



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME VIII NO. 5
SEPTEMBER 1959

 The air is now full of gracefully flying swal-
 lows. While most migrating birds fly by night
 and seek their food during the daylight hours,
 swallows travel only during the day and con-
 *gregate in numbers when roosting time comes. *
 *Although powerful on the wing, the northern *
 *breeding swallows do not attempt to cross big *
 *bodies of water to reach their Central and S. *
 *American wintering homes, but fly around the *
 *Gulf of Mexico via Mexico and Panama. Their *
 *name is derived from the Anglo-Saxon swalewe *
 *or swealwe. Their short weak legs are used *
 *only for perching; they never walk on the *
 *ground. The continuous twitter that we hear *
 *is their only song. *

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

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

- September 27 ORNITHOLOGY GROUP FIELD TRIP to be led by Armand Yramategui. Meet at the Post Office in Silsbee at 10:00 a. m. The party will cover the area around Silsbee and then go north to an area which will include the Turner Sanctuary. This trip was a great success last year, so be sure to be among those present and birding this year.
- October 1 Regular bi-monthly meeting of the Ornithology Group to be held at the Houston Natural Gas Hospitality House on Alabama and Kirby (3505 Kirby) at 8:00 p.m. Something interesting is apt to happen.
- October 13 Regular meeting of the Outdoor Nature Club. The movie "Tornado" made by the U. S. Weather Bureau will be shown.
- October 18 Outdoor Nature Club Field trip to Grand Lake; Leader: R. E. Wright.
- October 25 ORNITHOLOGY GROUP FIELD TRIP to be led by Mabel and Bob Deshayes. The party will meet at the Baytown side of the Tunnel and will leave from there at 8:00 a.m. Plans are to bird around Baytown and then along to the Trinity Bay Road with several side excursions off it. The Cove area will be covered in the afternoon.

ORNITHOLOGY GROUP REPORTS

ORNITHOLOGY GROUP FIELD TRIP OF AUGUST 23, 1959 - - - - - Reported by Carl Aiken

For an enthusiastic birder, every field trip holds something special - something by which the outing can be remembered. The O. G. field trip of August 23, was no exception. The 35 birders participating will long remember it as the wettest August trip they ever attended!

The group proceeded to the Baytown Tunnel from Thornhill's Cafeteria. In route we noticed hundreds of migrating barn swallows and one scissor-tailed flycatcher in Pasadena. The flycatcher was molting and had an unusually short tail. The first attractions at the Tunnel were wood ibis and white pelicans. Ten wood ibis were recorded - all of them immatures. It was interesting to note that the birds had pink feet and partially pink legs. This, as well as the mottled appearance of their heads, might possibly be a good way to tell their age. Shore birds were numerous on the flats north of the tunnel and considerable time was spent studying them. The species included dowitchers, black-necked stilts, pectoral, semipalmated, stilt and western sandpipers. Lesser yellowlegs were fairly common but only two greater yellowlegs were noted. The investigation of a nearby marsh added a least bittern, Wilson's plover, and ruddy turnstone.

At this point the trip became slightly disunited. Most of the group drove on to Galveston while the rest lingered behind to search for more birds. The discovery of three lesser scaup and a mottled duck inspired some to search for more migrant game birds but the effort proved futile. The rain kept coming down so before long everyone was on the highway. I suppose we all considered our morale boosted when we thought about going to a place where it might not be so wet. As we moved south, common nighthawks became more abundant, several groups of fulvous tree ducks were found, and a bank swallow was added to an evergrowing list of species.

A squall line was causing heavy rain between LaMarque and Galveston, but the deluge didn't last over fifteen minutes. Just before the hard rain, we noticed a group of water birds that had been frightened out of a grassy field by a train. We made closer observations of the flock and got the following estimates: 300 black-necked stilts, 125 wood ibis, 45 snowy egrets, 15 black-bellied plover, 13 white-faced ibis, 12 roseate spoonbill, 9 lesser yellowlegs, 1 greater yellowlegs. It was thundering and lightning constantly but the birds didn't seem to mind. However, when the train came rumbling through their area they all took to the air. They knew that nature had nothing to do with that beast.

