, Ross	4-24	8/19	--	1/1	1/2	--	5/13	--	1/3
Goose, Canada	24-24	3/56		F-BB(6)24,DR; F-BB(40)24,TPF; H-WHC(10)24,UM					
goose, sp.	11-11	1/50000		W-(50000)11,HAS					
Duck, Wood	12-18	4/22	--	--	1/2	--	3/20	--	--
Teal, Green-wing	5-26	12/7010	2/260	--	3/6100	2/8	4/442	--	--
Duck, Mottled	3-25	13/99	2/19	1/8	3/22	3/14	3/11	--	--
Mallard	3-23	8/77	1/1	--	2/12	--	4/62	--	--
Pintail, Northern	3-26	13/1606	2/110	--	5/630	1/15	4/821	--	--
Teal, Blue-winged	3-24	11/325	2/135	1/1	4/146	2/22	2/21	--	--
Teal, Cinnamon	5-6	2/4		B-(2)5,UD; B-(2)6,DB					
Shoveler, Northrn	4-25	13/1160	2/580	1/3	3/26	3/24	3/525	--	--
Gadwall	3-25	17/465	2/160	--	4/81	3/66	7/133	--	--
Wigeon, American	3-24	13/277	1/25	--	3/82	2/21	6/147	--	--
Canvasback	5-18	8/34	3/8	--	2/9	--	3/17	--	--
Redhead	5-25	4/26	2/21	--	1/4	1/1	--	--	--
Duck, Ring-necked	5-25	9/539	2/356	--	2/98	1/3	3/37	--	--

