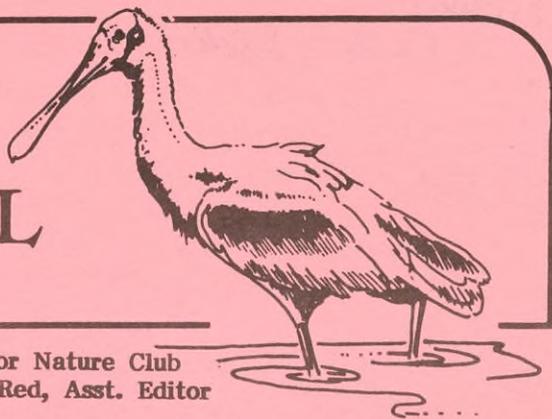


The SPOONBILL



Published by the Ornithology Group, Outdoor Nature Club
Houston, Texas, Libby Price, Editor; Ellen Red, Asst. Editor

VOLUME XXXVII, No. 11
November, 1988

Coming Events

Thursday, Dec. 1: Ornithology Group meeting at Bayou Manor, 4141 S. Braeswood at 7:30 p.m. George Regmund, Director of the Armand Bayou Nature Center will talk on "Winter Birding at Armand Bayou."

Saturday, Dec. 3: Ornithology Group field trip with Bob Honig as leader. Owling is great at Brazos Bend State Park and that's where our December field trip will be. The good news for all you late sleepers is that we'll begin at noon. Meet at the convenience store just 200 or so yards north of the park entrance. Birding will begin on some roads near the park and move into the park in midafternoon. Bring a picnic supper to eat between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. Owling will begin from the Elm Lake picnic area promptly at 5:00. We'll finish before closing time, but you're welcome to camp if you wish. For more information call Don and Lee Richardson at 661-1365.

Deadline for Spoonbill material and for Clearing House reports.

Thursday, Dec. 8: Outdoor Nature Club meeting at the Houston Arboretum. Marilyn Crane will program on Costa Rica.

Saturday, Dec. 17: Houston Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by the OG. Plan to participate and see the count list in this issue for a number to call and get your name on the list.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ATTWATER CENSUS

Two additional volunteers are needed to help census the entire Attwater NWR. These volunteers should be able to come out on a regular basis three to five times a month on weekdays. Marilyn Crane is a volunteer and could tell you what is involved. Call her at 360-2711 or call the refuge at (409) 234-3021.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Brazos Bend State Park is updating its checklist of birds. Personal checklists and field notes from 1984 to the present of birds seen at BBSP and the vicinity would be useful. Please send copies to: Brazos Bend State Park, 21901 FM 762, Needville TX 77461, ATTN: Checklist.

BEACH CLEANUP REPORT

About 55 members of the ONC participated in the Texas Coastal Cleanup. The group joined with Audubon Society members and Ed Rozenberg's Boy Scouts to work on Bolivar. First we cleaned the Sanctuary at Bolivar Flats and then for some distance along the beach. Altogether this group numbered about 100 people.

Maryann Young, who coordinated the effort from the Flats to Crystal Beach reports that 20 tons of trash were collected from that portion of Bolivar. About 60% was onshore litter and household trash. There were more heavy metal items picked up this year than last, when the trash was about 50/50 onshore and offshore, and the heavy items, some of which were left last year, probably accounted for the difference.

Offshore items included bottles and tubes with Spanish labels and even one with Russian letters. The most significant single item removed was a segment of heavy trawling cable about 800 feet long that has been on Bolivar flats for a long time. Bob Behrstock and Richard Uzar headed the effort to pull it out of the mud, finally hooking it to a truck to get it all out, after much human muscle was expended digging and pulling the first part free.

People who participated last year felt that the effort was better coordinated and more thorough in the Sanctuary than last year. Bob Honig, our on-site leader was pleased by the bigger turnout and earnest workers. We workers could revel in a beach that was clean instead of trashed-up.