Galveston Island once again proved itself a birder's paradise - even if it was a little damp. Roseate spoonbills were quite numerous. The warm pink color of this now familiar species brightened the day for every birder present. Migrants increased and the second hummingbird (presumed a ruby-throat) was added to the list. Nine clapper rails were observed in a marsh near West Bay. Nineteen cattle egrets were found - all of them on 9-mile Road and all with one small group of cattle. Feeding with the cattle egrets were 7 snowy egrets and one American egret.

The rain increased considerably after the cattle egrets were seen so the group once again split up - some returning to Houston while others kept birding. Birding at Mulberry Grove was hindered by the weather but a little effort brought good results. An olive-sided flycatcher and Baltimore oriole were the first migrants to catch our attention. This was the second olive-sided flycatcher for the day. A great-crested flycatcher and a male American oystercatcher were next on the program, followed by more hard rain. During the rain we noticed four blue-gray gnatcatchers, six red-eyed vireos, and one parula warbler. We had seen an immature hawk in the grove but decided to study it more when the weather calmed down.

After identifying the hawk as a red-tailed, we left Mulberry Grove and drove along the beach. Another party took our place at the grove and found yellow warblers, orchard orioles more olive-sided flycatchers, and a very early ruby-crowned kinglet. We found two more American oystercatchers and 31 ruddy turnstones. At the same time, still another party was observing six reddish egrets near the jetties. Three egrets were of the normal phase - three were of the white phase!

It was now about 4:30 p. m. and most of the group returned to Houston. A misty rain accompanied them, but by now no one paid much attention. They had all conquered the weather and had a wonderful time doing it!

GOOSE BUMPS WITH MAGNIFICENT FRIGATE BIRDS:

Sunday, August 30, 1959, at 2:00 p.m. we were boating in Chocolate Bay Bay near highway #9 when Nancy spotted a female frigate bird perched on a post at the 4th Mustang Bayou channel marker stake some 400 yards to the northwest. We turned toward the bird and approached to within 100'. The bird spread its wings, flapped two or three times and sailed into the stiff breeze (8 to 10 mph.) As we came about, the bird returned to the perch some

5' above the water and we were able to approach within 100' again, when she took flight and circled the boat and flew northward up Chocolate Bayou. We returned about 4:30 p.m. and the frigate bird was again perched on the same marker pole and she flushed again at about 100', this time circling the boat at about 30' altitude. We got several good looks, the white bill with the hook on the end was clearly seen as well as the "U" shaped dark spot on the white chest, as well as white wing pits. A real big thrill, thanks to the good "birding eyes" of my wife.

Submitted by Jerry Strickling
* # * # * # * # *

NOTES ON THE ESKIMO CURLEW:

The Eskimo Curlew has probably gone beyond the help of protection. A specimen was taken in Labrador in 1932, but, although we have reasonably reliable sight records within the past few years, practical conservationists fear that this bird may have joined the ghostly company that includes the great auk, the passenger pigeon and the heath hen.

In the United States, the Eskimo curlew was known only as a migrant. Its breeding ground was on the barren lands of Canada west of Hudson Bay and its path of migration was a strange one. Quitting in July the remote and lonely land where they had bred and reared their young, the curlews headed eastward across the Canadian arctic, arriving on the coast of Labrador by early August. There they fed and loitered for a brief time, blanketing the hillsides and gorging on the purple-black fruit that came to be known as the curlew berry.