SPECIES	DATES	TOTAL	BRAZ	CHAM	FBEND	GALV	HARR	JEFF	WALL
Scaup, Lesser	4-25	12/1031	2/12	1/5	2/25	2/58	4/731	--	--
Goldeneye, Common	25-25	1/2	G-(2)25,DU						
Bufflehead	15-26	4/30	--	--	1/12	2/13	--	--	--
Merganser, Hooded	4-23	4/77	--	--	--	--	4/77	--	--
Merganser, Red-br	5-18	2/3	G-(2)5,EM; H-(1)18,NPO						
Duck, Ruddy	5-25	9/98	3/7	--	1/2	1/40	1/40	--	2/3
duck, sp.	4-4	1/8500	C-(8500)4,RC						
Vulture, Black	5-26	11/146	1/20	--	5/76	--	2/17	--	2/31
Vulture, Turkey	2-26	19/651	5/158	--	7/225	--	4/93	--	2/165
Osprey	4-19	7/7	3/3	--	--	1/1	3/3	--	--
Kite, Blk-shouldr	4-25	10/36	4/14	--	1/1	3/16	--	--	1/3
Eagle, Bald	10-24	3/4	F-(1)10,UD; F-BB(2)12,GL; W-(1)24,UM						
Harrier, Northern	3-25	22/287	4/64	2/9	5/20	4/25	3/4	--	2/125
Hawk, Sharp-shin	11-24	3/3	F-BB(1)12,GL; W-(1)11,CJ; W-(1)24,UM						
Hawk, Cooper's	5-24	3/4	B-(2)5,EM; H-WHC(1)24,UM; U-(1)12,CPJ						
accipiter, sp.	11-11	1/1	W-(1)11,HAS						
Hawk, Red-shouldr	3-27	16/46	2/13	--	7/23	--	7/10	--	--
Hawk, Swainson's	24-24	1/1	F-(1)24,DR						
Hawk, White-tailed	11-24	2/4	G-(1)5,BH;W-(3)11,CJ; W-(1)24,UM						
Hawk, Red-tailed	3-26	25/353	3/10	1/5	8/25	3/20	6/16	--	2/255
Hawk, Ferruginous	11-24	3/6	U-(2)12,CPJ; W-(2)11,CJ; W-(2)24,UM						
Hawk, Harris'	5-19	2/1	F-DER(1)5,JM; F-DER(1)19,GL						
Eagle, Golden	12-12	1/1	W-(1)12,CPJ						
Caracara, Crested	5-24	6/15	2/4	--	1/1	--	1/4	--	2/6
Kestrel, American	3-26	27/570	4/49	2/20	7/346	3/32	8/58	--	1/30
Merlin	5-25	2/9	B-(1)5,UD; G-(8)25,DU						
Falcon, Peregrine	4-5	2/2	B-(1)5,UD; G-BF(1)4,RC						
Bobwhite, Northern	10-12	2/27	F-(15)10,UD; H-SJ(12)12,UD						
Rail, Clapper	4-25	3/5	C-(1)23,RU; G-(3)25,DU; H-SJ(1)4,DR						
Rail, King	4-4	1/2	C-(2)4,RC						
Sora	5-6	2/2	B-(1)6,DB; B-(1)5,EM (Bird found dead)						
Moorhen, Common	3-25	15/254	3/67	1/50	5/98	2/13	3/23	--	--
Coot, American	3-25	18/2845	4/843	1/5	4/477	4/120	3/1250	--	1/100
Crane, Sandhill	5-25	12/616	2/18	--	4/466	2/110	2/4	--	--
Plover, Blk-belli	4-25	13/598	3/62	1/3	--	5/450	3/8	--	--
Plover, Snowy	4-19	5/36	1/1	--	--	3/10	--	--	--
Plover, Semipalm	4-25	10/153	3/32	--	--	5/100	1/1	--	--
Plover, Piping	4-25	7/170	--	--	--	6/110	--	--	--
Killdeer	3-26	27/1356	3/100	2/90	7/81	4/99	7/171	--	2/700
Oystercatcher, Am	4-25	3/42	G-(2)4,RC; G-(25)25,DU; G-BF(15)19,MBU						
Stilt, Black-neck	4-24	3/16	G-(9)4,RC; G-BF(5)19,MBU; H-WHC(2)24,UM						
Avocet, American	4-25	9/3718	3/287	--	--	5/3430	1/1	--	--
Yellowlegs, Great	3-25	13/197	3/24	1/1	1/8	3/39	2/14	--	1/100
Yellowlegs, Less	3-26	10/94	3/17	--	2/4	2/12	1/6	--	1/40
Willet	4-25	10/538	3/105	--	--	5/381	1/2	--	--
Sandprr, Spotted	4-18	3/4	H-SJ(1)12,UD; H-SJ(2)4,DR; H-SJ(1)18,NPO						
Curlew, Long-bill	4-25	11/82	1/5	1/6	--	5/38	1/2	--	2/30
Godwit, Marbled	4-25	9/273	2/36	--	--	6/236	--	--	--
Turnstone, Ruddy	4-25	8/72	3/9	--	--	4/51	--	--	--
Knot, Red	4-25	4/37	--	1/1	--	2/26	--	--	--
Sanderling	4-25	13/1476	4/210	--	--	5/1025	3/41	--	--
Sandprr, Semipalm	6-6	1/8	B-(8)6,DB						
Sandprr, Western	4-25	12/579	3/42	--	--	5/345	1/15	--	2/102
Sandprr, Least	4-25	10/202	2/7	1/1	--	5/79	--	--	1/100
SANDPDR, BAIRD'S	11-11	1/1	W-(1)11,HAS(NO WRITE-UP; FIRST NOVEMBER REPORT)						
Dunlin	4-25	15/2676	3/95	2/500	--	6/1515	1/1	--	2/550
peep, sp.	4-5	2/3150	B-(150)5,UD; G-(3000)4,RC						
Dowitcher, S-bill	4-25	10/1304	3/79	1/75	--	4/1030	1/20	--	--
Dowitcher, L-bill	4-24	5/990	--	1/500	1/40	--	--	--	2/400
Snipe, Common	4-24	14/471	2/5	1/18	3/4	1/3	4/41	--	2/350
Gull, Laughing	4-25	13/151203/420	1/150	--	--	5/102003/2350	--	--	--
Gull, Franklin's	4-15	4/21	1/4	--	--	2/14	--	--	--
Gull, Bonaparte's	25-25	1/1	G-(1)25,DU						
Gull, Ring-billed	4-25	16/3141	3/91	1/200	--	5/1430	6/1120	--	--
Gull, Herring	4-25	9/309	2/23	--	--	5/255	1/1	--	--
GULL, THAYER'S	5-5	1/1	B-(1)5,EM						
GULL, LSR BLK-BCK	5-12	2/2	B-(1)5,EM; G-SLP(1)12,MA						
Tern, Gull-billed	4-4	1/3	G-(3)4,RC						