Noel's Niche Looking Back

by Noel Pettingell

.....10 YEARS AGO/FROM NOV., 1978 SPOONBILL

"Around and About ** A thoughtful editorial from a Houston newspaper says: 'As town houses and the town house concept spread through Houston, many older lawns are being paved over, many older houses surrounded by high walls. These, of course, have their virtue. But it is important to remember that trees must have water. To pave over an old grassy yard robs the tree of rainfall to which its root pattern has grown accustomed. Unless it is watered regularly and well, with a slow hose running all night long, it will gradually but inevitably die.

"As the trees die the birds withdraw. The Garden Club of America reminds that one house wren feeds 500 insects to its young every summer afternoon, that a swallow can devour 1,000 insects every 12 hours. One pair of flickers can polish off 5,000 ants in a day. A Baltimore oriole relishes hairy caterpillars at the rate of 17 a minute. And a brown thrasher may eat as many as 6,000 insects in a day.

"Old Houstonians planted trees by the thousands, and today's Houstonians enjoy many square miles of shady neighborhoods as a result. But the attrition is high, the replacement low. As a city that can be remarkably hot and steamy in the summertime, Houston must replace trees as rapidly as it loses them or take the consequences in increased pollution, higher temperature, fewer birds and bigger splashes of insecticide. Not a pretty prospect."

FEEDER WATCHERS NEEDED DECEMBER 26

by Bob Honig

The Buffalo Bayou Christmas Bird Count will be held on Monday, December 26, 1988. This CBC is held within Houston (the only one), and many of you live within the count area, a circle 15 miles in diameter centered at Edith L. Moore Sanctuary, just southeast of the Wilcrest/Memorial Drive intersection: it extends from Memorial Park on the east to beyond Highway 6 on the west; from the Southwest Freeway at West Belt on the south to FM 529 near Jersey Village on the north. If you can't join us in the field, we hope you can help us by being a "feeder watcher." Even if you don't have a bird feeder you can qualify as a "feeder watcher" if you merely go about your normal routine and report the kinds and numbers of birds you see within the count circle (at your feeder, in your yard or neighborhood, on the way to the store, etc.). Because so much of this CBC area is residential "feeder watchers" can greatly increase the efficiency of the count and observe species that otherwise would not be seen; in fact, last year, the only two hummingbirds observed, Anna's and Rufous, were seen by "feeder watchers." You need not have a lot of birding experience to help or pay the \$4 count fee. Call Doug Williams at 681-8433 (w) or Bob Honig at 776-3619 (h) for information on how to report or to determine if your home is in the count circle. Thanks for your help.

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This month is Christmas Count time. Most of us look forward to December when we spread out around the area to observe and count every sparrow, goose and hawk in the different count circles. It is time for count compilers to stake out the gimme birds for their areas. Participants need to be recruited and area leaders appointed.

I hope that all OG members will make the Houston Christmas Count on December 17 in Baytown. Richard Uzar and P. D. Hulce are the compilers and can give you a list of count areas and area leaders.

Remember that Christmas counts gather important data on the populations and winter distribution of birds, but the main purpose should be to get out and have fun with other birders.

This issue of The Spoonbill has the date, location and compilers of most Houston-area counts and some others. All compilers need more people, so if you are free on the dates of any of these counts, pick up the phone and volunteer.

David Dauphin says anyone over 65 who wants to make the Houston Count without doing much walking or being out in the weather is welcome to come to his house to watch his feeders and bird his neighborhood, which is "the birdiest in the count circle." David's number is 383-3955.

A FAREWELL TO ONE OF YOUR OLD FRIENDS

by Margaret Jones

During my long tenure as publisher and editor of The Spoonbill, I had occasion several times to say farewell in these pages; three come to my mind at this time: Clayton Gilman, Arlie McKay, Richard Brister. This time I asked your editor to let me say goodbye to a former Clearing House Compiler (a job he held for five years in the days before computers) and my partner in everything for 46 years, T. Paul Jones.

A quote from the July, 1980 Spoonbill regarding his retirement as compiler: "Paul, adhering to policies suggested by the previous compiler, Dan Hardy, and the checklist committee, and changed as experience dictated, has succeeded in firmly establishing the Clearing House as a formidably trustworthy account of observations on the UTC. His cheerful solicitation of observations helped in encouraging OG members and subscribers to contribute to the Clearing House on a more or less regular basis. The Ornithology Group is indebted to Paul for the countless hours he has willingly spent on the Clearing House on behalf of the Group."

