



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME VII No. 4

AUGUST 1958

 *On the basis of scientific investigation, it *
 is estimated that the insect eating birds are
 worth \$350,000,000 yearly to the farmer. One
 nighthawk's crop contained 340 grasshoppers,
 *52 bugs, 3 beetles, 1 spider. The crop of a *
 yellow-billed cuckoo had 250 tent caterpill-
 *ars; that of a chickadee, 200 cankerworms. *
 Crops of mourning doves contain an average of
 7,000 weed seeds. A single kildeer's stomach
 examined in Texas contained 300 mosquito lar-
 vae. Specialists estimate that if birds were
 to disappear entirely, human life would van-
 *ish too in less than ten years. *

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

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

- August 16 Ornithology Group Field Trip to FREEPORT. We will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Weingarten parking lot on Almeda at Cleburne. Lunch will be ravenoused (alright, troublemaker, so there's no such word) between noon and 1:00 p.m. at Lake Jackson Park. Join us there if you can't make it earlier. Clayton Gilman will lead the group and is enthusiastic about a new unexplored area.
- September 9 First regular meeting of OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB at 8:00 p.m. at Garden Center on Hermann Drive. At that time, the date of the September field trip will be announced. It will be led by Vic Emanuel and will be at Sheldon Reservoir.
- September 14 ORNITHOLOGY GROUP Field Trip to the Kountze-Silsbee area. Meet at the railroad station in LIBERTY at 9:30 a.m. Liberty is approximately an hour's drive from the outskirts of Houston. This is a wooded area that is new to most Houston birders. Armand Yramategui will lead the trip. With his enthusiasm and knowledge, it ought to be a dilly!

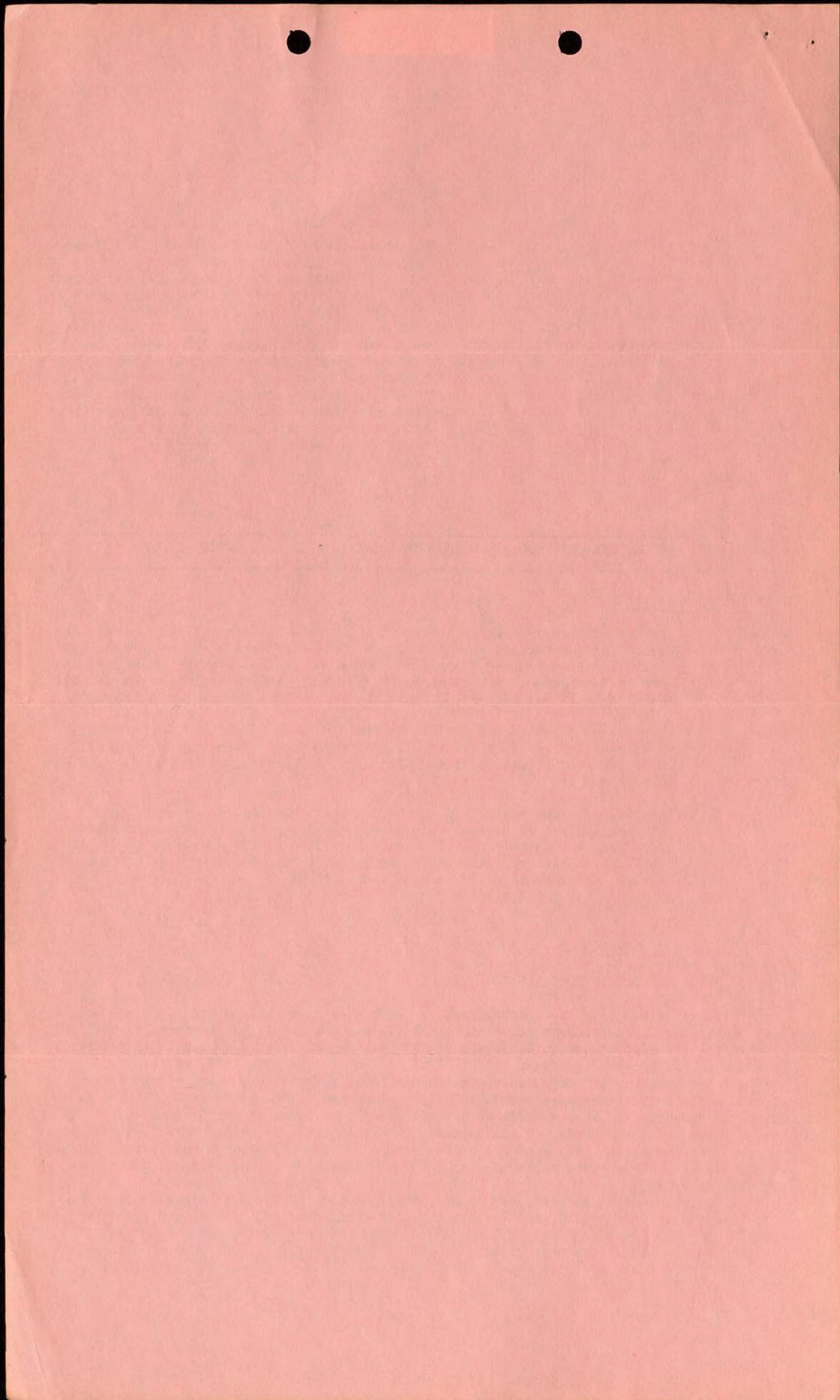
ORNITHOLOGY GROUP REPORTS

O. G. FIELD TRIP TO GALVESTON - - - - - REPORTED BY JERRY BAKER

An enthusiastic group of birders assembled at the usual meeting place in Galveston - the Humble Station on Broadway and 61st street. While waiting to get started, several prominent members of the group let it be known that they had been unfortunate in not yet seeing a cattle egret - so naturally this trip evolved into a quest for the said C. E.