From Labrador the migration moved across the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Nova Scotia on the way to the far-off winter home of the clan. What happened next depended on wind and weather. If storm or fog hindered the birds, they followed the coast south, and at such times hunters on Cape Cod and other favored places in New England shot curlews by the wagon load. If weather favored them, however, the curlews did not include the New England coast on their south-faring route. When they vanished from Nova Scotia, they were not seen again until they made landfall on the coast of South America, 2000 miles away. Strong westerly winds, overtaking them on the flight, sometimes drove them as far off course as Iceland and the British Isles, but still they survived. Mid-September found them on the pampas of southern Argentina, 8000 miles from the tundra of Canada where they had pastured two months before! The route of their spring flight was completely different. From the grassy plains of Patagonia, they came up across South America and reached this country in the region of the Texas coast. They then passed directly north to their nesting grounds through the prairie country west of the Mississippi. The Atlantic coast saw them in spring only as stragglers.

The golden plover followed an almost identical flight pattern and, in the old days, shared migration lanes and summer and winter homes with the Eskimo curlew. Hunters looked confidently to find the two together.

* * * * *

NOTES ON SHELDON BIRDS --- reported by Carl Aiken

- June 7 - one ROADRUNNER seen in a pine-hardwood habitat near Sheldon. The woods this bird was seen in have considerable underbrush and are usually damp.
- July 3 - 3 lesser yellowlegs and two black-necked stilts were seen at Sheldon Reservoir. They had been completely absent from that locality for about 3 weeks.
- July 14 - Today purple martins began preparing for migration. Several days were spent making short flights. Most of the young and old birds spent the day circling above their nesting site. By the first of August, all of the resident birds had left the Sheldon area.
- July 26 - Belted kingfishers are now more frequent at Sheldon Reservoir than they have been.
- Aug. 3 - One spotted sandpiper was found at Sheldon. By August 7 there were three spotted sandpipers in the area. On August 10, five of the birds had appeared at Sheldon.
- Aug. 10 - Eleven orchard orioles were seen in the willow trees at Sheldon Reservoir. All of these birds were migrants for none had nested in that vicinity. Several pectoral and stilt sandpipers were seen at Sheldon. A lesser yellowlegs also appeared on this date.
- Aug. 12 - One yellow warbler was found in the willow trees at Sheldon Reservoir. On August 13, two individuals of this species was seen in the same locality. A migrant Swainson's hawk was seen at Sheldon. Barn, cliff, rough-winged, tree and bank swallows began migrating daily over the Sheldon area.
- Aug. 13 - Today it appeared that redwinged blackbirds were assembling into winter flocks.
- Aug. 17 - A flock of 20 plus roseate spoonbills was seen at Sheldon Reservoir. One or two

spoonbills have been seen here during the summer but no large flocks. These were probably young birds.

- Aug. 17 - Two pintails were seen flying over Sheldon reservoir.
 Aug. 20 - Two white-faced ibis were seen at Sheldon reservoir. These were the first individuals of this species that I had seen during the summer.
 Aug. 25 - One ruby-throated hummingbird was noted at Sheldon.
 Aug. 28 - One blue-gray gnatcatcher seen at Sheldon Reservoir.

Ronald Fowler writes to say that birding in Abilene is quite different from Houston but most interesting as Abilene is on the dividing line between the east and west and many species come together there in Taylor County.

On the Mexican expedition Mr. Davis observed and recorded the Ridgway Whip-poor-will in several localities in southern Sonora and northern Sinaloa. It has now appeared in the United States and Ron has condensed an article from the May-June issue of the "Condor" concerning its appearance here:

"The Ridgway whip-poor-will (*caprimulgus ridgwayi*) is a little known caprimulgid inhabiting arid western North America south to Guatemala and Honduras. The northern limits of distribution have until recently been thought to run from slightly northeast of Hermosillo, Sonora, to the Sierra Madre Occidental.

In the Condor article, Richard F. Johnston and John William Hardy described the occurrence of the Ridgway whip-poor-will in extreme southwestern New Mexico. On June 23, 1958 a male was collected in Guadalupe Canyon, elevation 4200 feet, Hidalgo County, New Mexico. The locality is two miles east of the Arizona-New Mexico state line and about three miles north of the international boundary.

