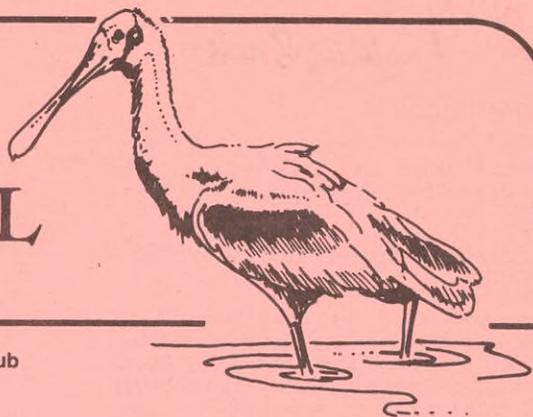


# The SPOONBILL



Published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club  
Houston, Texas B. C. Robison, editor

Vol. XXXV, No. 1  
January, 1986

## Coming Events

Monday, Feb. 3, 1986: Deadline for Clearing House reports.

Thursday, Feb. 6, 1986: Ornithology Group meeting at Bayou Manor, 4141 S. Braeswood, 7:30 PM. Doug Morris, Special Agent for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will speak on federal wildlife law enforcement from its origins in the days when egrets were slaughtered for plumes to current endangered species laws and international wildlife traffic regulations. (The last item should be of interest to those who travel abroad and like to bring back souvenirs.) Doug should have many fascinating stories to tell. Plan to be present. Deadline for Spoonbill articles and announcements.

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 1986: Outdoor Nature Club meeting, 7:30 PM, Garden Center, Hermann Park. The program will be "The Environment and the Federal Government." Speaker to be announced.

Saturday, Feb. 22, 1986: Ornithology Group Field Trip. Stennie Meadows and Robert Thacker will lead the group to Bolivar Flats for shorebirds and Sharp-tailed Sparrow, then up the Bolivar Peninsula for Scoters and other wintering birds, then if time permits, a brief stop at High Island and a visit to Anahuac NWR. Meet at 7 AM, at the Bolivar Ferry landing on Bolivar Peninsula in the parking lot to the right. Latecomers may join us at Bolivar Flats.

BOOK REVIEW: A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF THE BIG BEND  
by Wesley Cureton

Those who have watched birds in Big Bend National Park will enjoy Roland H. Wauer's A Field Guide to the Birds of the Big Bend, published just recently by the Texas Monthly Press in cooperation with the Big Bend Natural History Association. This book is a revision of Wauer's Birds of Big Bend National Park and Vicinity (1973); it brings the reader up to date on the park's bird occurrences. Each species' status is described briefly, and the more detailed information is given on locations, dates, breeding and change in status. Fortunately more birds have apparently increased in frequency than decreased. Eleven of the last volume's hypothetical species have been confirmed and added to the main list, and eleven completely new species have been recorded for a new total of 373. After the introduction is a discussion of bird finding in the Big Bend. I thought the section on migration, and particularly how the area's topography influences migrations, was especially interesting. At the end of the book is a list of 52 hypothetical species. The book has an attractive format with black-and-white illustrations by Nancy McGowan. If you are interested in bird records you'll like this book.

### NEW FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN APPOINTED

Many thanks to Rob Thacker who has enthusiastically agreed to serve as Field Trip Chairman for the remainder of the year.

# Noel's Niche Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

.....Twenty Years Ago This Month  
From January 1966 Spoonbill:

## "TRAITORS SCOUR COCOA SWAMPS AND COASTS by Bill Wright

Around 4:45 AM last Dec 28, I approached a busy-looking Scot, bedecked with a red jacket and matching tam. 'Are you Allen Cruikshank?' Thus began our day of birding with the pros.

Our party included two college professors in zoology and ornithology. One from the University of Tennessee and one from Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan. We were not assigned to one of the richest areas, as the 'oldtimers over the years had priority.' Even so, we managed to count 113 species in our area, and Betty and I tallied up 86.

In the morning we covered a fresh-water marsh, old orange groves, deciduous forest, bayfront, and open pinewoods. The latter was a fruitless attempt at finding Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman's Sparrow. In the afternoon we crossed over to the Port Canaveral area and birded some tidal flats, jetties, beaches and nearby ocean and salt-water marshes.

In most cases the birds seen did not differ greatly from what we may expect to see on the Houston area bird counts, except for the relative number of individuals. All crows were assumed to be fish crows unless you heard them caw with a drawn-out southern drawl. In our area the red-shouldered hawk appeared more often than the red-tailed. A tufted titmouse was an exclusive and a chickadee was unheard of. Palm warblers were everywhere.

Port Canaveral produced the Florida Scrub Jay in good numbers and the Great Black-backed Gull in all plumages. Marbled Godwit and an Oystercatcher were lifers for Betty and I. It was also good to see the Brown Pelican again.

The count-down then began with everyone in doubt about staying on top again this year. However when it was all finished and the final count given, it came to 197; however there were still a couple of parties in the field looking for owls and goatsuckers."

NOTE: 197 species was the final official 1965 total posted by the Cocoa, Fla. CBC, the No. 1 count in the U.S. for the 11th consecutive year. Although Freeport finished in 2nd place with 193 species, it had the nation's highest total from Dec. 26 to 27, 1965 and finally won top honors in 1971 with a new all-time high U.S. count of 226 species. - N.P.

.....Thirty Years Ago This Month  
From January 1956 Spoonbill:

## "SPECIAL FEATURES

### Ringed Kingfisher at Austin Armand Yramategui

Edgar Kincaid, the noted ornithologist and editor of TOS NEWSLETTER, who lives with the J. Frank Dobies in Austin, [could not believe that]...this beautiful giant kingfisher (near crow-size) with the chestnut-brown belly [had been reported]...at Barton Springs...[on Nov. 15]. Shocked is not the word that would describe Edgar when to his amazement he saw a female Ringed Kingfisher on the 'No Spear Fishing' sign. He had seen it many times in Mexico but the only three records of it in the U.S. were on the Rio Grande River many years ago. Numerous other people have since seen this rare bird at Zilker Park and have compared it with the smaller Belted Kingfisher which is often close by.

Edgar invited me to Austin on December 11, 1955 to see this tropical kingfisher. After a five hour search, just as the sun was beginning to set, the kingfisher was seen on a distant wire and as she turned her head she could be recognized by the very large bill. A closer approach to the highline (across the Colorado River) disclosed her rich chestnut underparts and a few moments later a Belted Kingfisher on the same wire confirmed her size. December 11 is the last record for the bird in Austin."

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In December 1985, Gene Heitzman, a treasured friend of mine and many members of the OG and ONC, died unexpectedly. Gene was currently serving as OG Field Trip Chairman and ONC Program Chairman. As many of you know, over the years Gene has contributed a great deal of his time and energy to promoting education and enjoyment of nature. He conscientiously applied his talents for organizing and sharing to provide OG and ONC members with memorable experiences. His enthusiasm and broad interests in the natural environment were an inspiration to all who knew him. The loss of Gene will be felt by us for many years.

THE FREEPORT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT  
by Jim Morgan

On Sunday, December 22, one hundred and forty-seven participants recorded 207 species of birds on the 29th annual Freeport Christmas Bird Count.