SPECIES	DATES	TOTAL	BRAZ	CHAM	FBEND	GALV	HARR	JEFF	WALL
Tern, Caspian	4-25	12/382	3/40	--	1/1	4/110	3/31	--	--
Tern, Royal	4-25	10/552	3/35	--	--	5/216	1/1	--	--
Tern, Sandwich	5-25	6/115	3/28	--	--	2/67	--	--	--
Tern, Common	5-25	3/13	G-(7)25,DU; G-(5)5,EM; H-(1)18,NPO						
Tern, Forster's	4-25	12/879	1/15	1/10	--	6/711	3/83	--	--
Skimmer, Black	4-19	7/1536	1/10	--	--	5/1226	--	--	--
Dove, Rock	4-25	15/1034	2/14	--	1/6	4/875	5/31	--	2/90
Dove, White-wingd	5-17	3/3	B-(1)5,EM; H-(1)16,EU; H-EHC(1)17,UF						
Dove, Mourning	3-26	24/973	4/118	1/80	6/81	2/24	7/105	--	2/540
Dove, Inca	2-25	6/18	1/2	1/2	--	1/4	2/9	--	--
Parakeet, Monk	2-25	2/16	H-(8)2,PM; H-(8)25,PM						
Ani, Groove-billd	6-6	1/1	B-BW(1)6,DB						
Barn-Owl, Common	11-23	2/2	C-(1)23,RU; H-(1)11,CJ						
OWL, FLAMMULATED	11-11	1/1	G-(1)11,JS (BIRD FOUND INJURED)						
OWL, Burrowing	15-15	1/1	G-(1)15,EU						
Owl, Barred	11-26	3/4	B-(1)24,TPF; F-BB(1)26,GL; W-(2)11,HAS						
Hummer, Buf-belly	5-17	2/1	G-(1)5,BH; G-(1)17,BH						
Hummer, Rufous	17-17	1/1	G-(1)17,BH						
Kingfisher, Belt	2-26	24/68	4/19	1/4	6/15	4/15	8/14	--	--
KINGFISHER, RINGED	3-5	3/1	F-BB(1)5,EM; F-BB(1)3,RU; F-BB(1)4,RH						
Wdpeckr, Red-head	4-25	2/2	H-(1)4,W; H-(1)25,WC						
Wdpeckr, Red-bell	2-26	13/83	--	--	7/73	1/1	3/5	--	2/4
Sapsuck, Yel-bell	4-26	12/38	--	--	6/21	--	4/4	--	2/13
Wdpeckr, Downy	3-26	11/21	--	--	7/13	--	2/2	--	2/6
Flicker, Northern	4-26	12/60	--	--	4/16	1/2	5/22	--	2/20
Wdpeckr, Pileated	3-26	14/26	2/2	--	7/19	--	4/4	--	1/1
Wood-Pewee, East	4-4	1/1	G-(1)4,RC						
Phoebe, Eastern	3-26	19/256	1/3	1/2	7/139	2/7	4/16	--	2/85
Phoebe, Say's	12-12	1/1	F-DER(1)12,GL						
Flycatcher, Vermiln	3-10	4/6	F-(2)10,UD; F-BB(2)3,RU; F-BB(1)26,GL; F-DER(1)2						
Flycatcher, Ash-Thr	24-24	1/1	W-(1)24,UM						
Kingbird, Western	5-11	2/2	B-(1)5,EM; H-(1)11,CJ						
Flycatcher, Ss-tail	4-24	4/50	1/40	--	1/1	1/8	1/1	--	--
Lark, Horned	4-25	5/15	2/7	--	--	2/7	--	--	1/1
Swallow, Tree	3-19	9/531	2/52	1/100	2/9	1/125	2/230	--	--
Swallow, N R-wing	4-10	2/5	C-(1)4,RC; F-(4)10,UD						
Swallow, Barn	3-12	7/23	2/11	1/4	3/7	1/1	--	--	--
Jay, Blue	4-26	17/134	1/5	--	5/45	1/9	7/50	--	2/22
Crow, American	3-29	17/669	1/12	1/2	7/456	--	5/99	--	2/95
Crow, Fish	5-5	1/6	B-(6)5,UD						
Chickadee, Carol	3-26	10/192	--	--	7/137	--	1/10	--	2/45
Titmouse, Tufted	3-26	8/78	--	--	7/76	--	1/2	--	--
Nuthatch, Red-brs	11-24	3/4	G-(1)12,DW; H-(2)11,JM; H-WHC(1)24,UM						
Creepcr, Brown	24-25	2/2	H-(1)25,WC; W-(1)24,UM						
Wren, Carolina	3-26	12/79	--	--	7/68	--	3/4	--	2/7
Wren, Bewick's	11-24	4/10	--	--	1/2	--	--	--	2/28
Wren, House	3-26	16/71	1/4	1/3	5/18	1/1	5/15	--	--
Wren, Winter	24-24	1/1	H-WHC(1)24,UM						
Wren, Sedge	4-25	5/11	--	1/2	--	2/6	1/1	--	1/2
Wren, Marsh	4-26	4/9	2/7	1/1	1/1	--	--	--	--
Kinglet, Gold-crn	26-26	1/1	F-BB(1)26,GL						
Kinglet, Ruby-crn	3-26	16/186	1/2	--	6/83	1/5	6/31	--	2/65
Gnatcatch, Blu-gra	3-26	9/88	--	--	6/45	--	1/1	--	2/42
Bluebird, Eastern	3-26	12/163	--	--	7/72	--	3/6	--	2/85
Thrush, Hermit	3-26	9/38	--	--	5/22	--	2/5	--	2/11
Robin, American	4-26	9/769	--	--	3/230	1/1	2/12	--	1/500
Catbird, Gray	5-26	3/89	B-(1)5,UD; F-BB(85)26,DR; F-(3)5,EM						
Mockingbird, N	3-26	26/240	3/20	2/9	8/73	2/21	7/32	--	2/65
Thrasher, Brown	3-24	16/43	--	--	6/15	1/1	6/8	--	2/18
Pipit, Water	3-12	5/73	1/12	--	3/46	--	--	--	1/15
Waxwing, Cedar	24-24	2/4	F-BB(1)24,DR; W-(3)24,UM						
Shrike, Loggerhed	3-25	25/151	4/19	2/4	5/44	3/26	7/18	--	2/32
Starling, Euro	3-26	25/3001	4/155	3/300	7/1595	1/70	6/321	--	2/475
Vireo, White-eyed	5-12	3/5	F-BB(3)12,GL; G-(1)5,EM; W-(1)11,HAS						