On the way out on Stewart Road where these birds have been found fairly regularly, several ponds and marshes were carefully inspected. Many of the ponds on the island have dried up, consequently, shore birds of various kinds were found in rather heavy concentrations on the remaining ponds. Black skimmers were cutting the surface of the water with their bright red bills. Black-necked stilts scolded us for disturbing them. Interesting summer visitors, or perhaps early migrants, were several long-billed curlews, dowitchers and marbled godwits.

As the group proceeded down the island, every herd of cattle was carefully searched with binoculars for the C.E. About eight miles down the road, the first ones were found. One flew over the road in front of the excited crowd and gave everyone an opportunity for a close look. Another was seen sitting on the back of a cow a la Trader Horn. Three were sitting on some posts around a pipe with running water. The buffy color on their backs could easily be seen.



After the hunger to see cattle egrets had been fully satisfied, and forty four species had been recorded, the group went to West Beach for a swim, supper and watermelon.

After dark, birding was put aside, the balscope was set up, and under the able guidance of Johnnye Murray, the amateur star-gazers concentrated on the constellations, the moons of Jupiter, and other wonders of the night sky.

Members and guests who attended were: the C.B. Gilmans, Ella and Helen Wolfer, Clinton and Linda Snyder, Mary Clark, Louise and Henry Hoffman, Jimmy and Johnnye Murray, Ernest and Mabel Edwards, Ronald Fowler, Jerry and Nancy Strickling, Ralph Peterson, Mary Beth Massie, Robert Simpson, Norma Oates, Jerry Baker, Sue Harris, Josiephine Wilkin, Carrie Holcomb, John O'Neill and Austin Evans.

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LT. GEORGE K PALMER CELEBRATES! ----- JOSIEPHINE WILKIN REPORTS

In response to the notice attached to your last Spoonbill regarding Palmer being in Houston after completing his studies at Squadron Officers' School at Maxwell AFB, three field trips were organized over the week-end of July 26-28.

On July 26, Norma Oates and Carrie Holcomb took Elva Theis of Cincinnati, and Bob Hill of San Antonio to Galveston. The following noteworthy birds were seen on this trip: 3 avocets, 12 clapper rails, 12 or 13 cattle egrets, an unusually large number of ringed plover, many peeps, and other shore birds.

George Palmer, en route from Maxwell Airforce Base to San Antonio, arrived after lunch July 26 and decided not to try to find the group in Galveston. Therefore George, Josie and Brom made a trip to the home of Bill Spangler where birds were observed through his picture window overlooking the patio. Bill is interested in the identity of birds visiting his feeding stations and has recently purchased several field guides.

July 27 - Thirteen members and guests went to the Freeport area. The first stop was made at Miller Road where early migrants such as spotted and solitary sandpipers were observed. At Lake Jackson the parula warbler was the star performer. Unusual birds for the season observed en route to Bryan Beach included blue winged teal, coots and scaup. While eating lunch on the beach a sandwich tern was seen. During the mid afternoon heat, the group sought relief in the shade cast by the Surfside Interoastal Canal bridge and had coffee and cake. At this location Bob added a lifer, the wood-ibis to his list.

It was at this location that the group was lucky enough to observe the habits of a clapper rail feeding and training her little chicks. The hen rail would find a tiny crab, rush down to the water to wash it, then come back and give it to a chick. The chick would then in turn rush down to the water and again wash the crab before eating it!

At Surfside we were invited into the home of Austin Evans where we made ourselves at home. The group changed into swim suits and took a mowed trail (compliments of our host) to the beach. The dip was the end of a perfect day. Participants on this trip were Austin Evans, Clayton and Eva Gilman, Bob Hill, Norma Oates, George Palmer, Thelma Smith, Linda and Clinton Snyder, Katrina Thompson, Josiephine Wilkin, and Ella and Helen Wolfer.

July 28 - Birding at the Baytown Tunnel was exceptionally good. Seen in this area were spotted and three stilt sandpipers, a clapper rail, two mottled ducks, a green heron, white faced, glossy and wood ibis, spoonbills, several hundred white pelicans, and a thousand or more peeps. The usual egrets and terns were also seen in large numbers. The trip ended at the beautiful new home of Linda Snyder overlooking the bay at La Porte, where we watched red-headed woodpeckers feeding their young. George Palmer, Josiephine Wilkin, and Linda and Clinton Snyder made this trip.

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ANGLETON BECOMES SANCTUARY FOR BIRDS:

Mrs. Stuart G. Kershner (Ruth) was interested enough in our inquiry about the bird sanctuary in Angleton to send us the following newspaper clipping from the Chronicle, written by Marie Beth Jones:

"Angleton - Small boys with B-B guns and sling shots may not welcome the information, but Angleton has become a bird sanctuary.