The bird seemed to be holding a breeding territory and probably was capable of effective breeding. At least one male was located in an adjacent area and it was thought that females were observed also.

Major characteristics of the habitat of the bird in New Mexico are similar to those of habitats of the bird farther to the south. Because two Ridgway whip-poor-wills were seen in New Mexico and these were calling and probably territorial, the writers believe the occurrence of the species in this marginal locality is not due to chance. It is more than passing interest also to note some other factors that tend to support this belief.

The vegetation of Guadalupe Canyon is a mixture of elements characteristic of xeric scrublands and riparian woodland. In addition to the juniper and mesquite there is an exceedingly wide variety of thornscrub subdominant and it is within this complex of scrub vegetation that an affinity of flora with xeric Sonora can be seen.

Some birds typical of arid tropical scrub are found in limited numbers in Guadalupe Canyon. In addition to *caprimulgus ridgwayi* the following species are abundant breeding birds of arid tropical scrub: violet-crowned hummingbird, broad-billed hummingbird, coppery-tailed trogon, rose-throated becard, olivaceous flycatcher, and red-eyed cowbird. All except the violet-crowned hummingbird are known to breed in Guadalupe Canyon and it may also breed there.

The point to be emphasized is that the occurrence in Guadalupe Canyon of such forms as *caprimulgus ridgwayi* seems not to be accidental but is more likely a part of a meaningful pattern of distribution reflecting reasonably similar occurrences of certain ecologic variables along the western slope of the Sierra Madre.

* * * * *

SIDELIGHT OF THE O. G. FIELD TRIP - August 23, 1959 - Carl Aiken

On the afternoon of August 23, Vic Emanuel and I had a wonderful opportunity to study migration along the Gulf Coast. While waiting for the rain to slacken at Mulberry Grove we noticed several flights of barn swallows flying west and parallel to the coast. One purple martin and one woods bird (probably a blue-gray gnatcatcher) were observed migrating in the same manner.

Two flocks of common nighthawks were seen - one containing five birds and one containing nine. Both flocks were flying south and at right angles to the coast. We later noticed three barn swallows flying in this same direction.

These birds were all flying during fairly heavy rain. We were unable to watch them any length of time so I am not certain if the birds changed their direction when confronted with the open Gulf.

#

And another sidelight - Thelma Smith's comment that it was good to see someone a step lower in the absolutely out of their mind level than us birding in the rain - several men fishing seriously away in the downpour - up to their chests in Offats' Bayou!

FALL MIGRATION REPORT FOR THE HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA FOR AUGUST, 1959 - Vic Emanuel

Fall migration got into full swing during August, in fact shorebird migration reached a peak around mid-August. Swallow migration began during the first week of August and has continued throughout the month. The following observations on August 2 and 9 illustrate these statements: 1) August 2 (Ruth Moorman, Thelma Smith, John O'Neill, Norma Oates at the Baytown tunnel observed: 7 American avocet, 1 wood ibis. At Galveston: 30 longbilled curlew, 35 cattle egret, 1 magnificent frigate bird, 1 eastern kingbird, 10 brown pelican, 2 black-bellied plover, 3 snowy plover, 20 sanderling, 1 pectoral sandpiper, 15 semipalmated sandpiper, 15 western sandpiper, 1 spotted sandpiper, 20 black-necked stilt, 20 least tern, 20 ruddy turnstone, 4 greater yellowlegs.

2) August 9 (Mabel and Bob Deshayes, Linda and Clinton Snyder, Carl Aiken, Vic Emanuel) at the Baytown Tunnel: 1 ruddy turnstone, 100 lesser yellowlegs, 1 greater yellowlegs, 50 American avocet, 30 pectoral sandpiper, 3 Wilson's phalarope, 135 stilt sandpiper, 80 dowitcher (sp) 60 least sandpiper, 60 semipalmated sandpiper, 60 western sandpiper, 11 wood ibis.