The species total was down significantly from the 222 species recorded in 1984 and below our five and fifteen year averages of 214 and 211 respectively. Reasons for the lower count appear to be threefold. First, due to a shifting of the count period by National Audubon Society, the Freeport CBC was necessarily held on a later date than any count we've had in over 10 years. Second, two hard freezes were encountered within the count circle prior to count day, a natural occurrence we had not encountered for many years. And third, lingering migrants and passerine birds have been in lower numbers this season with but a few exceptions.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, when 147 observers are in the field during exceptionally good weather within the Freeport count circle, one can expect some good birds to be found. This year three new birds were added to the count - Thayer's Gull, Lazuli Bunting and Scott's Oriole. The last was the "bird of the count," being not only a first for Freeport but only the second UTC record. The bird was discovered and observed by Bill and Will Graber of Beaumont, Texas. Bill gave an impeccable description of the bird at our countdown dinner, based on views of the bird at close range through a Questar. The Thayer's Gull was discovered by Ted Eubanks, Jr. and was carefully observed by Ted and his wife, Virginia. As expected, Ted's description of this bird was feather-by feather and flawless. The Lazuli Bunting was discovered by Sherry Collins and observed by Sherry and five other participants. Sherry's description of this bird was excellent. The oriole and the bunting were both relocated and observed the day after the count by Tom Collins and Greg Lasley.

In addition to these three new species, a species absent for over 15 years was observed by David Dauphin and the other participants on the Quintana jetty - a Brown Pelican. It would be very rewarding to begin observing this species regularly again on the Freeport count.

Other outstanding finds this year were Least Grebe, Bald Eagle, Crested Caracara, three Peregrine Falcons, Solitary Sandpiper, Common Nighthawk, three Tree Swallows, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Black-throated Gray Warbler (same location as one of last year's birds), Black-headed Grosbeak and Blue Grosbeak.

In general, numbers of geese, scoters, Osprey, dowitchers, terns, rails and blackbirds were up this year over years past. But a significantly

high number of 28 species had to be flagged as in very low numbers this year. Even worse, we had a few big "misses" this year, including Black Skimmer (first time in over 15 years), Nashville Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco and Purple Finch. Also absent were some hard-to-find but regular species such as Black-chinned and Anna's Hummingbirds and Fox and Harris' Sparrows. We also missed Wood Thrush and Rusty Blackbird, two species which have now sadly fallen into a status of being seen only two times in the last five years.

All-in-all, under the circumstances, we had a rewarding count and a count we should be proud of. As usual, the Freeport CBC was successful due to the efforts of so many people and organizations. Thanks must go out to the 147 participants for their efforts and to the special efforts of the eleven area leaders and the "hummingbird patrol". Freeport also benefits from the efforts of so many out-of-town participants who come year after year. Special thanks to those of you who do this. Finally, a very special thanks to the Houston Audubon Society for sponsoring the Freeport CBC and to Dow Chemical Company for hosting our count-down dinner and giving us permission to enter the many properties they own within the count circle. Both the Scott's Oriole and Lazuli Bunting were found on Dow properties. The count compilers and area leaders are also grateful to the other property owners within the count circle who so graciously allow us access to their land each year.

If you are interested in Texas birding and you do not take part in the Freeport CBC, you are missing something! Come join us next year!

NINTH ANNUAL BUFFALO BAYOU C.B.C.

After last year's record-breaking total of 106 species, the 1985 Buffalo Bayou C.B.C. netted 99 species. Less than optimal weather plus a significant drop in the number of participants were undoubtedly the major factors contributing to the lower total. Although a number of unexpected bonuses were seen, the elusiveness of several regular species resulted in our just missing the century mark. Barker Reservoir provided most of the highlights, including a Short-eared Owl before dawn, a Black-shouldered Kite, 3 White-tailed Hawks, and a pair of Hooded Mergansers flushed out of a drainage ditch (this is all within the Houston city limits!). Other noteworthy birds were: 3 American Woodcock, numerous Sedge Wrens, 3 Marsh Wrens, a Catbird, 3 Red-breasted Nuthatches, a Palm Warbler, 13 LeConte's Sparrows, a Fox Sparrow, a Dark-eyed Junco, and 35 Purple Finches. Species expected but missed were Brown Creeper, Wil-

(continued)

son's Warbler, Rufous-sided Towhee (all apparently hard to find this winter), Chipping Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird and Ringed Turtle-dove. Thanks to all who participated in a highly rewarding day.

Bob Honig and Doug Williams

#### WESTERN KINGBIRD OBSERVERS NEEDED

by Bob Honig

More volunteers are still needed to help in a study of Western Kingbird distribution and nest site preference. During the summers of 1984 and 1985 I have been keeping track of Western Kingbirds in west and south Houston as you may have read in past issues of the Spoonbill. In 1985 I observed approximately 15 nesting pairs. This represents either a recent range expansion or the discovery of a previously unobserved population of kingbirds. In addition, the kingbirds exhibited a fascinating nest site preference: nesting pairs were observed only at or immediately adjacent to HL&P substations (and never in seemingly appropriate habitat elsewhere).

Steve Williams, who first observed the kingbirds in 1984, and I are writing a short paper about these observations for publication. We would also like to expand the investigation of Western Kingbird distribution and nest site preference (HL&P substations are widespread throughout the UTC.) To do this we will need help. If you are interested in monitoring a substation (or substations), and other appropriate habitat if you have time, preferably once a week during the 1986 spring migration and nesting season, please give me a call (home 776-8619, office 757-3709). Most OG members undoubtedly live fairly close to at least one of the many HL&P substations. There are substations as far flung as Boling, Wharton, East Bernard, Richmond/Rosenberg, Sealy, Katy, Hockley, Waller, Tomball, The Woodlands, Kingwood, Baytown, Cedar Bayou, League City, Texas City, Galveston, Chocolate Bayou, Freeport and West Columbia; and they are more numerous as one moves in toward Houston, particularly in Houston itself. Thus helping out can involve only a minimum of time (maybe 30-45 minutes per week) and will likely result in more publishable data.

#### TRIAL RUN FOR BRAZOS BEND CBC

##### A SUCCESS

Although the Brazos Bend State Park Christmas Bird Count was unofficial, over 30 participants made it a highly successful outing. A total of 130 species were observed, a promise of possibly bigger and better things in future official counts. Every part of the circle turned up something interesting. In the park itself were 10 Fulvous Whistling Ducks at Elm Lake, plus 4 Vermilion Flycatchers, an Empidonax flycatcher, a Wilson's Warbler, 2 LeConte's Sparrows and of course a number of barred owls. In addition, the park yielded the bird of the count: a male Blackburnian Warbler foraging in the bottomland forest near the Brazos River, seen by Scott Thornton.

Dottie Praus' area, mostly in Brazoria Co., produced a Ferruginous Hawk, 8 Vermilion Flycatchers, a Bewick's Wren and 2 Harris' Sparrows. A large variety of ducks were found on the ponds near Long Point, including 4 Canvasback, a Redhead, 10 Common Goldeneye and 12 Bufflehead. Nine Common Ground-Dove, 2 Hairy Woodpeckers, 7 Golden-crowned Kinglets, numerous Sedge Wrens, 4 Catbirds, a Rufous-sided Towhee and 30 Lapland Longspurs were also seen during the count. Finally, 2 partial albino birds were observed: a Common Grackle along the boundary of the park, and a Red-tailed Hawk near Damon.

Thanks to all who came out to make this trial run a great start to what we expect will be a very popular Christmas Count. Remember, the next one will be official!

Because this count was unofficial the data will not be submitted to American Birds, and the participants' names will not appear in print. Therefore we will take this opportunity to give them some recognition here: Debra, Michael, Rebecca and Sara Benisch; Chuck Berthoud; Laird Fowler; Andrew and Renee Franks; David Henderson; Martha Henschen; Bob Honig; Barbara and Sam House; Fay Meek; Kathy Merritt; Richard Orr; John Parrott; Stan Perkins; Dottie Praus; Carol Sloan; Charles and Wanda Smith; Scott Thornton; Dana Van Reenan; Doug Williams; Charlene, George, Kris, Nancy and Steve Wilson. Our apologies to those who didn't sign the registration sheet.