SPECIES	DATES	TOTAL	BRAZ	CHAM	FBEND	GALV	HARR	JEFF	WALL
Vireo, Solitary	4-25	4/5	1/1	--	--	1/1	2/3	--	--
Vireo, Philadelph	5-5	1/2	B-(2)5,UD	(NO WRITE-UP)					
Warb, Tennessee	5-5	1/1	G-(1)5,EM						
Warb, Orange-crn	4-26	13/44	1/1	--	4/24	1/1	4/6	1/3	2/9
Warb, Nashville	4-10	4/5	1/1	--	1/1	1/2	--	1/1	--
Warb, Magnolia	4-5	2/2	B-(1)5,UD; J-(1)4,RC						
Warb, Yellow-rump	3-26	19/613	1/3	--	6/418	3/26	6/59	1/7	2/100
Warb, Blk-thr Grn	4-5	3/4	G-(1)4,RC; G-(1)5,EM; H-(2)4,WC						
Warb, Pine	24-24	1/1	F-BB(1)24,DR						
Warb, Palm	4-11	4/6	--	--	2/4	--	--	1/1	1/1
Warb, Blk-and-wht	4-4	1/2	G-(2)4,RC						
Yellowthroat, Com	3-18	7/32	1/5	--	2/7	2/17	1/2	1/1	--
Warb, Wilson's	4-25	4/7	--	--	1/2	2/4	1/1	--	--
Chat, Yellow-brst	4-4	1/1	G-(1)4,RC						
Cardinal, Northrn	3-26	20/267	2/6	--	7/146	1/6	7/42	--	2/65
Grosbeak, Blue	5-5	1/1	G-(1)5,EM						
Bunting, Indigo	4-5	4/73	1/8	--	--	2/60	1/5	--	--
Towhee, Rfus-side	24-24	1/1	W-(1)24,UM						
Sparrow, Chipping	10-24	5/192	--	--	2/7	--	1/30	--	2/155
Sparrow, Field	11-26	3/61	F-BB(1)26,DR; W-(25)11,CJ; W-(35)24,UM						
Sparrow, Vesper	4-24	6/401	1/12	--	1/1	1/3	--	--	2/375
Sparrow, Savannah	3-25	15/811	3/101	1/18	3/21	3/42	2/4	--	2/600
Sparrow, Grasshop	18-24	5/16	--	--	--	4/13	--	--	1/3
Sparrow, Le Conte	11-24	2/90	H-(30)11,HAS; H-WHC(60)24,UM						
Sparrow, Shp-tail	4-19	2/27	G-(25)4,RC; G-BF(2)19,MBU						
Sparrow, Seaside	4-4	1/6	G-(6)4,RC						
Sparrow, Fox	11-24	2/6	W-(3)11,HAS; W-(3)24,UM (EARLY BY ONE DAY)						
Sparrow, Song	5-24	7/26	--	--	--	1/1	3/8	--	2/16
Sparrow, Lincolns	2-24	11/81	1/1	--	2/4	2/6	4/5	--	2/65
Sparrow, Swamp	4-26	18/334	2/7	1/3	4/33	4/214	5/52	--	2/25
Sparrow, Wht-thrt	4-26	15/540	--	1/6	5/122	--	6/129	--	2/280
Sparrow, Wht-crn	3-24	5/226	--	--	1/3	1/15	--	--	2/205
Sparrow, Harris'	24-24	2/12	H-WHC(6)24,UM; W-(6)24,UM						
Junco, Dark-eyed	5-5	1/1	G-(1)5,EM						
Blackbird, Red-wg	3-26	19/131003/450	1/2500	5/2400	3/1080	5/670	--	--	1/4000
Meadowlark, East	3-27	24/413	4/72	2/25	4/53	4/73	7/153	--	1/25
Meadowlark, sp.	11-11	1/200	W-(200)11,EM						
Blackbird, Brewer	11-11	1/200	H-(200)11,LP						
Grackle, Gr-tail	4-27	17/648	2/35	1/2	4/32	2/55	5/94	--	1/300
Grackle, Bt-tail	4-25	6/482	2/127	1/350	--	3/5	--	--	--
Grackle, Common	4-26	15/5416	--	--	3/510	2/510	8/3346	--	1/1000
Cowbird, Brn-head	3-26	15/187281/15	2/400	4/1102	1/2000	3/8011	--	--	2/5000
ORIOLE, ORCHARD	5-5	1/1	G-(1)5,EM (NO WRITE-UP)						
(ORIOLE, Bullock)	13-13	1/1	H-(1)13,GM						
Goldfinch, Amer	11-26	4/93	--	--	2/47	--	2/46	--	--
Sparrow, House	6-27	13/93	1/5	1/2	3/15	1/25	4/29	--	--

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - NOV., 1989

FLAMMULATED OWL 11/11/89 Joseph Edwin Schmalz
Injured bird observed in hand. Found by caretakers at Pocket Park on Galveston Island and turned over to Texas Wildlife Rehabilitation Coalition (TWRC). Distinctly smaller than a Screech Owl. Has dark eyes and small ear tufts. Overall gray appearance mottled with rufous markings and rufous bluish about face. Rufous scapular stripes on wings. Bill blue-gray. TWRC rehabilitators will return bird to wild as soon as possible.