In a huisache thicket just east of Baytown, we found an amazing concentration of migrants, mainly flycatchers. The flycatchers were low in the bushes and were often seen on the ground feeding on the very abundant grasshoppers. Migrants seen in the huisache and in the trees along a nearby stream included: 25 blue-gray gnatcatchers, 65 wood pewee, 50 empidonax flycatchers, 3 yellow warbler, 1 yellowthroat, 2 black-and-white warbler, 1 Louisiana waterthrush, 6 orchard oriole. In another area (wooded) we found: 3 white-eyed vireo, 1 black-and-white warbler, 1 crested flycatcher, 1 yellowthroated warbler, 3 wood pewee. Numerous flocks of swallows were seen, but since they usually passed over rapidly, exact counts were impossible; however, one flock contained: 10 cliff swallows, 1 barn swallow, 1 bank swallow - and another contained: 20 cliff swallow, 15 tree swallow, 14 barn swallow, 10 bank swallow. In a high grass field we saw 8 upland plover.

3) Galveston (Katrina Thompson, Thelma Smith, George Sibley, John O'Neill) Observed: 20 long-billed curlew, 1 dowitcher (sp) 50 fulvous tree duck, 14 reddish egret, 6 empidonax flycatchers, 1 magnificent frigate bird, 2 red-tailed hawks, 1 WHITE-TAILED HAWK (near La-Marque), 3 belted kingfisher, 65 purple martin (in one flock over San Luis Pass) 30 common nighthawk, 3 black-bellied plover, 2 semipalmated plover, 11 Wilson's plover, 15 sanderling 5 pectoral sandpiper, 2 semipalmated sandpiper, 1 barn swallow, 21 ruddy turnstone, 1 greater yellowlegs.

Other observations reported included: August 15 (Ella and Helen Wolfer, Norma Oates) at the Baytown Tunnel: 2000 plus peeps including least, western, and semipalmated. 20 plus stilt sandpipers, 50 plus dowitchers (sp). At Galveston: 2 long-billed curlew, 20 cattle egret, 1 marbled godwit, 2 black-bellied plover, 6 semipalmated plover, 6 ruddy turnstone, 2 greater yellowlegs, 4 lesser yellowlegs.

August 16 (Katrina Thompson, Thelma Smith, Norma Oates) at Cinco Ranch: 4 Mississippi kites. In west Houston: 10 yellow-billed cuckoo, 1 crested flycatcher, 15 blue-gray gnatcatchers, 20 orchard oriole, 20 plus lark sparrow.

Rain during the latter part of August resulted in some good birding. The following were observed by Vic Emanuel at West Blvd. in south Houston: August 26: 2 blue-gray gnatcatchers, 2 brown thrasher (residents) August 27: 5 red-eyed vireos, 1 cerulean warbler, 1 BLACKPOLL WARBLER (details on blackpoll - white undertail feathers and olive breast with prominent streaks, two white wing bars) 1 black-and-white warbler, 1 brown thrasher.

* * * * *

CLEARING HOUSE: with additional information on Fall migration:

- August 6 Observed by Bill Risser and John Buck at Blue Ridge Farm area: 2 upland plover, Baird sandpiper, king rail, least bittern.
- August 11 Orchard oriole noted by Bill Risser, Bob Aylin, and John Buck at Addisks.
- August 13 The magnificent frigate bird seen by Bill Risser at 8 Mile Road, barn swallows.
- August 15 Observed by John O'Neill at Cinco Ranch: 1 purple gallinule, 2 common gallinule, 6 king rail, 500 plus fulvous tree ducks, 2 GOLDEN PLOVER (they are Spring migrants) 50 western sandpiper, 4 upland plover, 1 sparrow hawk, 1 marsh hawk, 3 red-tailed hawks.
- August 16 Norma Oates, Katrina Thompson and JON on Memorial and Dairy Ashford: 30 orchard oriole, barred owl, 2 crested flycatchers, 8 cuckoos - yellow-billed, 25 lark sparrows, At Cinco Ranch: 4 Mississippi kite and 1 upland plover.
- August 19 JON at home: 1 yellow-throated warbler
- August 24 2 pine warblers noted by Hoffmans in Memorial area
- August 26 1 mourning warbler seen by Hoffmans
- August 28 2 mourning warblers still in Hoffman yard
- September 3 Observed by Hoffmans in yard: numerous Canada and black-throated green warblers, blue-winged warbler, worm-eating, black-and-white warblers, ovenbird.