Bob Honig and Doug Williams

MINUTES OF THE OG MEETING

ON DEC. 5, 1985

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Stennie Meadours. Stennie first asked what good birds had been seen. Derek Muschalek gave a rundown on the numerous birds he had been seeing at San Jacinto Monument and Eisenhower Lake, notably Hooded Mergansers, Red-breasted Nuthatches and LeConte's Sparrows. Don Richardson reported that the participants on the November OG field trip to Brazos Bend Park were rewarded with sightings of Vermilion Flycatcher, Woodcock, Fulvous and Black-bellied Whistling Ducks and three species of owls, to name a few.

Ron Braun, Clearing House Editor, thanked everyone for the sighting reports, but requested that people send in information as soon after a field trip as possible to distribute his workload more evenly.

Ed Rozenburg, Aluminum Chairman, reported that he collected \$17.00 for cans last month and reminded everyone to continue bringing in aluminum.

George Wilson, Program Chairman, announced that upcoming OG programs for the first three months of 1986 are "Rocky Mountain Splendor" by Tommy Michaels, "Protecting Endangered Species" by Doug Morris and the second part of Gene Blacklock's "Sane Approach to Bird Identification."

Ellen Red, President of the ONC, reported receiving a \$100 anonymous contribution to the ONC in honor of Jim Morgan for his outstanding service to fellow birders.

Gary Clark, coordinator of the Piney Woods Wildlife Society's Rare Bird Alert Tape, expressed his appreciation to the many people who provide input to the tape. He then announced that a new phone system has been installed whereby a caller using a touch-tone phone may bypass birding information and begin his message simply by pushing "5" after reaching the Rare Bird number. He added that PWWS, in cooperation with Peregrine Tours, is hosting a Sparrow Seminar in February and suggested that interested persons contact either him or the Peregrine office.

Stennie Meadours announced that the Bolivar Flats sanctuary signs are up at last. She also announced that The Audubon Society will be celebrating its tenth anniversary of the acquisition of Edith L. Moore sanctuary on Sunday, Dec. 8, 1985, and invited all to attend.

Several Christmas Count compilers were present and they personally encouraged everyone to participate in the wide variety of counts this year.

The evening's program included two informative and entertaining films, "The Living Mosaic" and "The Swamp and Mr. Harkins," along with Ted Eubanks, Jr.'s lovely slides of the Brown-crested

Flycatcher that was seen at Galveston State Park in November.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Submitted by Wanda Smith for Carol Sloan, Secretary

OG TOUR TO PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Itineraries are now ready for the tour to the Pacific Northwest being organized for the OG and ONC by Peregrine Tours. The 11-day tour covers the Olympic Peninsula, Ranier National Park, the eastern side of the Cascades, Victoria B.C., and a pelagic trip. Cost is \$ 1,150 with up to 10 participants, or \$ 1,050 with 10 or more, plus air fare from Houston (approximately \$300.) Ben Feltner will be the main leader, with other Peregrine leaders added if registration warrants. For more information call the Peregrine office at 441-1220.

Send requests for OG information, checklists, maps to:  
Maxine Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst  
Houston 77096, 723-8559

Send bird records for Clearing House before 3rd of month to:  
Ron Braun, 1302 Berrywood Ln.  
Houston 77077, 496-3108

Rare Bird Alert Tape, sponsored by The Piney Woods Wildlife Society:  
821-2846

Send announcements, articles, etc. for The Spoonbill to editor:  
Dr. B. C. Robison  
10331 Longmont, Houston 77042  
(h) 974-1894

Send dues, subscriptions and changes of address to:  
Peter Vennema, 2120 Tangley  
Houston 77005, 520-6803  
Annual Dues: \$11.00  
(ONC \$5.00, OG \$6.00)  
Annual Subscriptions: \$9.00

# Clearing House December, 1985

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

## ABBREVIATION CODES

AB = Armand Bayou	H = Houston
ANWR = Anahuac NWR	HA = Houston Arboretum
BAR = Barker & Addicks Reservoirs	
BBSP = Brazos Bend SP	HI = High Island
BC = Brazoria Co.	HR/BC = Harris Reservoir(BC)
BF = Bolivar Flats	RP = Rollover Pass
Bolv = Bolivar Peninsula	SJSP = San Jacinto SP
BR = Barker Reservoir	SWH = SW Houston
CC = Chambers Co.	TCD = Texas City Dike
EG = E. Galveston	WGI = W. Galveston Is.
EP/DP = Eisenhower & Deussen Parks	
FBC = Ft. Bend Co.	WH = W. Houston
Galv = Galveston	WHC = West Harris Co.
GC = Galveston Co.	WOB = White Oak Bayou

185 Species reported to the regular CH with 52 additional species reported on Christmas Counts for a total of 237 species

Loon, Common: EG-(1)15, JH; TCD-(5)21, BH; (7)29, JMc  
 Grebe, Pied-billed: 15 reports (1-27; 95)  
 Grebe, Horned: HI-(3)1, BB; Galv-(1)1, BB; WHC-(1)1, JM  
 Grebe, Eared: 6 reports (1-30; 81)  
 Pelican, American White: 14 reports (1-800; 1538)  
 Cormorant, Double-crested: 20 reports (1-2000; 3016)  
 Cormorant, Olivaceous: SJSP-(16)2, (5)6, (1)31, DM;  
 EG-(12)15, JH; TCD-(12)21, BH; (14)29, JMc  
 cormorant, sp.: BC-(3)1, PM; (3)1, PM  
 Anhinga: BBSP-(5)1, WSH; (5)7, JKAB; (2)16, DM; FBC-(3)6, UO;  
 HR/BC-(22)7, WPBB; EP/DP-(1)27, DM  
 Heron, Great Blue: 23 reports (1-40; 178)  
 Egret, Great: 23 reports (1-125; 385)  
 Egret, Snowy: 17 reports (1-130; 295)  
 Heron, Little Blue: HR/BC-(2)7, WPBB; BR-(5)7, BH;  
 WGI-(2)9, JH; Galv-(1)31, JMc; SJSP-(1)31, DM