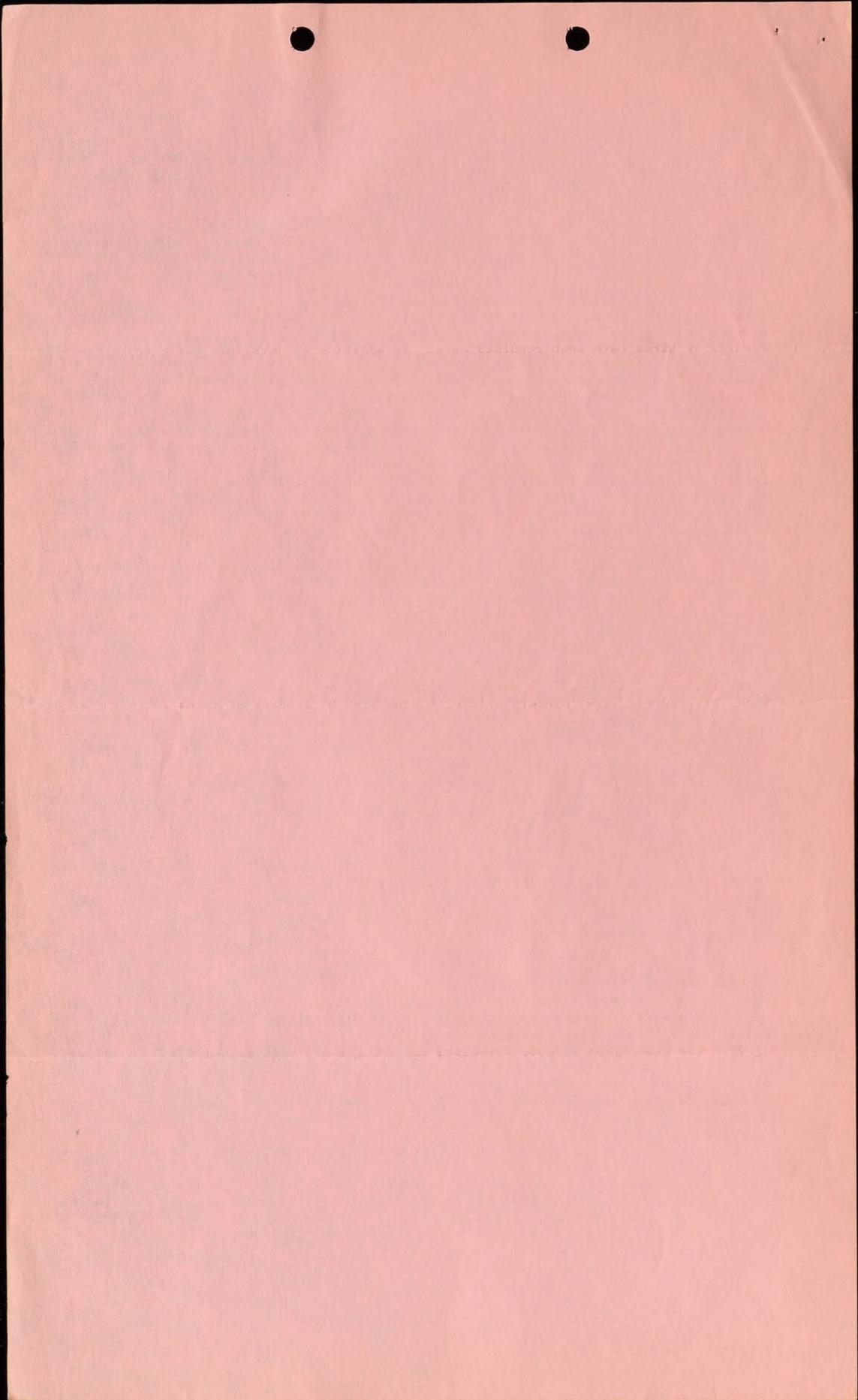
Angleton is the third city in the state to take this action.

The city council recently passed, on request of the Angleton Garden Club, an ordinance making it unlawful to trap, hunt, shoot, or attempt to shoot the birds, or to rob their nests anywhere within the city limits.

These are considered to be misdemeanor offenses, and anyone convicted of them will be fined a sum not to exceed \$200.

The local club plans to establish feeding centers and build bird houses to entice birds into the city. The only two cities in Texas to have declared themselves sanctuaries, other than Angleton, are Alvin and Brenham. Mrs. E. E. Hunter is president of the local club.

Do you think the day might ever come when Houston might do likewise?



BIRDING AT ARANSAS WILDLIFE REFUGE- -REPORTED BY JERRY STRICKLING

The refuge is located 150 miles southwest of Houston and can be reached via highway 59 to Canado, FM 172 and state highway 35 to Port Lavaca and Tivoli thence via Route 113 to Austwell. Here a large sign directs one southward to the Refuge which occupies the whole of Blackjack Peninsula in Aransas county containing 47,000 acres between San Antonio Bay and St. Charles Bay opposite St. Josephs and Matagorda Islands. State Highway 35 crosses the marshy delta of the San Antonio-Guadalupe Rivers between Pt. Lavaca and Tivoli and this area is worthy of a stop for birding.

The headquarters of the Refuge are located adjacent to the entrance and a bulletin at the registration desk states that this refuge is an important link in the chain of water-fowl wintering areas along the Gulf coast. It is the ancestral home and only remaining wintering site used by the whooping cranes. The manager, Mr. Claud Lard, advises that almost 300 species of birds have been recorded here. In addition to javelina, white tailed deer racoon and an occasional red wolf are seen.

A map is furnished which shows the roads that may be driven and visitors are free to travel unescorted; however, because of the primitive terrain you are requested not to leave the shell-surfaced roads. Two observation towers are maintained which furnish excellent views of surrounding wildlife. The birds, particularly the whooping cranes, and mammals have become accustomed to these towers and will feed near them with little regard to quiet visitors. A parking area is available at the fresh water lake where deer and birds are usually seen. Two picnic areas are maintained, one immediately south of the headquarters and another on St. Charles Bay. Both have rest room facilities.

The sandy terrain is rather well covered with live oaks, post oaks, prickly pear, grasses and marsh vegetation at the perimeter. Open areas are more prevalent on the St. Charles side of the peninsula.

During the winter practically all of the wintering shore birds, ducks, long-legged waders, and geese may be found in common to abundant numbers. The whooping cranes have been seen by the writer on 3 of 4 visits to the refuge between the months of November and March over the past 3 years. This included one juvenile in brown plumage. Sandhill cranes are generally found during the winter, and the wintering perching birds and hawks are also found in good number.

A recent trip to the area over the July 4 week end resulted in 66 species being logged. This list included 25 long-billed curlews, Inca dove, blue grosbeak, the whiteface, white and wood ibis, horned lark, orchard oriole, spoonbills, 6 species of terns including an excellent study of a Sandwich tern in company with a group of Royal's. The yellow tipped bill and slight crest were plainly seen. He was not wary and was still preening on a sandbar when we drove away.

The ladder-backed woodpecker was found and of particular interest was a family of western kingbirds which was our first record of their nesting here. We also found the mocking birds feeding nestlings, while a cliff swallow was seen near the Guadalupe River on highway 35. Willets and stilts were apparently nesting and had young, because they were vociferous as we would approach them. The willets became excited and dived on us, coming within 10 feet, as we searched unsuccessfully for their young.