BIRDING IN THE BAYSHORE AREA -- Submitted by Clint and Linda Snyder

On August 4: 50 barn swallows, 1 bank swallow, 12 blue-gray gnatcatchers, white-eyed vireo, 4 orchard oriole, 12 immature painted buntings, 3 upland plover, and migrant(?) marsh hawk at Cedar Bayou. At the Tunnel: 22 white-faced ibis, 3 wood ibis, 34 roseate spoonbill, 2 lesser scaup, 2 stilt sandpiper, spotted sandpiper, semipalmated plover, dowitcher, lesser yellowlegs, 2 clapper rail, king rail, and 2000 peeps.

On August 6: WHITE-TAILED HAWK off Highway 225

On August 8: 50 upland plover flying south over our house

On August 9: Fall migration begins to hit its stride with the appearance of 3 Wilson's phalarope at Tunnel.

On August 10: Male RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD in our yard, also yellowthroat.

On August 11: 1 PRAIRIE WARBLER, 25 or 30 yellow warblers, 50 orchard orioles, 15 Indigo bunting, empidonax flycatcher, 6 wood pewee, white-eyed vireo, 25 blue-gray gnatcatcher, 100 nighthawk migrating at Cedar Bayou. At Tunnel: 1 solitary sandpiper, 10 Baird's, 50 pectoral, 150 plus stilt, 300 plus western, 300 semipalmated, 50 least sandpipers, 2 Wilson phalarope, 5 greater yellowlegs, 50 lesser yellowlegs, 300 dowitcher, 25 semipalmated plover 12 wood ibis, 4 white-faced ibis, 20 roseate spoonbill, 1000 plus white pelican.

On August 12: 2 pileated woodpeckers in our yard

On August 13: First blue-winged teal (2) at Tunnel, also Wilson's phalarope(12) 50 avocet, 300 stilt sandpiper.

August 14: 24 Wilson's phalarope and 1 broad-winged hawk

August 17: Peak of 3000 shorebirds and peeps at Tunnel, including 500 dowitchers.

August 19: Phoebe (early date)

August 21: At Galveston: the usual plus belted kingfisher, 2 upland plover, 12 cattle egret, and 7 starling.

August 23: BELL'S VIREO and 300 plus swallows of all kinds at Cedar Bayou.

August 24: Black-billed cuckoo at Cedar Bayou.

August 26: Red-eyed vireo, blue-winged and black-and-white warblers.

August 27: A super day at Galveston by Clint, Drew, Paul Cornell and myself - saw HUDSONIAN GODWIT (not normally a Fall migrant) 18 marbled godwit, 86 long-billed curlew, whimbrel, 52 GOLDEN PLOVER (not normally a Fall migrant, and in spring plumage) 7 piping plover, snowy, Wilson's, semipalmated and black-bellied plover, 53 ruddy turnstone, 6 knot 6 solitary sandpiper, 15 reddish egret, wood ibis (1 over West Bay fishing camp) 57 cattle egret, 2 INCA DOVE, 3 SANDWICH TERN, 3 gull-billed tern, 10 ring-billed gull, belted kingfisher, chuck-wills-widow, 25 starling, summer tanager, 32 eastern kingbird.