THAYER'S GULL 11/5/89 Jim Morgan
Observed at Follet's Beach/Surfside in Brazoria County by EM with 10x binocs, Questar for 30 minutes at distance of 10m-200m. Was preening, standing, feeding and flying. Bill slighly and slimmer than adjacent Herring's (about 3/4 less) and bill all dark, less angular; gape dark; head overall coffee brown indistinctly mottled; eye dark; orbital ring dark gray; forehead less angular than adjacent Herring, producing an overall "dove headed" aspect; nape and hind neck more a buffy coffee, more so than head, back or mantle, with very little

streaking; mantle concolor with head with indistinct mottling; underside - foreneck, breast, belly and vent coffee brown with little or not mottling; wings in general aspect were concolor with head and mantle; in flight reduced contrast between remiges and coverts; no gradation between color in flight feathers; outer webs of primaries medium dark brown and inner webs light (whitish) with darker brown of outer webs extending onto inner web at apex. Secondaries concolor with coverts, broadly tipped light and dark at apex. Primaries extended beyond tip of tail. Undersides of remiges silvery white producing a dramatic wing flash when seen from below; tail-rectrices brownish, only slightly darker than mantle with no barring visible and a very indistinct tail band. Legs and feet were a light bubble gum (pink). Appeared obviously shorter legged than all nearby Herring's - both absolutely and proportionately.

Burrowing Owl 11/15/89 Richard Uzar
Seen at close range in Galveston County (location not reported to help in minimizing harassment of bird) 10-20 min. in good light with 10x binocs. Ground perched, long legs, no ears, spotted above, barred below, wings not quite reaching end of tail, head rounded & dark (black) collar markings at sides of neck.

Ash Throated Flycatcher 11/24/89 Jim Morgan
Observed at Harper's Church Rd., approx. 300m past the old church. Small Myiarchus flycatcher in very fresh, striking plumage. All black bill smaller than the bill of Great Crested or Brown-Crested; brownish face with black eye; reddish-brown crown, often made erectile in reaction to Screech-Owl call; dull grayish-brown back; white throat, becoming ashy-white on upper breast; rich pale lemon yellow belly, brighter than many Ash-Throated's seen on UTC; rufous tail with fuscous on outer webs extending across tip of inner webs (diagnostic). Seen in excellent light for 5 minutes as close as 5m with 10x binocs by both observers (UM). Photographed. Habitat as brushy, with Yaupon & bachyrus and small trees.

Northern Oriole (Bullock's) 11/11 - 12/3/89 Gretchen Mueller
Mature adult male seen in backyard of Bellaire. The bird can be several times a day, feeding in a flowering loquat tree and was once seen at the bird bath. I was able to observe this bird at a distance of never more than 10 yards, often for a minute or more with 10x, 50 binoculars. Bright orange breast paling to yellow toward the vent, with black stripes down the center of chin to the throat. Large white wing patch, black eyeline and black crown leading to a black back. Bright orange cheeks. Tail black with orange-yellow outer tail feathers. Similar species eliminated as follows: No other oriole has a black crown, orange supercillium and black eyeline, combined with a large white wing patch. I am familiar with the "Bullocks" Oriole, having lived in Aspen, Colorado for seven years, when it would feed at the hummingbird feeders in my yard.

Say's Phoebe 11/12/89 Geneva LaVern
Observed on Davis Estate Rd near intersection of FM 1994 by LM at distance of 150 - 300 ft. with 10x binocs and 22x scope. Toasted-caramel colored underparts; black, relatively long slightly notched tail; two tone brownish-gray head darker in eye are (dark line through eye). Bill black, two-thirds length of head; light pearly-white throat; sooty-brown upperparts with white wingbars and white edges on flight feathers. Did not pump tail like Eastern Phoebe. Area of head from nape to crown was rounded, not squared like Eastern. Bird perched low on fence post, not very active. Flitted a couple of times, leaving perch to chase insect, returned to same spot.

RINGED KINGFISHER 11/5/89 Jim Morgan
Observed for 45 minutes at 50-100m with 10x binocs, Questar. Very large as compared to nearby Belted Kingfisher. Observed feeding from perches on dead snags as well as perched and flying. Very large bill, mainly dark but with noticeable area of horn color at base; bluish-gray head, somewhat shaggy and crested; black eye with very prominent white ocular spot; white neck band and throat; bluish-gray upperparts and wings, the latter showing white flashes in flight; broad, bluish-gray breast band, bordered below by narrow white band; belly and undertail coverts rufous. Much larger size and rufous belly extended through the vent which eliminates Belted, the only Kingfisher likely to be confused with Ringed.