For the past four or five years Paul's interest in birding became more confined to the neighborhood or an occasional short trip to Galveston, etc. He had been leading spring and fall birding trips in Pittman Park in Bellaire for the past three years, for several Saturdays each season, which he enjoyed as much as did his (mostly novice) flock. With his enthusiasm and patience, Paul was an excellent leader and teacher for beginning birders. He will be missed.

For New Birders
TECHNIQUES FOR SEEING BIRDS
by Don Richardson

SECTION III: SNEAKING UP

Approaching birds correctly takes some specific skill and knowledge. The very best advice in the matter is general in nature, easy to do and probably the most ignored. It is stated in Section I: by being generally quiet you will disturb the birds less, but best of all you will be able to hear them better. Slow motion is important. Whether you are birding the woods, the shore or the prairie moving slowly will allow you to see more. Restrict not only your speed but other motion as well. Minimizing your hand and arm motions will help.

Dr. Leakey, the well-known anthropologist who has done much of his work in eastern Africa, has written about the diagonal approach used by the cheetah. I have used the approach while birding with a good deal of success. The cheetah's objective is to appear to be on a path which will pass by his prey rather than to approach it directly. Here's how to use the approach in birding. First, pick the spot where you would like to be to observe the bird, considering first how close you need to be, how close you think you can get, the lighting for the best view and any other factors which are important to you. Second, imagine a straight line from the bird to your chosen spot; this line will be your line of view. Third, imagine a line passing through the spot and perpendicular to the first line; this line is to be your path of progress. Finally get yourself onto the path and move along it slowly. Stop on occasion to take a look or a picture, then continue, but stick to your design. When you reach the spot

you should be able to view the bird as you had planned. Often you can spend considerable time on your spot, especially if you restrict your movements and are quiet. For still more good looks, depart along your path, still moving slowly, and look back at the bird.

A blind is a good device to observe birds from, and it can take several forms. One which is usually readily available is the automobile. You will often have the opportunity to drive near a group of birds and watch from the windows. Normally you'll be able to get closer in the car than out of it. Special window mounts for telescopes are available which clamp to the edge of a partly opened window. Many wildlife parks and refuges provide blinds, but be sure to inquire whether you need an appointment or if they are available in that season.

Be unobtrusive. If you are in brush four feet tall, crouch down and blend in. Try standing next to or against a tree instead of out in the open. Wear subdued colors (unless your purpose is to imitate a Prothonotary Warbler or a Painted Bunting). Above all don't ruin all these efforts by suddenly pointing and crying out "Ooo ooo ooo!" Usually the bird will know you are there but your quiet, calm appearance will provide a situation in which the bird will be more comfortable.

You will see more birds if the birds feel comfortable with your presence. A quiet unobtrusive approach will present a less threatening situation. Except where your intent is to make the birds defensive, such as with the Screech Owl sound or their own breeding songs, the calm approach will work the best. Birds are alert, they hear and see well, and they know you are there. The trick is to make them not care.

MINUTES OF OG MEETING, NOV. 3

The November OG meeting began a little late, with Ed Rozenburg introducing our speaker, Larry Shelton of the Houston Zoo. Shelton has been an active participant in the Guam Bird Rescue Project since 1983. His talk described the current efforts to ensure the survival of five highly endangered species of birds on Guam whose existence is threatened by the Brown Tree Snake. The avifauna of Guam had no such predator prior to this snake's accidental introduction during the Second World War. From abundance to near extinction in less than half a century calls for some response on our part, we stewards of the world. We applaud the efforts of the Guam Bird Rescue Project and thank Larry Shelton for sharing his experience with this heroic effort.

In our business session Ed Rozenburg expressed appreciation to the 55 ONC folks, many of them OG members, who participated in the Texas Coastal Cleanup. Ed informed us of the current discussions with Texas A&M about ONC maintenance plans at the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary; called attention to a proposed roads project in the Armand Bayou area that may adversely affect the Nature Center; and reminded us of the ONC trip to Big Bend December 26 through January 2. Finally, Ed put in a plug for OG members to support the OG-sponsored Houston CBC on December 17.