September 1: 14 ruby-throated hummingbirds

* * * * *

SOME PEOPLE ALSO CALL ME:

1. Sun-gazer	12. Franklin gull
2. Whip Tom Kelly, chip-a-wee-o	11. Spotted sandpiper
3. Robin snipe	10. Cooper hawk.
4. Gourdhead, blue Charley, plumber	9. Pintail
5. Spike tail, salt-water teal, bumble bee buzzer	8. Sparrow hawk
6. Fly-up-the-creek	7. Willet
7. Tell-tale, tattler	6. Belted kingfisher
8. Cleek-cleek, killie hawk	5. Ruddy duck
9. Sprigtail	4. Wood ibis
10. Blue darter	3. Knot
11. Teeter-tail	2. White-eyed vireo
12. Prairie pigeon	1. American bittern

WHAT IS MY NAME?

BIRDS OF THE COVE AREA FOR AUGUST, 1959 --- Reported by Arlie McKay

Total: 134 species

Pied-billed grebe: 1 on 27th; white pelican: 2 to 100 on 5 days - anhinga: 1 on 4 days
cattle egret: 33 on 22nd - reddish egret: on 6 days (only 2) - green heron: 1 to 3 on 8 days
yellow-crowned night heron: 1 to 6 on 7 days - wood ibis: 1 on 2nd, 6th, 11th, 14th, 18th,
30 estimated on 9th - white-faced ibis: on 8 days up to 250, 8th - white ibis: on 13 days,
up to 200 on 22nd - spoonbill: on 12 days, peak of 45 estimated on 2nd - fulvous tree duck:
on 5 days, peak of 2500 estimated on 22nd - mallard: 4 (one flock) on 8th, 2 on 9th and 31st
mottled duck on 7 days, peak of 55 on 8th, 153 on 31st - pintail: 7 on 26th (first sure mi-
grants) 23 on 31st - green-winged teal: 1 on 8th, 22nd and 31st plus a flock of 13 (first
migrants) on 31st - blue-winged teal: on 8 days, peak of 800 estimated on 22nd and 600 on
31st - red-shouldered hawk: 1 to 8 on 17 days - Swainson's hawk: 1 on 2nd, 2 on 25th - bob-
white: there seem to be more than in any other of my 25 years of birding - king rail: 2 on

August 1 - clapper rail: 1 on 23rd and 27th - common gallinule: 1 on 8th - semipalmated plover: on 6 days, peak of 17 on 9th - Wilson's plover: 1 on 16th - black-bellied plover: on 5 days, peak of 8 on 31st - ruddy turnstone: first 5 on 8th, 1 on 22nd, 2 on 27th - long-billed curlew: first 2 on 29th, 1 on 31st - upland plover: 22 on 8th, 12 on 22nd, 2 on 25th 1 on 27th, 6 on 31st - spotted sandpiper: 1 to 9 on 8 days - solitary sandpiper: 1 on 8th, 2 on 31st - willet: 1 to 22 on 7 days - greater yellowlegs: 1 to 5 on 7 days - lesser yellowlegs: on 10 days, peak of 1000 estimated on 2nd - pectoral sandpiper: on 11 days, peak of 2000 estimated on 8th - least sandpiper: on 9 days - semipalmated sandpiper: on 8th and 9th western sandpiper: on 4 days - dowitcher: on 7 days, peak of 150 on 8th - stilt sandpiper: first one on 8th, 1 on 22nd, 3 on 26th - buff-breasted sandpiper: first 6 on 8th (equal to earliest ever) 1 on 22nd, 2 on 24th, 8 on 28th - sanderling: first one on 24th - Sandwich tern: first one on 2nd, 1 on 9th and 16th - screech owl: 1 to 3 on 11 days - horned owl: 1 on 23rd, 30th, 31st - barred owl: 1 on 9th - chuck-wills-widow: first one on 9th, 1 on 11th 26th, 27th - hummingbird: on 12 days, peak of 7 on 31st - RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: 1 from 25th & 26th - eastern kingbird: on 16 days, peak of 37 on 30th - WESTERN KINGBIRD: first two on 30th crested flycatcher: first 8 on 11th, 1 to 6 on four other days - empidonax flycatcher: first and peak on 9th with 125 estimated, 1 to 11 on 9 other days - yellow-bellied flycatcher: first on 9th and 3 other days - alder flycatcher: from 9th - least flycatcher: 1 on 20th & 31st - pewee: first on 8th, peak of about 8 on 27th and 10 days - olive-sided flycatcher: first 3 on 9th, on 10 days, peak of 31 on 30th - robin: a spotted breasted immature on 8th - blue-gray gnatcatcher: first 50 estimated on 8th and on 11 other days - white-eyed vireo: 3 on 9th - red-eyed vireo: first 2 on 9th, peak of 10 estimated on 24th and 25th - yellow-throated vireo: 1 on 9th and 27th -