RINGED KINGFISHER 11/4/89 Robert A. Honig
 Observed at distance of 100 yards. Much chunkier and larger than the several Belted Kingfishers nearby. Just under twice the length of a male American Kestrel perched nearby. Bill slightly longer than length of head, much more massive than that of the Belted. Upperparts - crest, head, face, back, rump and upper surface of tail and wings essentially the same slaty blue as the Belted, except for a conspicuous white collar extending completely around the neck to include the throat and nape. Small white spot in front of eye. Upper surface of tail narrowly barred with white. Breast slaty blue; white band below breast separating it from bright rusty bell, rust color extending posteriorly through the undertail coverts. In flights showed rusty wing linings, surrounded by white apparently on the base of the underside of the flight feathers; distal to this white area, underside of flight feathers dark. Vocalization (one) was a short rattle, much slower and noticeably lower than that of the Belted. It appeared to cut the rattle short as it was not nearly as drawn out as that of other Ringed seen in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Flew very little; mostly perched on snags in center of lake.

Buff Bellied Hummingbird 11/5/89 Barbara House
 Seen over several days as above bird. Larger than Rufous Hummingbird, with rufous in tail but no white. Very noticeable orange bill with black tip, green head and throat.

Harris' Hawk 11/5/89 Jim Morgan
 Seen in good, early morning light by both observers (EM) as bird left perch in roadside tree and took flight. Seen as close as 20m with 10x binocs and observed for 20 seconds. Believed to be same individual initially seen in October. (No Clearing House report) A large, dark raptor with dark flight feathers and rufous wing linings; long tail with distinctive broad white band at base of tail, visible from above and below. No location given on this bird, but assumed to be bird being observed at Davis Estate Rd. in Fort Bend County.

Harris' Hawk 11/19/89 Geneva LaVern
 Observed on Davis Estate Rd. near intersection of FM 1994 and FM 762 in Fort Bend County. Distance from bird from 30 - 80 ft. Bird perched low in sparsely-leafed tree. Sleek-looking hawk with long orange legs and orange cere. Uniformly dark brownish-black plumage from head to tail. Contrasting reddish-bronze scapulars and thighs. When bird flew, it showed pure white feathers on rump contrasting sharply with dark plumage. Wing linings were not visible. When perched, bird did not have barrel-chested aspect of Red-Tailed hawks observed in same area. In flight, did not appear as narrow and elongated as Marsh Hawk; flight was heavier, less buoyant than Marsh Hawk flight.

LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL 11/12/89 Michael Austin
 Observed at W. Bay-offshore sandbar on Northeast side of San Luis Pass at distance of 150 yds. using 7x42 binocs and 50-80x Questar for 10 minutes. Bird was standing in sandy saltwater up to tarsus. Head angular; heavy brown streaking on hindcrown, nape, otherwise white. Too distant to see eye color. Bill heavy, yellow with orange spot at gonydeal angle. Mantle dark slate gray, about concolor with Laughing Gull. Definitely paler than black folded primary tips (therefore *graellsii*, not nominate race). Underparts white; legs yellow. A full 1/4 larger than adjacent Ring-Billed Gull with impressively darker mantle.
Scissor-Tailed Flycatcher 11/13/89 Michael Austin

Late date for this bird. Seen on Beamer Rd. in Harris Co. Observed for 10 seconds sitting on power wire alongside pasture. Slim, pearly gray bird with central retrices elongated to at least a length equal to the birds body.

Golden Eagle 11/12/89 Charles and Patricia Jones
 As I scanned the flock (of snow geese) I noticed a large, dark raptor. I alerted Patricia to watch for a flash of white on the tail. Sure enough, we were soon rewarded and I yelled "Bald Eagle". However as it came closer we were able to see that the tail was not entirely white and, in fact, possessed a wide, dark terminal band. The white on the tail was clean and bright and not at all dirty in appearance. Now we could perceive a distinct, isolated white patch on the underside of the bird and both were well defined and limited in extent. Up to this point we had been unable to determine the color of the head. The tail looked considerably longer than the head. The bird's head certainly did not appear as particularly prominent. We were fortunate to finally have it fly overhead and Patricia and I both felt we had noticed a golden sheen to the head. There were a few turkey vultures in the area at the same time for comparison purposes. Our bird had wider, flatter wings, did not rock, and possessed the white features mentioned above. While we watched, the twice stooped, unsuccessfully, on individual Snow Geese. The visibility was excellent and the bird was in view for approximately 10 minutes. We viewed it through 8x,42 and 10x,42 binoculars.

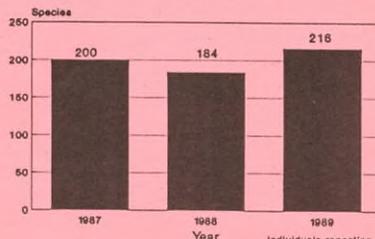
FOX SPARROW 11/11/89 Jim Morgan
 Early fall arrival date by one day. Heard the distinctive flat "click" note at first location just over Harris/Waller Co. boundary. Located two more individuals by call note and distinctive musical song on Harper's Church Rd. in Waller. One of the latter two individuals well seen by JM - mainly rich rufous on upperparts and tail; gray about head, nape, neck and throat; splotchy rufous spots on white breast; a very large, relatively secretive sparrow. On 11/24/89 UM returned to Harper's Church Rd. location and one individual was still singing. This bird reacted to a taped song of Fox Sparrow (not his). On both dates, bird was well seen with 10x binocs in good light.