The announced visiting hours at the Refuge are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. seven days a week. The gate is locked at 6:00 p.m., however arrangements can be made at headquarters to stay later provided someone is available to unlock the exit gate. The late evening hours are particularly rewarding for the feeding birds and wild turkey are generally seen south of the headquarters area. One flock of 18 birds approached our car as we sat parked in it (smooching Nancy?) feeding as they moved along. They passed on either side of us ignoring or not noticing us.

The white-tailed deer are abundant and 25 were seen at sundown feeding in the general area south of the headquarters. These included bucks in velvet as well as fawns with spots.

The National Wildlife Refuges have proved to be fascinating areas for wildlife enthusiasts and the cordiality and reception to visitors is the maximum permitted without interfering with the underlying purpose for which the refuges are established.

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HAVING WONDERFUL TIME WISH YOU WERE HERE!

The Henry Aldrichs report a grand vacation with 3 lifers. Part of it was spent in the Black Hills region of South Dakota. It was there on July 25 in Spear Fish Canyon that they saw the blackheaded grosbeak. In fact they saw a whole family with the male feeding an immature male. They were in beautiful plumage. They also got a good view for rather a long time of the western tanager. They watched the dipper, or water ouzel, for about 20 minutes. The birds would fly downstream and then work their way upstream. They were fortunate in hearing the ouzels singing.



NOEL PETTINGELL SHARES HIS VACATION WITH REMEMBERED FRIENDS:

"Altho I didn't spend my vacation in Texas, I still had a most enjoyable time in Connecticut, New York, Ontario, Pennsylvania and Maryland from June 27 to July 7. My wife and I considered our visit to Niagara Falls a "delayed honeymoon" since we hadn't taken one when we were married in '55! The Falls are certainly one of the world's natural wonders and must be seen (in person, like Grand Canyon) to be appreciated. Birds are almost forgotten when one is in the vicinity of Niagara's thunderous roar, but I did manage to catch fleeting glimpses of common terns, herring and ring-billed gulls, and rough-winged, bank, and tree swallows amid the spray-filled Horseshoe Falls (mostly on the Canadian side) Wind currents would sweep the birds down onto the surface of the churning rapids at the base of falls and it almost appeared as tho the birds made a game of feeding on the wing in this dizzy manner! Also present (near the American Falls) was a common loon still in winter plumage (it was July 2) Blue-winged teal and spotted sandpipers were also on the American side of Niagara Falls.

From Niagara we drove around the Canadian shore of Lake Ontario, our destination being the Thousand Islands. We boarded the excursion boat at Rockport, Ontario which, altho more appropriately named than Rockport, Texas, still brought back vivid memories of the latter, Connie Hagar's - and Texas! - birding Mecca! This was the most northerly extent of our vacation tour but no exceptional Canadian species of birds were to be seen (I had little time for bird-watching at this point as I was a full-fledged sight-seeing tourist for the moment!)

Our final destination before returning to Connecticut was Gettysburg, Pa., only 5 miles north of the Mason-Dixon (Md.) line and our furthest point south while on vacation. We were back in mockingbird territory and I relived once again many happy birding experiences in Texas as I listened to the symbol of the Lone Star State singing his beautiful song at this most famous of American battle sites. In fact, there is actually a monument dedicated to a bird (possibly a mocker!) in the battlegrounds! It is a stone replica of a shell-torn tree trunk with a parent bird feeding 3 nestlings during the pitched 3-day fighting between Confederate & Union forces. And lodged at a point just inches above the nest is a cannon ball which shattered the top part of the tree. The incident is part of the history of the Battle of Gettysburg and commemorates the bravery of a bird protecting its family in the midst of terrifying shellfire and gunfire.

While in New York we also got in a visit to the Ginger Lakes, including Cornell University (where Arthur A. Allen is professor of ornithology - one of America's finest) where we saw cardinals near the northern limit of their range. At Watkins Glen (south tip of Seneca Lake, west of Cayuga Lake) a picturesque gorge with waterfalls and rapids, veeries were in song all around us (actually the dominant bird!) and wood thrushes, too. Even Carolina wrens were singing, this being about the farthest north of their breeding range. This is also true for the blue-gray gnatcatcher, another unexpected find at the Glen (saw 24 on July 4) - and another reminder of Houston! Red-eyed, yellow-throated and warbling vireos sang from the treetops, too.

Other notable species seen or heard on our vacation trip included the following: Turkey vulture - seen near Hancock, N.Y. (near N.E. Penna. corner) my furthest north ever also in Pa. Sparrow hawk - one only during entire trip - in Ontario; black tern - two birds - Ontario; nighthawk - one at Gettysburg, Pa. - only one of trip; horned lark - N.Y. and Ontario; tufted titmouse - Gettysburg (altho resident in Conn.); white-breasted nuthatch - New York; cedar waxwing - N.Y.; the following warblers: black-and-white (Conn. & N.Y.); blue-winged (N.Y.); yellow - (N.Y. and Ontario); Blackburnian?(N.Y.); chestnut-sided (N.Y.); ovenbird (N.Y. & Pa.); yellowthroat (Conn., N.Y., Ontario, Pa.); chat (N.Y.); red-start (N.Y.) Bobolink was seen in N.Y. The following sparrows: grasshopper (N.Y., Ontario, Pa.); Henslow's (N.Y.); vesper (N.Y.); chipping (Conn., N.Y., Ontario, Pa., Md.); field (N.Y., Pa., Md.); swamp (N.Y.); song (Conn., N.Y., Ontario, Pa., Md.); Savannah (N.Y.).