Heron, Tricolored: 9 reports (1-6; 27)  
 Egret, Reddish: 8 reports (1-3; 10)  
 Egret, Cattle: 13 reports (3-200; 558)  
 Night-Heron, Black-crowned: 6 reports (1-100; 275)  
 Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned: FBC-(1)1, WSH  
 Ibis, White: 8 reports (15-75; 334)  
 Ibis, White-faced: 5 reports (5-175; 241)  
 Spoonbill, Roseate: SJSP-(12)2, DM; HR/BC-(12)7, WPBB;  
 WGI-(2)9, JH; CC/GC-(3)10, DM; GC-(10)29, DM  
 Whistling-Duck, Fulvous: WHC-(2)8, RBP; BBSP-(4)16, DM  
 (See notes for both sightings, ed.)  
 Whistling-Duck, Black-bellied: 8 reports (15-650; 1193)  
 (Status changing, ed.)  
 Goose, Greater White-fronted: 6 reports (2-5000; 8582)  
 Goose, Snow: 16 reports (15-80000; 155470)  
 (Goose, Blue): 6 reports (8-10000; 10916)  
 Goose, Ross': WHC-(1)15, BM  
 Goose, Canada: 4 reports (52-10000; 10452)  
 Duck, Wood: FBC-(1)6, UO; BAR-(9)25, HH  
 Teal, Green-winged: 7 reports (4-15000; 28626)  
 Duck, Mottled: 10 reports (1-30; 91)  
 Mallard: 5 reports (4-125; 239)  
 Pintail, Northern: 7 reports (1-1500; 2457)  
 Teal, Blue-winged: 7 reports (1-30; 78)  
 Teal, Cinnamon: WHC-(1)1, JM; (6)15, BM; BBSP-(3)7, JKAB  
 Shoveler, Northern: 13 reports (3-1000; 1964)  
 Gadwall: 10 reports (2-500; 1148)  
 Wigeon, American: 8 reports (1-300; 457)  
 Canvasback: WHC-(15)1, JM; (1)8, RBP; (35)15, BM;  
 ANWR-(38)28, JMc  
 Redhead: WHC-(3)1, JM  
 Duck, Ring-necked: 7 reports (1-200; 586)  
 Scaup, Greater: ANWR-(2)28, JMc (See notes, ed.)  
 Scaup, Lesser: 10 reports (3-1000; 1371)  
 Bufflehead: WHC-(2)1, JM; ANWR-(5)29, JMc  
 Merganser, Hooded: SJSP-(2)12, (36)6, (5)31, DM  
 (See CH Editor's Notes for additional info, ed.)  
 Merganser, Red-breasted: EG-(5)9, (4)15, JH; BF-(150)29, DM  
 Duck, Ruddy: 10 reports (1-125; 280)  
 Vulture, Black: 14 reports (1-60; 181)  
 Vulture, Turkey: 21 reports (1-250; 793)  
 Osprey: AB-(4)5, DM; SJSP-(1)31, DM  
 Kite, Black-shouldered: BC-(1)1, PM; (1)1, PM; AB-(1)5, DM;  
 BR-(1)15, HC; Galv-(2)31, JMc  
 Eagle, Bald: WHC-(2)1, JM; (2)8, RBP  
 Harrier, Northern: 16 reports (1-80; 202)  
 Hawk, Sharp-shinned: BBSP-(1)1, WSH; SJSP-(1)6, DM;  
 WHC-(1)15, BM; SWH-(1 male)30, RB  
 Hawk, Cooper's: BBSP-(1)7, JKAB; WHC-(1)8, RBP;  
 GC-(1)10, DM; WH-(1)15, HC; H-(1)22, MC  
 Hawk, Red-shouldered: 16 reports (1-8; 39)  
 Hawk, Swainson's: BBSP-(1)1, WSH (See notes, ed.)  
 Hawk, White-tailed: BR-(2)15, HC (See notes, ed.)  
 Hawk, Red-tailed: 23 reports (1-50; 202)  
 (Hawk, Harlan's): FBC-(1)29, WHH (See notes, ed.)  
 Kestrel, American: 25 reports (1-35; 175)

- Merlin: WH-(1 female)8, BDH (See notes, ed.)  
 Bobwhite, Northern: FBC-(25)6, UO  
 Rail, Clapper: SJSP-(2)6, DM; Galv-(1)31, JMc  
 Moorhen, Common: 6 reports (1-100; 189)  
 Coot, American: 12 reports (6-400; 1366)  
 Crane, Sandhill: 8 reports (2-100; 300)  
 Plover, Black-bellied: 6 reports (1-200; 238)  
 Plover, Snowy: BF-(12)10, (10)29, DM  
 Plover, Wilson's: BF-(1)10, (3)29, DM  
 Plover, Semipalmated: RP-(2)10, DM; TCD-(1)29, JMc;  
 BF-(4)29, DM  
 Plover, Piping: BF-(15)10, (60)29, DM  
 Killdeer: 17 reports (2-100; 454)  
 Oystercatcher, American: BF-(3)10, DM  
 Stilt, Black-necked: GC-(3)10, DM; EG-(1)15, JH  
 Avocet, American: SJSP-(4)2, (8)6, DM; EG-(3)9, (1)15, JH;  
 GC-(2500)10, (5000)29, DM  
 Yellowlegs, Greater: 9 reports (2-30; 93)  
 Yellowlegs, Lesser: SJSP-(15)2, DM; BR-(1)7, BH; (7)15, HC  
 Willet: 5 reports (3-100; 152)  
 Sandpiper, Spotted: SJSP-(3)2, (2)6, DM; EP/DP-(1)3, DM;  
 HR/BC-(1)7, WPBB  
 Curlew, Long-billed: 5 reports (2-30; 60)  
 Godwit, Marbled: RP-(25)10, DM; BF-(80)29, DM  
 Turnstone, Ruddy: GC-(120)10, (40)29, DM; TCD-(5)29, JMc  
 Knot, Red: BF-(20)29, DM  
 Sanderling: 7 reports (6-500; 854)  
 Sandpiper, Western: EG-(5)15, JH; BF-(600)29, DM;  
 Bolv-(50)31, JMc  
 Sandpiper, Least: BR-(4)7, BH; (15)15, HC; BF-(10)10, DM  
 Dunlin: 6 reports (2-350; 857)  
 peep, sp.: BR-(6)7, BH  
 Sandpiper, Stilt: WHC-(2)8, RBP (See notes, ed.)  
 Dowitcher, Short-billed: BF-(75)29, DM; Bolv-(75)31, JMc  
 Dowitcher, Long-billed: WHC-(2000)1, JMc  
 dowitcher, sp.: SJSP-(200)2, DM; WHC-(50)8, RBP  
 Snipe, Common: BR-(2)7, BH  
 Gull, Laughing: 12 reports (2-2000; 4209)  
 Gull, Bonaparte's: EP/DP-(3)3, DM; BF-(150)10, (29)29, DM  
 Gull, Ring-billed: 19 reports (2-500; 2504)  
 Gull, Herring: 6 reports (1-50; 96)  
 Tern, Caspian: 9 reports (1-12; 32)  
 Tern, Royal: 4 reports (20-300; 393)  
 Tern, Sandwich: BF-(2)10, DM  
 Tern, Common: TCD-(2)29, JMc  
 Tern, Forster's: 12 reports (1-350; 829)  
 Skimmer, Black: RP-(300)10, DM; EG-(100)15, JH;  
 BF-(600)29, DM  
 Dove, Rock: 9 reports (5-100; 342)  
 Dove, White-winged: Galv-(3-6)1-31, JH  
 Dove, Mourning: 23 reports (1-135; 788)  
 Dove, Inca: 5 reports (3-50; 77)  
 Ground-Dove, Common: FBC-(4)6, UO  
 Roadrunner, Greater: WHC-(1)1, JMc (See notes, ed.)  
 Barn-Owl, Common: WGI-(1)9, JH; BBSP-(1)16, DM  
 Owl, Great Horned: WHC-(1)8, RBP; (1)15, BM  
 Hummingbird, Buff-bellied: WH-(1)10, MAM (See notes, ed.)  
 Hummingbird, Ruby-throated: WH-(2, female & imm. male)  
 1-31, MAM (No notes - was Black-chinned considered  
 for female bird, ed.)
- Hummingbird, Rufous: H-(1)14-31, GC; WH-(1)23, MB  
 hummingbird, (Selasphorus) sp.: H-(1)23-31, GC  
 Kingfisher, Belted: 14 reports (1-5; 26)  
 Woodpecker, Red-headed: EP/DP-(6)3, (5)27, DM; H-(1)27, WC  
 Woodpecker, Red-bellied: 12 reports (2-12; 78)  
 Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied: 11 reports (1-5; 26)  
 Woodpecker, Downy: 11 reports (1-10; 46)  
 Flicker, Northern: 13 reports (1-4; 31)  
 Woodpecker, Pileated: 7 reports (1-7; 28)  
 Phoebe, Eastern: 15 reports (2-35; 138)  
 Flycatcher, Vermilion: BBSP-(3)7, JKAB; (2)16, DM  
 Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed: FBC-(1)21, GL (See notes, ed.)  
 Lark, Horned: BF-(8)10, DM; Bolv-(7)31, JMc  
 swallow, sp.: GC-(5)10, DM  
 Jay, Blue: 13 reports (1-25; 143)  
 Crow, American: 21 reports (2-200; 592)  
 Chickadee, Carolina: 14 reports (2-60; 270)  
 Titmouse, Tufted: 10 reports (1-50; 166)  
 Nuthatch, Red-breasted: EP/DP-(2)3, (3)27, DM  
 Nuthatch, Brown-headed: EP/DP-(1)3, (2)27, DM  
 Creeper, Brown: EP/DP-(1)3, (2)27, DM; HA-(1)6, WHN  
 Wren, Carolina: 8 reports (1-12; 45)  
 Wren, Bewick's: WHC-(1)15, BM (See notes, ed.)  
 Wren, House: 9 reports (1-3; 19)  
 Wren, Sedge: SJSP-(3)6, DM; WOB-(1)30, WC  
 Wren, Marsh: SJSP-(1)31, DM  
 Kinglet, Golden-crowned: 10 reports (1-22; 86)  
 Kinglet, Ruby-crowned: 20 reports (1-230; 515)  
 Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray: 8 reports (1-15; 31)  
 Bluebird, Eastern: 8 reports (1-24; 81)  
 Thrush, Hermit: 9 reports (1-15; 29)  
 Thrush, Wood: HI-(1)10, DM  
 Robin, American: 17 reports (1-800; 2033)  
 Catbird, Gray: HI-(1)10, DM; BBSP-(1)16, DM  
 Mockingbird, Northern: 22 reports (1-30; 143)  
 Thrasher, Brown: 10 reports (1-15; 51)  
 Pipit, Water: BR-(2)7, BH; (5)15, HC; WHC-(125)8, RBP;  
 BF-(2)10, DM; WH-(5)15, HC; SJSP-(45)31, DM  
 Pipit, Sprague's: AB-(1)15, DM  
 Waxwing, Cedar: 6 reports (2-125; 189)  
 Shrike, Loggerhead: 18 reports (1-30; 124)  
 Starling, European: 14 reports (2-1000; 2642)  
 Vireo, White-eyed: EP/DP-(1)27, DM  
 Vireo, Solitary: HI-(2)10, DM; WOB-(1)14, WC; FBC-(5)16, DM;  
 EP/DP-(4)27, DM  
 Warbler, Orange-crowned: 15 reports (1-15; 47)  
 Warbler, Yellow-rumped: 17 reports (1-250; 426)  
 Warbler, Yellow-throated: HR/BC-(1)7, WPBB  
 Warbler, Pine: 9 reports (2-52; 111)  
 Warbler, Palm: BBSP-(1)7, JKAB  
 Warbler, Black-and-white: HR/BC-(1)7, WPBB; Galv-(1)14, JH  
 Ovenbird: BBSP-(1)16, DM (See notes, ed.)  
 Yellowthroat, Common: SJSP-(8)6, (1)31, DM; BR-(1)7, BH;  
 WHC-(1)8, RBP; FBC-(2)16, DM; WOB-(1)30, WC  
 Warbler, Wilson's: HI-(1)10, DM; WOB-(2)14, WC  
 Cardinal, Northern: 17 reports (2-75; 249)  
 Towhee, Rufous-sided: HA-(2)6, WHN  
 Sparrow, Chipping: EP/DP-(40)3, DM; BBSP-(2)16, DM;  
 BAR-(1)25, HH