CLEARING HOUSE CODES

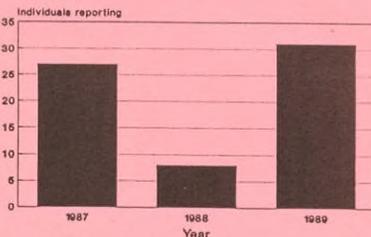
Observer Codes:

BH = Barbara House	MA = Mike Austin
CJ = Charles Jones	MBU = Uzar, Gretchen Mueller,
CPJ = Charles & Patricia Jones	Judy Boyes
DB = David Bradford	NPO = Noel Pettingell
DLR = Don & Lee Richardson	OG = O.G. Field Trip
DR = Don Richardson	PM = Peggy Milstead
DW = Diane Wise	RC = Uzar, Christine Bourgeois
EM = Eubanks, Morgan	RH = Bob Honig
EU = Uzar, Ted Eubanks	RU = Richard Uzar
GL = Geneva La Vern	TPF = Tony & Phyllis Frank
GM = Gretchen Mueller	UD = Uzar, Arch Dillard
HAS = Houston Audubon Society	UD = Uzar, Jim Day
JM = Jim Morgan	UF = Uzar, Joe Farrell
JS = Joseph Schmalz	UM = Uzar, Jim Morgan
LB = LaVern, Norma Barnes	WC = Wesly Cureton
LP = Libby Price	WM = Bill McClure

Total Species Reported November

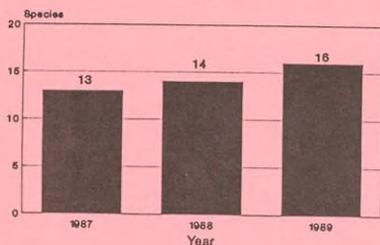


Observers November

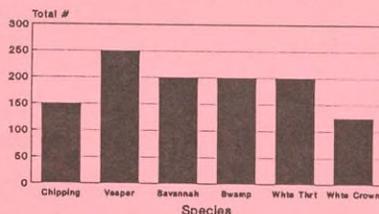


For those thinking observer #'s are down

Sparrow Species November

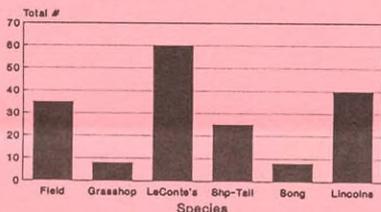


High numbers in one Day Sparrows - November 1989



White Crown on 11 November
Vesper on 11 November
All others on 24 or 25 November

High numbers in one Day Sparrows - November 1989



Shp-Tail on 4 November
All others on 24 November
Fox & Harris' also on 24 November

MINUTES OF OG MEETING, DEC 5

Sparrow identification presented by David Bradford during Novice Time drew a crowd of over 20 people. David concentrated on sparrows that can be found in W. Harris Co. and Galveston and grouped them according to habitat.

At 7:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Richard Uzar. Richard presented our new OG "business cards" designed by Matt DeFord, Kathy's son. He also encouraged everyone to participate in the Houston CBC, and reminded all of the W. Harris Co. and Rockport field trips in January.

Jo Ann Gartig announced the Texas Parks and Wildlife's Second Annual Bald Eagle Count on Rayburn Lake on January 12, 13 and 14, 1990. Boats and volunteers are needed. Call Katrina Martin at TP&W, 512-389-4979 to volunteer or get more information. Charles Jones reported that the FAA is looking further into the Westside Airport and it is not too late to make your views known. Libby Price announced her coming resignation from Editor of The Spoonbill, with the May issue to be her last. Volunteers and a computer are needed to take over. It was suggested by Don Richardson that members check with their companies to find a computer in case they are updating equipment, and Tom Day

volunteered to contact a manufacturer. Tom is also a public relations professional and will work with the OG if we can get a PR volunteer.

Jerry Patrick presented the proposed budget and solicited ideas for amendments. He said also that membership is up, which improves revenues; and that money gained from checklist sales will be put in a separate fund to support future reprinting.

Lee Richardson announced new purchases for the library: two more Audubon videos, "Non-passerine Land Birds" and "Song Birds, Vol. I"; and also a new book, Donald and Lillian Stokes' The Hummingbird Book, Little, Brown & Co.

Notable bird sightings included Greater Scaup, Oldsquaw, Flammulated Owl, Green-tailed Towhee, Bullock's Oriole and a number of Bald Eagles.