TOTAL SPECIES, JUNE 27 - July 6; 86

TOTAL MILES: 2,000 $\frac{1}{2}$ (incl. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours by boat), 6/27-7/7

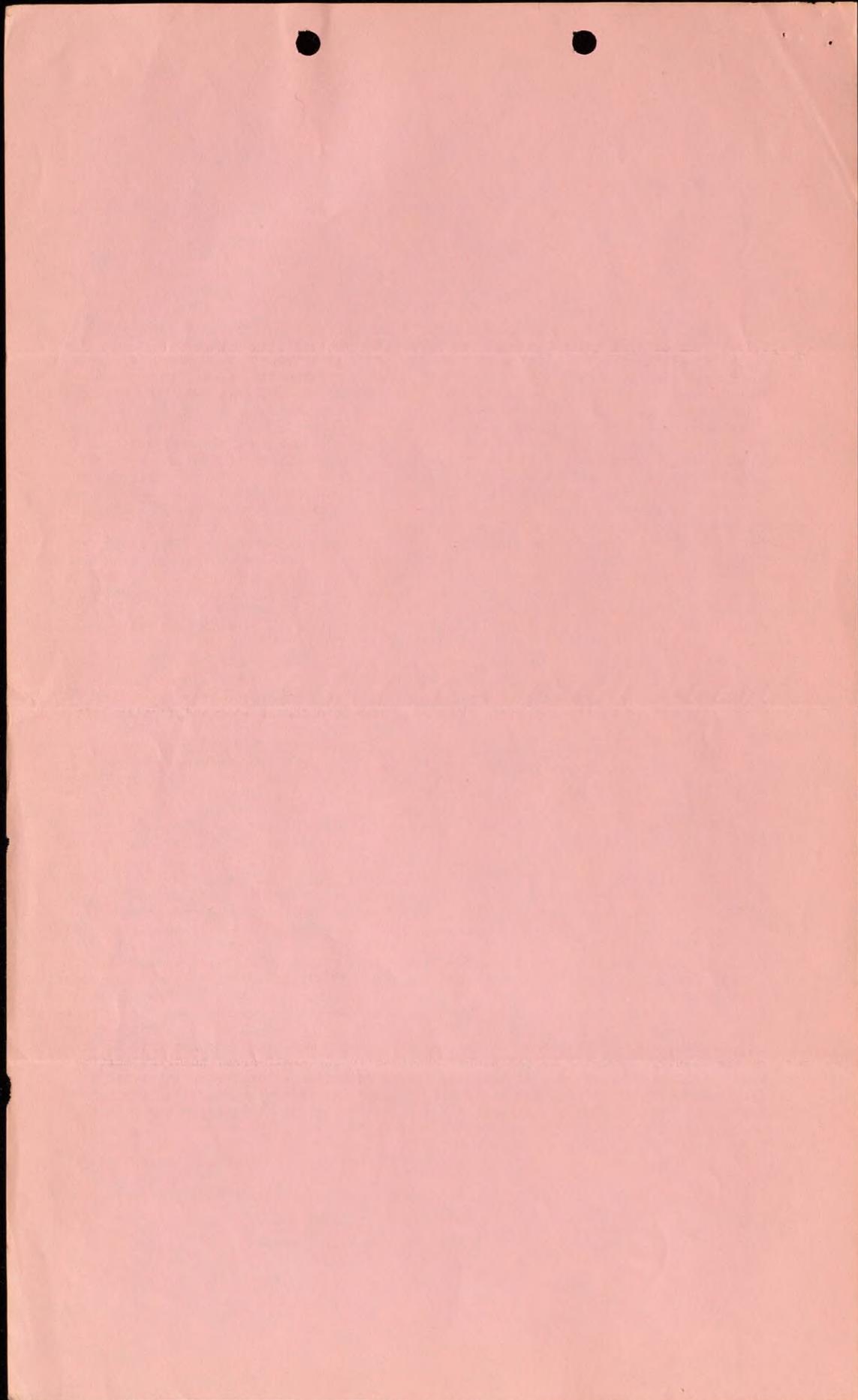
(86 is not too impressive, but whole trip was through inland country only with stops at sightseeing attractions not always good for birds; also, my 3 companions were non-birders - altho they did help spot a few species - and late June/ early July is one of poorest times of year for variety)

NOTE: In 1953 I saw 134 species (mostly in Colorado) in a trip from Houston to N.Y. and Conn. to Colo.

July 10 - Aug. 2 - 7,150 miles; in 1954: 108 species (mostly in Florida) in a trip from Houston to Miami (3,920 miles - June 6-20)

Best regards to Ornithology Group,

Sincerely, Noel Pettingell
(Texan-at-heart!)



ARMCHAIR BIRD WATCHING - - - - - SUBMITTED BY MAX H. JACOBS

The best way to watch birds is to get out in the fields and woods, but if this is not possible, armchair bird watching can be quite rewarding.

My wife, Elsie Jacobs, and I have confined most of our bird watching to the back portion of our two-acre place in the 5900 block of Westheimer Road.

Our observations are made from a glassed-in porch which projects into the edge of a clump of red haw and elm trees, or through a living room picture window which overlooks about an acre of lawn and trees.

Over a period of six years we have carefully and positively identified and recorded 73 species, some of them quite unusual. We have had some thrilling moments when rare visitors appeared at our feeding station at the edge of a haw thicket.

One day we spotted a pure white bird that looked and acted like an English sparrow. The binoculars revealed that it was indeed an English sparrow, but an albino, with bright pink bill and feet and black eyes. This bird came regularly to our feeding station and then disappeared.

One evening at twilight there was a great flapping of wings in a clearing near our porch, and a huge bird alighted. Close examination with binoculars and reference to Peterson's Field Guide identified it as a yellow-crowned night heron.

It stalked slowly and warily to a shallow bird bath on the ground nearby, stepped in and stood there as happily as if it were in the middle of a marshy rice field. We speculated that the heron must have gotten off course, saw a glint of water through the trees and come down to find a place to spend the night.

When we first moved to the Westheimer Road house, in 1947, the area had been freshly reclaimed from swampy prairie. Several times we saw king rail lumbering clumsily along a ditch at the side of our property. Our cocker spaniels flushed woodcock several times, and once drove a prairie chicken from the tall grass.

Among oddities observed were a blackbird with a white tail and another with several white wing feathers.