Sparrow, Field: AB-(1)5, DM; BBSP-(1)16, DM; HA-(1)20, WHN; SJSP-(1)31, DM  
 Sparrow, Vesper: WHC-(2)1, JM  
 Sparrow, Savannah: 8 reports (2-125; 339)  
 Sparrow, Seaside: SJSP-(2)6, DM  
 Sparrow, Song: 6 reports (1-5; 12)  
 Sparrow, Lincoln's: 6 reports (1-8; 20)  
 Sparrow, Swamp: 11 reports (1-24; 64)  
 Sparrow, White-throated: 12 reports (2-60; 184)  
 Sparrow, White-crowned: BR-(3)7, BH; (1)15, HC; WHC-(2)15, BM  
Longspur, Lapland: WHC-(3)8, RBP (See notes, ed.); FBC-(7)29, WHH  
longspur, sp.: WHC-(300)8, RBP  
 Blackbird, Red-winged: 13 reports (5-5000; 9565)  
 Meadowlark, Eastern: 14 reports (1-50; 349)  
 meadowlark, sp.: AB-(2)28, JMc  
 Blackbird, Rusty: BR-(1)7, BH  
 Blackbird, Brewer's: 6 reports (1-50; 137)  
 Grackle, Great-tailed: 10 reports (1-250; 508)  
 Grackle, Boat-tailed: TCD-(35)29, JMc  
 Grackle, Common: 9 reports (15-200; 605)  
 Cowbird, Brown-headed: 9 reports (1-15000; 20721)  
 blackbird, sp.: 7 reports (50-2000; 4950)  
 (Oriole, Bullock's): HI-(1 female)10, DM  
 Finch, Purple: HI-(1 female)1, BB  
 Goldfinch, American: 13 reports (1-200; 667)  
 Sparrow, House: 7 reports (10-200; 408)

The following sightings, requiring notes, were submitted without them:

Thrush, Swainson's: BBSP-(1)7, JKAB  
 Warbler, Yellow: BBSP-(10)7, JKAB

#### CONTRIBUTORS - December, 1985

BB=Bob Behrstock; BDN=Barbara & Doug Hortvet; BH=Bob Honig; BM=RB, JM; DM=Derek Muschalek; DW=Doug Williams; GC=Glenn Cureton; GL=Greg Lasley; HC=BH, Fred Collins; HM=BH, Martha Henschen; JH=Jane Hamilton; JKAB=Jeannette Kropp & Armand Bayou field trip; JM=Jim Morgan; JMc=John McGeough; MAM=Mary Ann Moore; MB=Marcia Braun; MH=Martha Henschen; PM=Peggy Milstead; RB=Ron Braun; RBP=Randy & Bill Pinkston; UO=Unknown Observer (from Dewalt); WC=Wesley Cureton; WNH=DW, MH, BH; WNN=DW, MH, Bill Newell; WNSH=DW, MH, Doug Stein, BH; WPSB=Warren Pruess & Brazosport Birders

#### CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - December, 1985

Fulvous Whistling-Duck: Two birds in flight 100 meters directly overhead near Katy-Hockley and Katy-Hockley Cut-Off Rds; large, long-necked ducks, dark wings contrasting with all-tawny bellies; squealing calls uttered frequently as they flew over; 10 x 50 binocs in early morning light. --Randy Pinkston

Fulvous Whistling-Duck: Four individuals standing on shore of "Elm Lake" at Brazos Bend State Park. Birds displayed a rich tawny head and underparts; dark back and wings; long gray legs; grayish colored bill; distinct white stripes on sides below folded wings. Observed from a distance of 30 yards with 10x50 binocs in excellent light. --Derek Muschalek

Greater Scaup: These birds were observed while feeding at Shoveler Pond at ANWR. They were in a mixed flock with a number of Lesser Scaup and other common species. The birds were observed at about 175 feet with a 10 x 50 scope for about 15 minutes. The birds had near white flanks and grey backs. There was a distinct line between the white flanks and the black breast, neck, and head. The bill was grey/green. The head was distinctly rounded, not peaked. The Lesser Scaup around them provided a means of comparing the head angle. In flight the 2 birds showed a white stripe out through the primaries. --John McGeough