The program began with Steve LaBuda, Manager of Attwater's Prairie Chicken NWR, giving us the figures on the decline of the prairie chicken population to its present serious situation. He spoke about management techniques, scarcity of habitat, the problems such as heavy spring rains that kill chicks, and possible solutions such as a captive breeding program and acquisition of more habitat.

P.D. Hulce and Richard Uzar presented "Good Birds on the Houston CBC." The group watched slides as P.D. and Richard talked about birds to look for and where to find them. They discussed identification problems and stressed taking immediate and copious notes for rare birds.

Christine Bourgeois, Acting Secretary

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1990

	1990	Approved 1989	Actual 1989
Estimated Revenues:			
Membership dues (390 @ \$10)	\$3900	\$3400	\$3760
Spoonbill subscriptions (18 @ \$13)	234	260	208
Interest earned on deposits	365	260	358
Sales check lists, maps	25	125	31
Aluminum sales	125	100	125
Non-recurring revenues/donations	-	-	210
	\$4649	\$4145	\$4692
Projected Expenses:			
Spoonbill printing (11 issues @ \$220)	2420	2420	2396
Bulk mailings (11 @ \$35)	385	440	378
Donation Bayou Manor	-	150	150
P.O. Box rental	39	30	39
Contribution to Bird Atlas	150	150	150
Misc. postage, stationary, etc.	200	50	95
Library	200	150	150
Program expense	650	300	90
Printing Clearing House forms	80	100	69
Publicity	150	-	-
Projection equipment	150	-	-
Sponsor Birdathon Team	-	130	152
Unbudgeted expense*	-	-	2316
Depreciation	80	-	-
	\$4504	\$3920	\$5985
Projected Carry Fwd/(Loss)	145	225	(1293)
*Memorials		\$ 156	
Awards to Checklist underwriters		160	
Donation to Audubon(Smith Oaks)		2080	
		\$2316	

Jerry Patrick, Treasurer

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

If you are reading this message I will assume you are a birder. If that's true, I'd like you to ask yourself a question, "Am I a good birder?" Not me, I mean you! Are you a good birder? And what is a "good" birder, anyway? What is it that distinguishes us among ourselves?

In speaking with some OG's about participating in our Houston Christmas Bird Count I've heard "I'm not a very good birder," too often -- almost as if there were some requirement to demonstrate proficiency before we'll let you in. I am saddened that any of our members could have such an impression of any OG event. We are an association of amateur enthusiasts. Think about it. Enthusiasts: up long before the chickens, out into the cold, sometimes rain, drive an hour or more to search out a little brown streak that shows itself long enough to say "pszeet" and then disappears! Or maybe to search a 90-foot tall tree hoping to glimpse a creature whose prime goal seems to be to appear as a leaf at the very top. Persons so moved are either crazy or in love; some would argue it's all the same.

In our association, enthusiasm is the discriminating factor and the engine that drives us. It is important to me to reaffirm exactly who and what we are as a group. Our primary concern is the "... promotion of the study, observation and recording of bird life." We have chosen education as the best vehicle toward that end. The "expert birders" we respect today were those scratching their heads over some little brown critter 15 years ago. Their instructors of the day puzzled over Fuertes' prints of birds and decried the lack of information in their learning days, 15 years before that.

Every one of us has some degree of the quality which causes us to be, or to become "good birders." You couldn't be reading this otherwise. You share the joy of seeking out and appreciating the grand spectacle of nature which birds so easily and readily present to us. Experienced or not, the degree of enthusiasm which you bring to the study is what moves you along. Some might say, "I'm lacking in this critical ingredient." Let me assure you that enthusiasm has a very contagious nature. Those

among us with an abundance are more than happy to share. If you can't believe me, then ask some of those who participated in any of the recent Novice Corner sessions. Come to the meetings, tour with the field trips (there are two great ones in January) and commit yourself to do so regularly.

Every birder of any persuasion, level of expertise or interest is a welcome birder with our Ornithology Study Group. We wish to experience you and your love of birds, and to share with you ours; to pass on our experiences; to further the body of knowledge about birds; and to grow even more in the process. In order to be "good birders" we must first be "birders." So if you can find some piece of yourself in this article I'll be looking for you on January 9 if we missed each other on the Christmas Counts.

Richard Uzar, Chairman (phone 527-0454)

BANNER YEAR FOR WHOOPING CRANES

Another banner year for Whooping Cranes saw 12-18 chicks successfully fledged this year in the Canadian nesting grounds at Wood Buffalo National Park. 145 cranes were expected to migrate this year. Drought did affect the nesting grounds somewhat, and the cranes were more spread out as a result, making them more difficult to check, but we can be glad they did so well in spite of less water than normal on the nesting grounds.

HOUSTON ARBORETUM PROGRAMS

The Houston Arboretum will offer weekend programs on "Fruit, Nut and Berry Trees for Houston," (six Friday evenings); "Houston Arbor Day Weekend," January 20-21; and a "Volunteer Orientation" if you would like to become a volunteer, January 27.

There is a fee for the first; the others are free. For more information check the literature table at meetings or call 681-8433.

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