Richard Uzar announced that ONC tee shirts would be available at the December meeting for

those who had ordered them. He also called attention to an opportunity to participate in a TOS land acquisition in the Sabine Pass area, by purchasing bonds offered by TOS.

Jerry Patrick gave a financial report, written copies available upon request, and made a proposal that we permit new members joining in the third quarter to pay \$5 or 1/2 the annual dues, plus their \$5 ONC dues, and that new members joining in the last quarter be permitted to pay full dues (\$10 for OG and \$5 for ONC) that would carry them through the last quarter and the next full year as well. The measure was passed unopposed.

Don Richardson and Bob Honig announced upcoming field trips. Bob also announced a request from the Canadian Wildlife Service asking that we report any sightings of Loggerhead Shrikes from their banding project. Bands are red, blue, yellow and white (see article).

The Chickadee was noticeably absent from their regular table in the meeting room.

A question was raised about our treasury and suggestion made that we might consider donating to the land acquisitions projects of other organizations. This led to some discussion, and we affirmed that our \$4000 C.D. is specifically earmarked for printing the 7th UTC checklist. Also reaffirmed was our \$250 annual commitment to support the Texas Breeding Bird Atlas Project.

Richard Uzar, Secretary

T. PAUL JONES by David Dauphin

On November the 7th, the OG lost another dear friend. T. Paul Jones died. Paul Jones led many OG field trips, compiled the Houston Christmas Count, was an HCC area leader, edited the Spoonbill's Clearing House and ran the OG's Rare Bird Alert. These are a few of the things I could think of, and he did all of them for many years.

According to my logbook, the first time I birded with Paul Jones was on Sunday, August 8, 1975. We "watched Mississippi Kites feed above the Richmond Courthouse live oaks. Later Paul showed me two Black-bellied Tree Ducks off Rabbs Prairie Road. Beautiful birds and lifers to boot."

Paul and Margaret were excellent at taking new OG members "under their wing" and making them feel welcome, as well as showing them birds. Paul was hard-working, gentle, would argue with a stump, but had the patience of Job when helping new birders. Many people have worked many hours, making the Ornithology Group, the Spoonbill and the OG Checklist the envy of birding clubs all over the U.S. Few of us, though, worked harder or cared more than our old friend, T. Paul Jones.

One thing we can all do to remember Paul best, is, like Paul and Margaret, take a new birder "under the wing," show the birder some birds, some places to go birding, and be a little more patient with people who someday will show you some birds. Paul Jones once told me that what made the OG really neat wasn't the birds, it was the birders, and we would all have a lot more fun birding if we would remember that. Let's do remember that.

SAN ANTONIO TRIP A BIG SUCCESS

Twenty OG members traveled to the San Antonio area on October 14 for a weekend of birding led by Dottie Praus and Marilyn Crane. Saturday morning found us at Mitchell Lake where we joined about 20 San Antonio birders and local expert Ernie Roni. The shorebirds were abundant and easy to see. A Mute Swan, which has been in the area for some time, was still there and provided a magnificent view. Also at the lake we found a Black-bellied Plover which is not unusual for Houston birders but uncommon near San Antonio. The best bird of the morning was the Great Kiskadee, a rare find for this area. Birds are abundant at this fine birding spot, including lots of shorebirds, ducks, and a good selection of everything from sparrows to hawks.

Saturday afternoon we proceeded to Lost Maples State Natural Area. Our group now consisted of just Houston birders. The maples were just beginning to change color. We hiked one of the shorter trails, and although birds were sparse in the mid-afternoon, we could see that the area holds much promise for birding another time.

Sunday morning our group split and some birded the area around Neal's Lodges in Concan, while others went on to Garner State Park. At Neal's some of the birds seen were Brown Towhee, Lesser Goldfinch, House Finch and Cactus Wren. The group at Garner saw Ladder-backed and Golden-fronted Woodpeckers, Western Tanager, several species of sparrows and an abundance of Bewick's Wrens. Many thanks are due to Dottie and Marilyn for leading this excellent field trip.