Stilt Sandpiper: Two winter-plumaged individuals in close association with 5-10 dowitchers in flooded field at Katy-Hockley Cut-Off Rd. and Logenbaugh Rd.; approx. 1/3 smaller overall size than dowitchers; slimmer look; mostly unpatterned gray upperparts; white underparts except for light grayish wash on sides of upper breast; slight line over eye but hardly noticeable; bill close to 2 inches in length with slight droop at tip, distinctly shorter and thinner than the dowitchers' bills; both birds fed by rapid probing in water almost belly-deep; legs never seen nor were the birds seen in flight; no calls; 10 x 50 binocs from 25-30 meters for 5 minutes in excellent light. --Randy Pinkston

Greater Roadrunner: Large bird, heavily streaked with very long tail. I surprised the bird which was taking water out of a bar ditch in W. Harris Co. The bird quickly ran into the hedgerow and could not be relocated. Seen with naked eye at 20 ft in excellent light for one or possibly two seconds. --Jim Morgan

Buff-bellied Hummingbird: Bird was heard first, from open patio door, feeding on salvia beside patio. Stayed in the yard for approx. 30 min. feeding at coral honeysuckle, salvia and shrimp plants. Did not approach feeders. All marks seen clearly with 9 x 36 Bushnell; brown tail, green throat, buff belly, orange bill with dark tip. Loud, squeaky notes heard several times. --Mary Ann Moore

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: While driving through Ft. Bend Co. near Needville (2 miles N of town) I noticed the distinctive silhouette of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher perched on a utility wire along the road side. I turned around and went back to the bird and noted the following: Large flycatcher with extremely long tail, nearly two times its body length. Crown, nape, back gray. Pale gray to whitish throat and

breast. Pinkish shoulders and flanks. Dark gray wings and tail. Tail showed white edges. Eye and bill dark. The bird was photographed for the record. --Greg Lasley

(Excellent photograph submitted with notes. ed.)

Bewick's Wren: We first became aware of this bird as it began scolding in response to a screech owl tape. A small, brown House Wren-sized bird hopped upon a branch in clear view about 15 yds. away. Viewed through 10X40 binocs, the prominent white eye-brow stripe, the whitish breast & underparts, & rather long tail, all helping to eliminate House Wren, were clearly visible. As the bird danced about on the branch, it held its tail straight up, thus revealing the black & white undertail pattern. This, the constant tail wagging (jerking from side-to-side while held in an erect position), & the complete lack of buffy color on the underparts eliminated Carolina Wren. 2-3 min view in good light. -- Ron Braun

Ovenbird: Walking in dense thicket near "40 Acre Lake" at Brazos Bend SP. Large, plump warbler with brownish unmarked upperparts; orange crown bordered by dark brown stripes; bold white eye-ring; white underparts with bold dark brown streaks. Watched for 1 min, as bird walked quickly through the undergrowth. This bird is correctly listed as a rare "Winter Resident" at BBSP. Used 10x50 binocs at 25' in good light. --Derek Muschalek

Lapland Longspur: Bare dirt and stubble field N of intersection of Katy-Hockley Cut-Off Rd. with Katy-Hockley Rd., on east side of Cut-Off Rd.; This has only happened to me twice on the UTC, the other time in Jan. 1980 also near Katy: From sunrise until we left this field at noon, longspurs were continuously in view (no exaggeration); initially I noticed two large groups (~100 birds in one and ~200 in the other), rising and flying and wheeling over the field, alighting briefly and suddenly all taking off again; later on were many smaller groups (10-30 individuals) presumed to be fragments of the original two; frequent dry rattle calls were the most obvious clue; I also heard them give occasional "teew" notes; white outer tail feathers were seen and on a few individuals I noted a smudgy black throat (these I feel certain were Laplands); also in same field for comparison were many Water Pipits and Savannah Sparrows; 10 x 50 binocs from as close as 8 meters in excellent light. --Randy Pinkston

#### CH EDITOR'S NOTES - December, 1985

Hooded Merganser: This is one of the finest ducks, as ducks go, in my opinion & I always enjoy seeing them. The numbers being reported by Derek at San Jacinto SP are refreshing after a lean year past. They seem to be in their traditional locations; the state park &, in spite of its demise, the Mercury Drive site. Wesley will be reporting 70 from the west side of Mercury Drive in the January CH. Thought you might be interested in some historical data:

	March	Feb.	Jan.	Dec.	Nov.	Oct.	Seasonal Totals
86/85				99	4	-	?
85/84	-	-	-	20	-	-	20
84/83	-	-	47+	100	2	-	149
83/82	-	-	27	18	-	-	45
82/81	2	-	-	22	-	-	24
81/80	-	-	38	120	3	15	176
80/79	-	-	6	22	42	-	70
79/78	-	10	26	18	48	-	102
78/77	-	44	46	35	110	-	235
77/76	1	4	10	36	13	-	64
Totals	3	58	200	391	218	15	885

Clearly the Christmas Counts make Dec the most consistent month, but the narrowing of the seasonal distribution is interesting in a speculative way.

Annual Christmas Count Summary: The following Christmas Count reports were received before the CH had to be closed out. I was hoping to get a few more from area compilers, & if I do before the next Spoonbill deadline, I'll include them with the January CH. Notes for sightings affecting the Checklist will be published next month.

Swainson's Hawk: Seen soaring high overhead. On underside of wing, flight feathers appeared noticeably darker (gray) than white shoulders (wing linings). Wings appeared distinctly narrower and more pointed than those of a red-tailed hawk with which it was flying.

--Bob Honig

White-tailed Hawk: 2 at Barker Reservoir. Large buteos, seen alternately perched in central portion of transmission towers and flying approximately 100' high. Pinkish-chest and shoulders & uniformly charcoal-gray back, top of head, & sides of face; white throat & underparts; short, white tail with black subterminal band. Seen by both observers for approximately 10 minutes, excellent light.

--Bob Honig

(Harlan's Hawk): Along U.S. Hwy 59 just west of Tx Hwy 6, in Ft. Bend Co. Plumage dark chocolate-brown, appearing almost black, except for: gray flight feathers when viewed from underneath; and gray tail with black terminal band, appearing narrowly tipped with white. Light bill with black tip, dark brown eye. Yellow feet. Same body size and flight posture as typical red-tailed hawk (judged both from previous experience & subsequently by comparison with a typical Red-tailed Hawk which flew near the Harlan's). This bird was very skittish. Viewed perched at approximately 50-75 yards; then flying. Equipment: 10x40 Zeiss, 8x40 Leitz, 8x30 Zeiss.

-- Bob Honig.

Merlin: Female eating small bird on peak of 1 1/2 story house (English House Sparrow I think). Falcon a little larger than Blue Jay. Dark brown head & back; heavily brown streaked light belly, and legs; lite gray white and black banded tail. Doug watched falcon like bird

with small bird in talons fly 8-10 ft. above ground past east side of our house, cross the street, between houses over the fence to the west and perch on peak of roof of 1 1/2 story house. Bird's creamy buff breast heavily streaked with rich, brown. Face heavily streaked dark brown and white -- mostly brown. Difficult to ascertain a pattern but seemed to have a thicker, darker malar stripe and lighter line above eye. Crown mostly dark brown -- nape showed whitish base to dark feathers when head was down -- seemed all brown when head was erect. Back & long wings were a darker sooty brown. Wings extended almost to the last dark grayish black band of four dark bands on a dirty white square tipped tail (to me) ending with a narrow white band. (The bird flared its tail to keep balance in a slight breeze). The feathers on legs were more orangish buffy -- heavily streaked brown than the belly. The chin was creamy buff with very fine brown streaks. Undertail coverts grayish white. Bill dark slaty gray -- cere bright yellow. Feet yellow yellow, claws black (easily seen when bird shook prey's feathers from claws). Underneath of long pointed wings patterned black on two tones of ochraceous buff. (Underwing coverts Coleman mustard -- under primaries PomPom mustard). Merlin ate bird slowly -- feathers flying intermittently and flew when finished low over the street swooping down and one flap of her wings up again over the house next to where I stood and has not been seen since. --Barbara Hortvet