Warblers: black-and-white: first one on 8th, on 6 days with peak of 5 on 11th - prothonotary: first migrant on 24th, 1 on 27th - worm-eating: 1 on 9th - blue-winged: first 2 on 20th - parula: first 1 on 23rd, 1 on 24th - yellow: on 11 days with peak of 17 on 31st - yellow-throated: first 2 on 24th - PRAIRIE: first 2 on 11th - Kentucky: one on 30th - yellow throat: first migrant on 31st - chat: first one on 16th (second earliest ever - one once on August 10) 1 on 20th - hooded: first one on 9th (earliest ever by 4 days) - Canada: first 1 on 20th - redstart: first 1 on 24th, 1 on 27th, 31st - Louisiana waterthrush: 1 on 11th - Baltimore oriole: 1 on 20th (second earliest ever) 1 on 24th - common grackle: 1 or 2 on 4 days - summer tanager: first migrant on 20th and a non-migrant on 9th in nesting habitat - blue grosbeak: first one on 16th, 2 on 20th, 1 on 23rd, 4 on 30th: - seaside sparrow: on 5 days, peak of 12 on 2nd - lark sparrow: one on 27th.

COMMON LOON --- Observation reported by Carl Aiken

One June 18, 1959, a game warden brought a common loon (*gavia immer*) to the office of the Texas Game and Fish Commission at Sheldon. The bird could neither fly nor walk and had probably not eaten for some time. The individual was caught at Lake Houston.

I placed the loon in a large cage with a tub of water and some fish nearby. The bird evidently had some disease for I could find no broken bones or signs that it had been hurt in other ways. Whatever its trouble was it proved fatal, for the loon was dead the next morning.

At first the bird appeared to be an immature or an adult in winter plumage. By measuring the wing, tail, bill, and tarsus I found the bird to be an adult male. The shape of the nostril and the color of the iris also aided me in separating it from juveniles. This individual showed no signs of summer plumage whatsoever and had a larger wing span than is common for this species.

WE WOULD LIKE TO RUN A SORT OF TRADING POST IN WHICH MEMBERS MAY LIST FOR SALE OR TRADE ANY ARTICLE CONNECTED WITH BIRD WATCHING: BINOCULARS, BIRD BOOKS OR RECORDS, FEEDERS, BIRD BATHS, ETC. IT WILL GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISPOSE OF SOMETHING NO LONGER WANTED AND IT MAY BE JUST THE THING SOME OTHER BIRDER MIGHT WANT - ESPECIALLY OUR JUNIOR MEMBERS WHO AREN'T IN THE ZEISS CLASS JUST YET. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE SEND FULL INFORMATION TO YOUR EDITOR:

Mrs. Henry S. Hoffman
443 Hollow Drive
Houston 24, Texas
Ho 5- 5852



Outdoor Nature Club
(Ornithology Group)
1532 Muhler
Houston 23, Texas
Return Postage Guaranteed