MINUTES OF OG MEETING, OCT. 6

Chairman Ed Rozenburg opened our October meeting at 7:30. Ron Bisby and Steve La Buda of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were introduced, along with two of their refuge assistants. Two videos were shown on color TV representing the plight of North American waterfowl, especially in regard to habitat losses through drought and destruction in the north, and development along the Gulf Coast. Some hopeful notes were sounded in this terrible depiction by presentation of a governmental cooperative effort called the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and more locally by the Gulf coast Joint Venture. A lengthy and interesting discussion followed, with lots of questions and answers about these efforts.

Steve La Buda spent some time updating the current status of birds and birding at the Attwater NWR. This also prompted spirited discussion.

Jerry Patrick presented the monthly financial report, copies of which are available. An announcement was made to order ONC tee shirts, particularly if you want to participate in the ONC support for the Channel 8 Telethon on December 3. Contact Gwen Kunz at 665-0639 if you're willing to help out.

Libby Price requested information from Christmas Count compilers who wanted to be listed in The Spoonbill. Ed reported on next month's program and announced that Joann Thompson would be assuming duties as program chair. If you have any suggestions please call Joann. Don Richardson called attention to upcoming field trips with plenty of opportunities during October and November.

A proposal was brought forth, suggesting that new members joining the OG in the last three months of the year be given a free ride to the end of the year--their dues being applied to the next calendar year. Another thought was to offer life memberships. There was plenty of interest in these ideas, but it was decided to table further discussion until time was available to address them adequately.

Ed also announced that the International Council for Bird Preservation, an organization dedicated to the protection of endangered and threatened bird species around the world, has contacted the OG about plans to open an office in the U.S. Anyone desiring information may write 219c Huntingdon Rd., Cambridge CBC ODL, United Kingdom.

Richard Uzar, Secretary

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Clearing House - OCTOBER, 1988

October Editors: Lynne Aldrich
Peter Gottschling

For October there were 18 reports submitted for a total of 220 species found and one species of Bobwhite lost. A new late date for Baird's Sandpiper was established in Oct. The Woodcock was identified in the hand by WG after it crashed into a window at WELEX where he works. The stunned bird was given to wildlife rescue for resuscitation.

We are including some graphic information this month which shows the specific number of species seen of selected bird families. The editors of the Clearing House are anxious to provide as much information as possible in as clear a fashion as possible. If you like our formats and the inclusion of this graphic information, please let us know. If you have ideas on what further information you would like to have included, what changes you feel are necessitated, and other ideas on the presentation of the Clearing House data, please let us know. We will be meeting soon with the Bird Records Committee to garner information and suggestions they have on our information presentation which will help them in their collection of data. The information we gather is utilized by several organizations and Ornithological groups around the country to track species status. Thank you for your help in this endeavor.

How to read this report:

Species (#reports/total #species) County/Location (low-Hi#) early/late date Observers.
Sightings of very rare (based on 6th UTC checklist) birds are underlined; never before seen on this date are **bold** and never seen before on UTC are both. Don't bother, there are no both this month.