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS  
(Totals not included in the Dec CH)

SPECIES	BPC	HCC	FCC	BBCC	BBS	SCC*	Totals
	12/18	12/21	12/22	12/27	12/28	1/4	
Goose, Snow	863	769	4179	50	34000		77,161
(Goose, Blue)	98	185	9290		14000		23,573
Goose, Ross'	1	1	11				13
Goose, Canada	101	41	372		654		1,168
Duck, Wood	46	25	75	10	13	4	173
Teal, Green-winged	64	345	2132	119	2100		4,760
Duck, Mottled	10	41	330	50	404		835
Mallard	69	19	12	20	29		149
Pintail, Northern	81	77	2021	7	1716		3,902
Teal, Blue-winged	224	2	264	4	133		627
Shoveler, Northern	86	916	5131	3	489		6,625
Gadwall	380	97	826		203		1,506
Wigeon, American	432	96	763		395		1,686
Canvasback	45	20	302		4		371
Redhead	2		419		1		422
Duck, Ring-necked	27	26	204		237		494
Scaup, Greater			11				11
Scaup, Lesser	187	5617	1147		81	7	7,039
Scoter, Black			40				40
Scoter, Surf			3				3
Scoter, White-winged			45				45
Goldeneye, Common		26	1		10		37
Bufflehead		54	30		12		96
Merganser, Hooded		24	10	2			36
Merganser, Red-breasted	1	8	73				82
Duck, Ruddy		315	319	1	421		1,056
duck sp.			500				500
Vulture, Black	143		940	12	60	68	1,223
Vulture, Turkey	278	63	542	37	303	42	1,265
Osprey	2	2	16				20
Kite, Black-shouldered	2	6	27	2			37
Eagle, Bald	4	1	1				6
Harrier, Northern	11	47	163	9	86	14	330
Hawk, Sharp-shinned	2	7	9	3	1	4	26
Hawk, Cooper's		6	7	1	4		18
Accipiter sp.			1				1
Hawk, Red-shouldered	56	36	144	7	49	29	321
Hawk, Swainson's	1						1
Hawk, White-tailed				3			3
Hawk, Red-tailed	70	197	210	104	279	14	874
(Hawk, Krider's)		1					1
Hawk, Ferruginous					1		1
Buteo sp.	5		3		1		9
Caracara, Crested		2	1				3
Kestrel, American	136	124	257	54	181	14	766
Merlin		3	3				6
Falcon, Peregrine			3				3
Bobwhite, Northern	6	1	203	22	67		299
Rail, Yellow			4				4
Rail, Clapper		3	76				79
Rail, King			49	2	1		52
Rail, Virginia			13				13
Sora			17				17
Gallinule, Purple	1						1
Moorhen, Common	51		62		193		306
Coot, American	1878	387	7105	10	3835		13,215
Crane, Sandhill	142		1899		769		2,810
Plover, Black-bellied			19	250			269
Plover, Snowy				10			10
Plover, Semipalmated			4	25			29
Plover, Piping				7			7
Killdeer	631	530	962	340	1501	153	4,119
Oystercatcher, American			2				2
Stilt, Black-necked			15				15
Avocet, American			635	110			745
Yellowlegs, Greater	22	60	184	4	73		343
Yellowlegs, Lesser	2	20	171		30	36	259

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS  
(Totals not included in the Dec CH)

SPECIES	BPC	HCC	FCC	BBCC	BBS	SCC*	Totals
	12/18	12/21	12/22	12/27	12/28	1/4	
Loon, Common		15	8			1	24
Grebe, Least			1				1
Grebe, Pied-billed	211	23	545	14	150		943
Grebe, Horned		4	2				6
Grebe, Eared		120	254		12		386
Gannet, Northern			1				1
Pelican, American White	1223	1177	338		49		2,787
Pelican, Brown			1				1
Cormorant, Double-crested	2447	2035	1521		256	9	6,268
Cormorant, Olivaceous		34	9				43
cormorant sp.	20						20
Anhinga	63	1	47		21	1	135
Bittern, American			7				7
Heron, Great Blue	138	264	378	17	49	9	855
Egret, Great	115	221	397	24	125	5	887
Egret, Snowy	85	238	394		27		744
Heron, Little Blue	37	9	86		8		140
Heron, Tricolored	18	29	89		12		148
Egret, Reddish		2	16				18
Egret, Cattle	23	205	157	1	43	4	433
Heron, Green-backed	4	2	1				7
Night-Heron, Black-crowned		53	369		10		432
Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned		17	15	1	1		34
Ibis, White	171	2	483		349		1,005
Ibis, White-faced	30	13	858		600		1,501
Spoonbill, Roseate	8	4	121				133
Whistling-Duck, Fulvous					10		10
Whistling-Duck, Black-bellied	432				97		529
Goose, Greater White-fronted	214	84	2383		6000		8,681

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS.  
(Totals not included in the Dec CH)

SUMMARY OF AREA CHRISTMAS COUNTS  
(Totals not included in the Dec CH)