A young hawk flew headlong into a porch window and flapped to the ground, dazed. For several days the big, fierce-looking bird was groggy and perched on a low haw branch in full sight. When we tried to approach, he would flap lazily away to another nearby tree and sit there, as if too tired to fly any more. He was around more than a week and finally left for good.

Early on a misty morning we saw a ring-necked pleasant cock strolling slowly across the front lawn. It was obviously tame, its tail and wings clipped to prevent flight. The cock looked around curiously, as if exploring, and appeared not to have made up its mind whether it liked freedom or not. It walked slowly out of our open front gate and disappeared around the garden wall into tall grass. Where it came from or where it went remain unsolved mysteries.

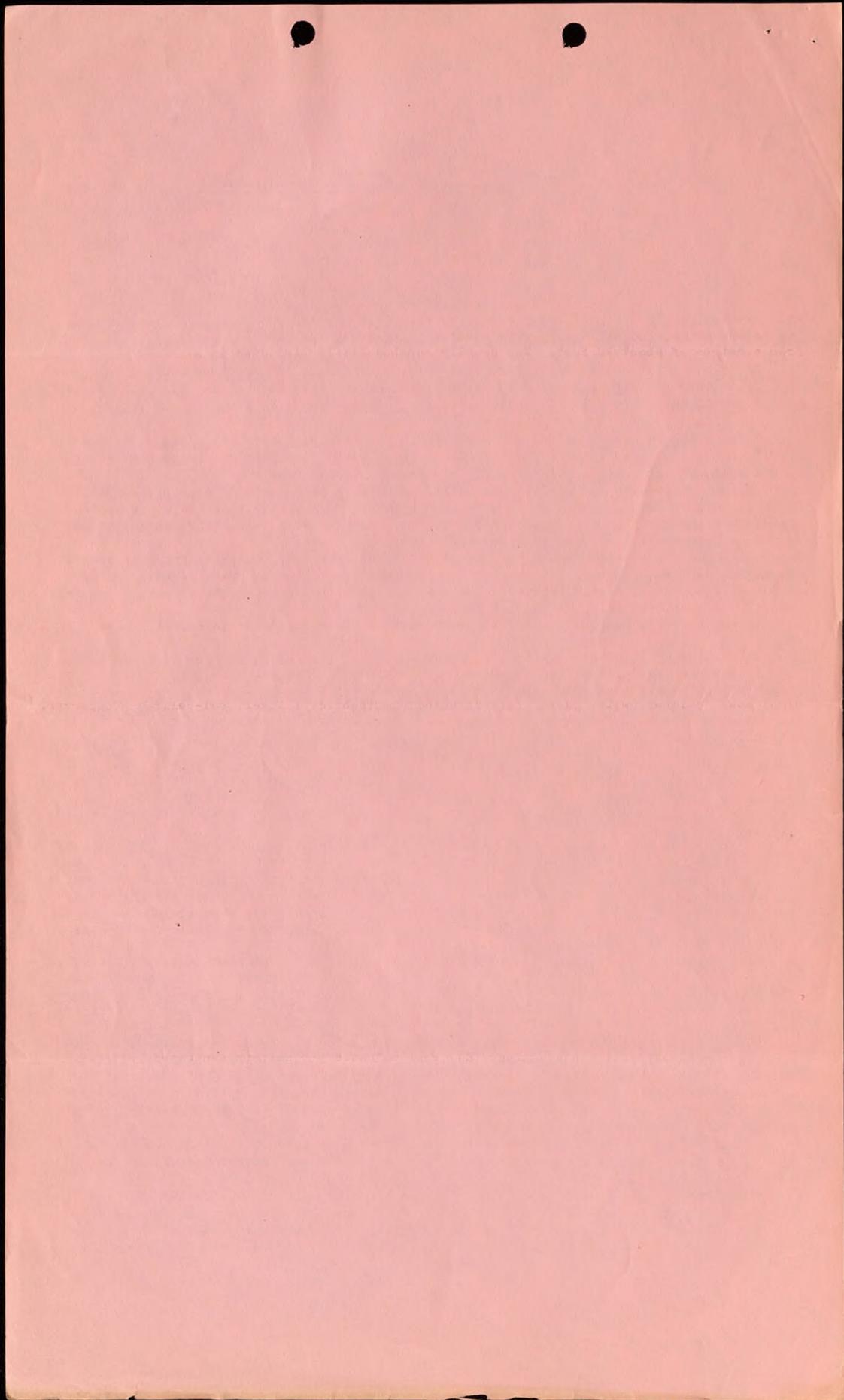
Parrakeets which are escapees from captivity are becoming quite common. At least a dozen have been seen at our feeding stations and bird baths. They are with us for a few days or a few weeks and then disappear. One green parrakeet seemed tougher than the rest. He had been a regular boarder for several months, feeding with other birds morning and evening, and we had just about decided he would survive when he, like the others, disappeared. A few days later we had another of these colorful birds, this one bright blue, with greenish wings white markings on the head.

The comings and goings of these escaped pets lead to some interesting speculation. What happens to them? Do they return to their former homes? Does some skilled parrakeet lover lure them back into captivity? Do they make a meal for a cat? Is freedom too rugged for them? If so, it is heat, cold, or just the plain necessity of scratching for a living that lays them low?

One wonders, too, whether some day we may not have a race of wild parrakeets in this part of the country. Judging by the number observed in our small area, hundreds must be escaping. Of all these, there must be a few rugged individuals capable of surviving for a considerable period. Perhaps some of these tougher individuals may find mates and produce offspring. Over a period of years, a new, tougher race of wild parrakeets might evolve. This could be a case of Darwinian selection at work.

All in all, maintaining a feeding station where a mixture of standard hen scratch, fine baby chick feed and sunflower seed is put out twice a day, summer and winter, has been a great joy.