SPECIES	BPCC	HCC	FCC	BCCC	B BSP	SCCC#	Totals	SPECIES	BPCC	HCC	FCC	BCCC	B BSP	SCCC#	Totals
	12/18	12/21	12/22	12/27	12/28	1/4			12/18	12/21	12/22	12/27	12/28	1/4	
Sandpiper, Solitary			1				1	Nuthatch, Red-breasted					3		3
Willet		194	292				486	Nuthatch, Brown-headed							3
Sandpiper, Spotted	26	45	11				82	Creepers, Brown			5	2			7
Curlew, Long-billed	39	1	196		47		283	Wren, Carolina	80	87	206	63	72	48	556
Godwit, Marbled		2	4				6	Wren, Bewick's						1	1
Turnstone, Ruddy		2	181				183	Wren, House	30	89	94	2	11	9	235
Knot, Red			3				3	Wren, Winter		1	2				3
Sanderling		168	498				666	Wren, Sedge	6	78	624	7	12	9	736
Sandpiper, Western		588	441		27		1,056	Wren, Marsh	4	5	114	3		1	127
Sandpiper, Least	57	67	84	9	10		831	Kinglet, Golden-crowned	20	43	75	25	7	34	204
Dunlin		7	644		73		724	Kinglet, Ruby-crowned	576	620	1269	296	842	119	3,722
peep sp.			454				454	Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray	37	41	215	20	13	2	328
sandpiper sp.			50				50	Bluebird, Eastern	287	168	36	23	67	32	613
Dowitcher, Short-billed		325	520		58		903	Thrush, Hermit	13	42	79	16	22	7	179
Dowitcher, Long-billed		27	15		50		92	Robin, American	11993	1087	8233	1034	4341	5590	32,278
dowitcher sp.		255	530		51		836	Catbird, Gray	6	14	44	1	4		69
Snipe, Common	11	5	20	23	100	14	173	Mockingbird, Northern	89	263	451	136	204	58	1,201
Woodcock, American		2	2	12			16	Thrasher, Brown	31	88	168	20	40	10	357
Phalarope, Wilson's	1						1	Pipit, Water	306	112	193	29	350	33	1,023
jaeger sp.			1				1	Pipit, Sprague's		2	19				21
Gull, Laughing	61	44023	4689				48,773	Waxwing, Cedar	161	616	2185	325	94	429	3,810
Gull, Bonaparte's			219				219	Shrike, Loggerhead	124	202	356	55	287	17	1,041
Gull, Ring-billed	35	28532	2141	24	11		30,763	Starling, European	309	925	1747	912	549	476	4,918
Gull, Herring		121	372				493	Vireo, White-eyed	3	4	8	2	1		18
GULL, THAYER'S			1				1	Vireo, Solitary	8	13	65	7	12		105
gull sp.			55				55	Warbler, Orange-crowned	48	96	221	30	41	12	448
Tern, Gull-billed		2	11				13	Warbler, Nashville		1					1
Tern, Caspian	18	15	74		1		108	Warbler, Yellow-rumped	799	1047	1548	393	917	301	5,005
Tern, Royal	6	7	156				169	Warbler, Black-throated Gray			1				1
Tern, Sandwich			2				2	Warbler, Blackburnian	2					1	3
Tern, Common		56	25				81	Warbler, Yellow-throated	1	1					2
Tern, Forster's	6	152	2033				2,191	Warbler, Pine	8	149	19	43	8	76	303
Dove, Rock	16	198	382	206	3		805	Warbler, Palm	4		11	1			16
Dove, Mourning	160	599	715	626	352		2,452	Warbler, Black-and-white	2		6			1	9
Dove, Inca		48	2	1		11	62	Redstart, American			1				1
Ground-Dove, Common			3		9		12	waterthrush, sp.			1				1
Parakeet, Monk					6		6	Yellowthroat, Common	18	13	264	1	11		307
Ani, Groove-billed			12				12	Warbler, Wilson's	8	2	29			1	40
Barn-Owl, Common	1	5	5	4	8	1	24	Chat, Yellow-breasted	1						1
Screech-Owl, Eastern	2	44	2	12	3	2	65	Cardinal, Northern	279	290	578	183	366	109	1,805
Owl, Great Horned	5	7	15	3	6	2	38	Grosbeak, Black-headed			1				1
Owl, Barred	14	5	46	4	20	4	93	Grosbeak, Blue			1				1
Owl, Short-eared		1	5	1			7	BUNTING, LAZULI			1				1
Nighthawk, Common			1				1	Bunting, Indigo			13				13
Hummingbird, Buff-bellied			2				2	Tomhee, Rufous-sided	1	3	2		1	1	8
Hummingbird, Ruby-throated			1				1	Sparrow, (Aimophila) sp.	1						1
HUMMINGBIRD, BROAD-TAILED			1				1	Sparrow, Chipping	101	79	5		2	51	238
Hummingbird, Rufous		1	4				5	Sparrow, Field	36	1	5	1	12		55
Kingfisher, Belted	45	51	109	4	15	3	227	Sparrow, Vesper	2	3	22	1		5	33
Woodpecker, Red-headed	3	3	15		2	23	23	Sparrow, Lark	2		1				3
Woodpecker, Red-bellied	126	56	184	64	76	24	530	Sparrow, Savannah	421	74	1076	297	361	22	2,251
Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied	44	43	109	14	27	24	261	Sparrow, Grasshopper	4		3				7
Woodpecker, Downy	31	14	56	46	30	15	192	Sparrow, Le Conte's	2	4	150	13	3		172
Woodpecker, Hairy			1		2		3	Sparrow, Sharp-tailed	6	7	12				25
Flicker, Northern	25	54	76	19	15		189	Sparrow, Seaside		4	75				79
Woodpecker, Pileated	50	24	103	15	17	9	218	Sparrow, Fox	2	6		1		1	10
Empidonax sp.	1		1		1		3	Sparrow, Song	14	14	25	27	54	6	140
Phoebe, Eastern	167	66	386	51	151	9	830	Sparrow, Lincoln's	25	28	151	33	30	3	270
Flycatcher, Vermilion	11		13		13		37	Sparrow, Swamp	59	47	695	112	55	30	998
Flycatcher, Ash-throated	1		2				3	Sparrow, White-throated	62	218	293	96	119	46	834
Lark, Horned			10		2		12	Sparrow, White-crowned	1	15	6	4	8		34
Swallow, Tree	52	11	3				66	Sparrow, Harris'						2	2
Swallow, Northern Rough-winged	36		1				37	Junco, Dark-eyed		2		1			5
Swallow, Barn	1						1	sparrow sp.	20						8
swallow sp.	3						3	Longspur, Lapland							20
Jay, Blue	63	127	77	159	40	77	543	Blackbird, Red-winged	3398	221348	11891	1365	5002149	195	5240346
Crow, American	715	269	734	209	544	142	2,613	Meadowlark, Eastern	366	144	565	257	498	114	1,944
Chickadee, Carolina	396	289	759	194	392	110	2,140	meadowlark sp.			792	64			856
Titmouse, Tufted	189	25	341	172	289	64	1,080	Blackbird, Rusty	1						1
								Blackbird, Brewer's	75	1	93	3	49	93	314

MEISJE CHARTER CRUISES - BIRDING FROM  
A YACHT

Observe shoreline birds and waterfowl from the opposite direction from the water side. One day we can quietly sail the Intercoastal Waterway from Bolivar to Rollover Pass to High Island. When we find interesting areas we can row ashore in the dinghy where one can walk alone or with other members of the cruise to traverse areas accessible easily only by boat. Another day we can go ashore at Smith's Point Island and Vingt-et-Un Islands. Later we can cruise several miles up Double Bayou on the east shore of Trinity Bay to view a different habitat. If overnight anchorages are involved they will be aboard a modern, heated or air-conditioned 40-foot sailboat anchored along a lee shore in Galveston Bay. A longer 9-day trip in spring and summer is a transit of the Intercoastal Waterway to the bayous of southern Louisiana near Morgan City. After a few days in bayouland, a return by sailing offshore in the gulf.

Meisje Yacht Charters, 3018 Kevin Ln., Houston TX 77043, is owned and operated by Bill and Evelyn Shahan, who both are Coast Guard licensed captains and have been sailing the gulf coastal waters for 16 years. Please contact them at (713)462-3515 concerning fees, itineraries and schedules.

Grackle, Great-tailed	702	30022	1788	572	396	33,480
Grackle, Boat-tailed		36	145			181
Grackle, Common	13301	80073	6291	522	490	31100,680
Cowbird, Brown-headed	628	220279	2803	430	1000844	486,1225470
blackbird sp.	134803		62200	2500	30586	1130,089
Oriole, Northern		11				11
ORIOLE, SCOTT'S			11			11
Finch, Purple	5			35		40
Siskin, Pine		21	3			31, 81
Goldfinch, American	964	1042	2635	414	632	296, 5,983
Sparrow, House	3	153	180	523	77	341, 1,277
	84074	652284	216469	13706	6117270	10012 7093815

BPCC = Brazosport CC  
HCC = Houston CC  
FCC = Freeport CC  
BBCC = Buffalo Bayou CC  
BBSP = unofficial Brazos Bend SP CC  
SCCC = Spring Creek CC \*(Harris Co. portion only)

**THE SPOONBILL STAFF**

Editor ..... B. C. Robison  
Art Editor ..... Linda Feltner  
Layout Artist ..... Connie Clark  
Typists ..... Barbara Darr  
Libby Price  
Labels ..... Peggy Milstead  
Mailing Committee ..... Beth Hudson  
Yetta Chapman  
Connie Shimbor  
Checklist Committee ..... Ron Braun  
Ben Feltner  
Noel Pettingell  
Jim Morgan

**ORNITHOLOGY GROUP (Outdoor Nature Club)**

c/o Beth Hudson  
623 Hallie  
Houston, TX 77024  
(RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED)

**SOLICITED MAIL  
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL  
DO NOT DELAY**

Non-profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Houston, Texas  
Permit No. 1063