Not long ago we glanced out at the feeding area and counted 14 bobwhite quail, a family of cardinals, two adults with three young; four bluejays, six mourning doves, a boat-tailed grackle, half a dozen male and female cowbirds, with several young; and a score or more English sparrows. At the sunflower seed feeder a red-bellied woodpecker and a blue-



ARMCHAIR BIRD WATCHING, BY MAX H. JACOBS, continued:

jay were quarreling over which had priority. Eating happily with the birds on the ground were two cottontail rabbits.

This was not at all unusual. We have had one or more coveys of quail in our backyard since we moved into the Westheimer Road house 11 years ago. It is a joy to watch the covey break up into pairs during the breeding season in the spring, and then to see the adults leading their young to the feeding station, like top sergeants herding a file of recruits across a drill ground. Watching a covey of baby quail grow up is a source of never-ending delight.

But there are heartaches, too, in having these wild creatures for neighbors and friends.

We were watching several young loggerhead shrikes waddling across the lawn when there was a sudden, angry flash of red. A hawk swooped down, seized one of the little birds in its talons and soared aloft. My wife's scream frightened the hawk and he dropped his prey from a height of about 20 feet. The cruelly mangled little bird died in my hand.

Every now and then in the spring, when birds are nesting and feeding their young, we find half-grown English sparrows dead in the feeding area, pecked to death by blackbirds. This seems to happen only in the spring, and the female blackbirds appear to be the killers.

One spring day a few years ago, we heard the sharp crack of a .22 calibre rifle in the direction of the vacant lot where the quail nest. A small boy with a gun in his hand stood holding a quail hen and looking at the limp bird curiously. He did not know what it was, and did not realize he had shot the hen off a nest filled with eggs.

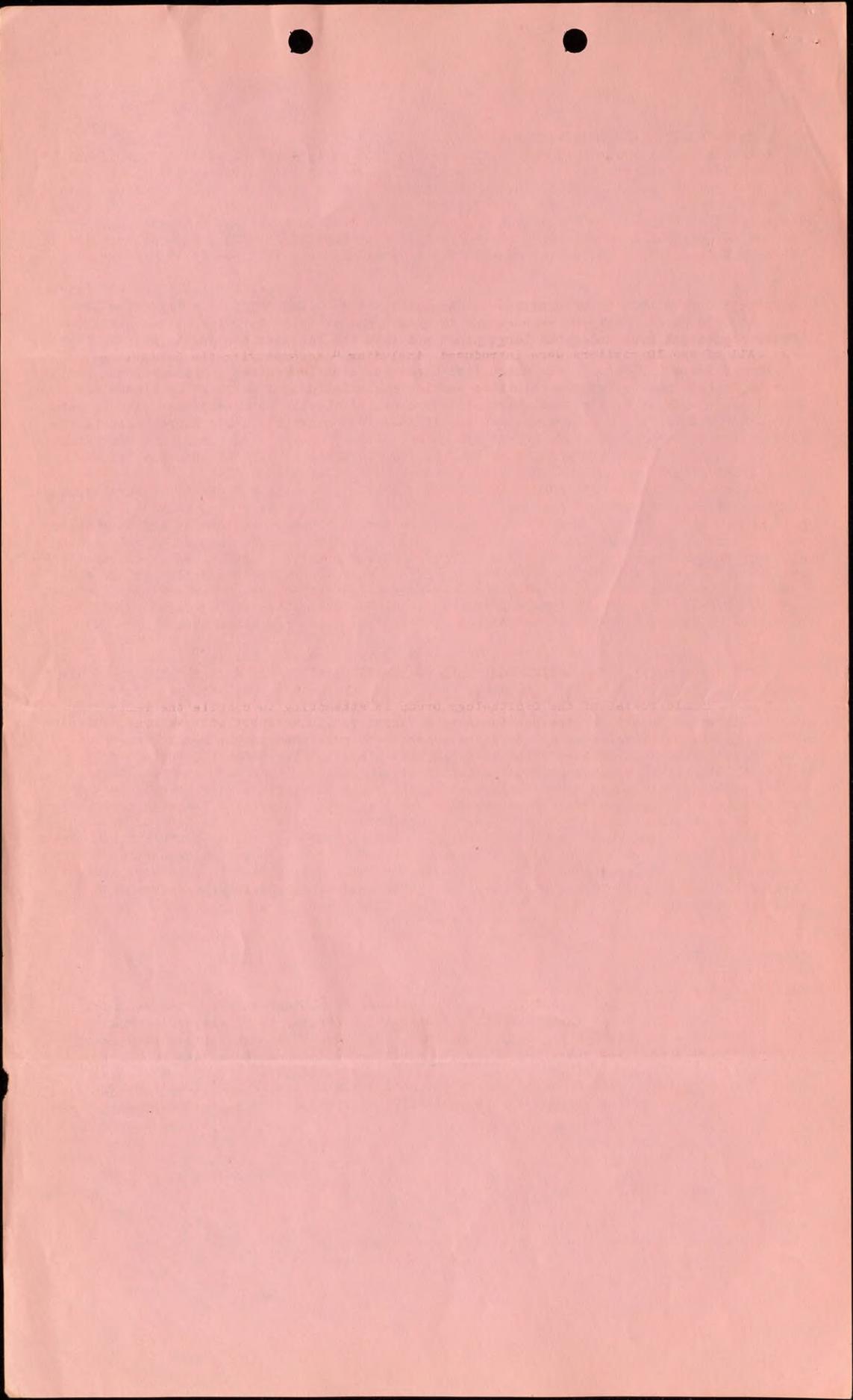
Later a cock quail appeared at the feeder, herding a recalcitrant brood of fuzzy young birds no bigger than golf balls. He seemed to be counting them as they marched in, and again as he led them away. Every day for weeks he marched them to the feeder and back again to the cover of tall grass in the vacant lots around us. We counted them as eagerly as he did, all summer long, and heaved a great sigh of relief when they were grown. We could be wrong, but we are convinced this tough old cock was the mate of the hen felled by the rifle shot. We like to think he hatched out the eggs and then raised his motherless brood to maturity. Of one thing we are sure. If human fathers were as attentive as this old cock quail, we would have less juvenile delinquency and fewer teen-age tragedies.

Our "armchair life list", all observed in our own backyard, follows;

Yellow-crowned night heron, bobwhite, ring-necked pheasant, king rail, kildeer, woodcock, rock dove, mourning dove, yellow-billed cuckoo, black-billed cuckoo, screech owl, night hawk, chimney swift. Also, ruby-throated hummingbird, flicker, red-bellied woodpecker, red-headed woodpecker, yellow-bellied sapsucker, down woodpecker, eastern kingbird, scissor-tailed flycatcher, phoebe. Also, Acadian flycatcher, least flycatcher, wood peewee, blue jay, tufted titmouse, Carolina wren, mockingbird, catbird, brown thrasher, robin, wood thrush, olive-backed thrush, gray-cheeked thrush, blue-grey gnatcatcher, American pipit, cedar waxwing. Also, loggerhead shrike, starling, black-and-white warbler, orange-crowned warbler, magnolia warbler, myrtle warbler, black-throated green warbler, chestnut-sided warbler, bay-breasted warbler, pine warbler, prairie warbler, northern water thrush, yellow-breasted chat, hooded warbler, Canada warbler, American redstart. Also, house sparrow, meadow lark, red-winged blackbird, orchard oriole, Baltimore oriole, Brewer's blackbird, boat-tailed grackle, purple grackle, bronzed grackle, cowbird, summer tanager, cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, painted bunting, purple finch, Savannah sparrow, white-crowned and white-throated sparrow.

CLEARING HOUSE:

- July 15 Barred owl seen on Memorial drive.
 July 19 Bill Risser observed a black-and-white warbler at Teas nursery. Migration?
 July 26 Linda and Clinton Snyder report seeing the following at the Baytown tunnel:
 Florida gallinule and 7 chicks, wood ibis, glossy ibis, spoonbills (24) least
 bittern, solitary sandpiper (2), semi-palmated and western sandpiper, willets.
 July 27 Seen by Ben Feltner on the east fork of the San Jacinto River at the border between Harris and Montgomery counties: Eastern kingbird, scissortail flycatcher, white-eyed vireo, orchard oriole, eastern wood peewee, 500 blue-gray gnatcatchers (migration?), pileated woodpeckers, titmouse, cowbirds, yellow-crowned night heron, green heron, Carolina wren, parula warbler, yellow-billed cuckoo, red-bellied woodpecker, turkey vulture, little blue heron, snowy and American egret. Early in the month he saw one robin feeding two young on Harris st. in Pasadena.
 July 28 Female summer tanager at Hoffman's.
 August Covey of 13 young quail at the Aldrich's.
 August 3 Several robins passed through at the Murray's.
 August 7 Clayton Gilman saw two sparrow hawks downtown (migration?)
 August 8 Jimmy Murray saw a flicker, he thinks. It wouldn't stay still!



STRANGE THINGS ARE HAPPENING DEPARTMENT:

The Clayton Gilmans have been seeing a king rail in the ditch in front of their home ! There is a downy woodpecker at the Hoffman's who is chestnut red on top of its head where it had oughter be black! What scared mama?

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Didn't we all have a really, really good time at John O'Neill's on July 10! And weren't his mother and father delightful hosts! Our very sincere thanks.

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BIMONTHLY ORNITHOLOGY GROUP MEETING----- August 7, 1958-----REPORTED BY RONALD FOWLER

At 6:30 pm 26 hungry OG members and 10 guests met at Milby Park in southeast Houston After a pleasant meal under the large pines and oaks the business meeting began.

All of the 10 visitors were introduced, including 4 accompanying the Stricklings. Mrs. Norma C. Oates of the Check-list Committee reported on the forthcoming check-list. She said that the work of the committee would be completed by the 8th of September. It will not be long until the check-list will be available to the members of the club.

Ronald Fowler is going to compile the Fall Migration Report in the Houston area for the TOS Fall Migration study which covers the whole state.

The Ornithology Group will be in charge of the display at the October meeting of ONC.

On Saturday, August 16, there will be an OG Field trip to the Freeport area. The group will meet at the Weingartens on Alameda promptly at 7:30 am. It is hoped that we will be able to get off to an early start.

The October meeting will be held indoors at a yet undetermined location because of the possibility of bad weather.

The program consisted of reports given by various members on trips that they had taken during the summer. Of special interest was the trip taken by Vic Emanuel and Carl Aiken. They accompanied Irby Davis to Baja California, California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona and New Mexico. The purpose of the trip was to make bird recordings for Cornell University. They were gone for a period of two months. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

* * * * * ATTENTION: ALL OG MEMBERS * * * * *

Ronald Fowler of the Ornithology Group is attempting to compile the Fall Migration Report for the Houston Area & Vicinity. This report will be one of many submitted from all over the state to be published in the Texas Ornithological Society Newsletter next February. Special forms for the purpose of sending in records will be mailed to all OG members and other interested persons. It is especially important that a rough estimate is made of all migrants and water birds. It is not necessary that you count each individual, a rough estimate at the end of the day is sufficient. If observations aren't recorded, it doesn't make any difference whether they were made or not.

Details should accompany all unusual observations. Any and all observations submitted will be greatly appreciated. Send all records to Ronald Fowler, 11921 Knippwood Lane, Houston 24, Texas. Any unusual or interesting observations will be forwarded to Mrs. Henry S. Hoffman for publication in the SPOONBILL.

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LISTEN BUDDY, THIS MEANS YOU!

Please be thinking of ideas for our Ornithology Group display at the October meeting of the Outdoor Nature Club. Anything concerning birds may be of use. Please submit your ideas for material to Henry S. Hoffman, chairman, or John O'Neill, the poor sucker who'll do all the work!

Your editor is going on vacation, so the next issue of the SPOONBILL will be late. Please forgive us. And keep that wonderful material coming in! Thank you.

Outdoor Nature Club
(Ornithology Group)
402 Sue St.
Houston 22, Texas
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