Grebe, Pied-billed (12/138)	BCGF	(1-120)	1/31	
Pelican, American White(8/896)	BCFGH	(1-400)	15/31	
Pelican, Brown(2/9)	G	(2-7)	15	EM, JH
Cormorant, Double-cr.(7/514)	BGH	(1-400)	1/31	
Cormorant, Olivaceous(6/143)	BG	(3-90)	1/31	
Anhinga(4/18)	BCFH	(1-10)	2/30	
Frigatebird, Magnificent(1/1)	G	(1)	24	DMB
Bittern, American(4/7)	BCG	(1-4)	1/29	
Bittern, Least(1)	B/BW	(1)	29	BB
Heron, Great Blue(13/264)	BFG	(1-75)	1/31	
Egret, Great(12/550)	BFG	(2-300)	1/31	
Egret, Snowy(13/522)	BFGH	(1-350)	1/31	
Heron, Little Blue(12/113)	BCFG	(1-32)	1/31	
Heron, Tricolored(10/143)	BCFG	(2-40)	1/31	
Egret, Reddish(6/52)	BG	(1-35)	1/29	
Egret, Cattle(13/2733)	BFG	(2-800)	1/31	
Heron, Green-backed(7/9)	BFGJ	(1-2)	2/29	
Night-Heron, Black-cr.(7/36)	BCFGJ	(1-28)	1/29	
Night-Heron, Yellow-cr.(3/65)	B/BWF/BBJ	(2-60)	1/29	BB, BW
Ibis, White(12/1488)	BFG	(1-1000)	1/31	
Ibis, White-faced(9/1479)	BCF	(2-500)	1/30	
Spoonbill, Roseate(8/230)	BFG	(1-90)	1/31	
Whistling-Duck, Fulvous(4/34)	CGJ	(2-22)	9/24	
Whist.-Duck, Blk-bel.(2/12)	BF	(6-6)	15/23	BB, PM
Goose, Gr. White-fr.(4/5310)	BCFH	(10-3000)	23/29	
Goose, Snow(7/2493)	BCFH	(3-2500)	22/30	
Goose, Ross(1/1)	B/BW	(1)	29	BB
Goose, Canada(1/50)	H	(50)	23	A
Duck, Wood(3/34)	CHJ	(3/25)	3/24	BB, EM, JF
Teal, Green-winged(6/2674)	BCFG	(1-2000)	9/31	
Duck, Mottled(8/250)	BCFG	(2-130)	1/31	
Mallard(1/55)	C	(55)	24	DMB
Pintail, Northern(5/893)	BCF	(3-500)	15/29	
Teal, Blue-winged(8/771)	BCFG	(1-500)	1/31	
Teal, Cinnamon(1/4)	B/SB	(4)	22	BOG
Shoveler, Northern(8/573)	BCFG	(2-300)	15/31	
Gadwall(6/1775)	BCFG	(1-1200)	15/31	
Wigeon, American(4/1300)	BC	(100-800)	15/29	
Canvasback(2/46)	GC	(1-45)	24/31	DMB
Duck, Ring-necked(3/52)	C/AW GB	(6-31)	24/31	AG, DMB
Scaup, Lesser(2/74)	GF	(4-70)	24/29	DMB, DR
Duck, Ruddy(3/104)	GCF	(10-54)	24/31	DMB, DR
Vulture, Black(4/21)	BC	(1-15)	15/30	
Vulture, Turkey(10/251)	BCFGJ	(4-50)	1/30	
Osprey(5/13)	BCH	(1-8)	1/30	
Kite, Black-shouldered(11/61)	BCFGJ	(1-24)	1/31	
Eagle, Bald(2/2)	C	(1-1)	15/24	DMB, EM
Harrier, Northern(12/278)	BCGF	(2-70)	1/31	
Hawk, Sharp-shin.(3/4)	B/SBGF	(1/2)	2/29	BOG, DMB, DR
Hawk, Cooper's(5/6)	BCHG	(1-2)	15/30	

Hawk, Red-shouldered(10/57)	BCFGH	(1-25)	1/29	
Hawk, Broad-winged(2/17)	F/BBJ	(2-15)	1/2	
Hawk, Swainson's(1/1)	B	(1)	15	PM
Hawk, White-tailed(2/2)	H/WHCB/LB	(1-1)	22/23	BOG
Hawk, Red-tailed(8/56)	BCGH	(1-20)	1/31	
Caracara, Crested(1/2)	H	(2)	23	A
Kestrel, American(17/189)	BFGH	(1-35)	1/31	
Merlin(3/3)	BGJ	(1-1)	8/15	AG, EM
Falcon, Peregrine(3/3)	CG	(1-1)	1/31	DMB, EM
Pheasant, Ring-necked(1/1)	C	(1)	1	EM
Rail, Yellow(1/5)	B/BW	(5)	29	BB
Rail, Clapper(4/14)	BG	(2-6)	1/29	
Rail, King(2/4)	B/BWB	(2-2)	22/29	BB, BOG
Rail, Virginia(1/4)	B/BW(4)	(4)	29	BB
Moorhen, Common(9/762)	BCFG	(5-600)	1/30	
Coot, American(13/4457)	BCFG	(1-2500)	1/31	
Gallinule, Purple(1/1)	B/bw	(1-1)	8	AG
Crane, Sandhill(1/18)	B	(18)	22	AG
Plover, Black-bellied(5/4529)	BG	(4-4000)	1/29	
Golden-Plover, Lesser(1/6)	G/HI	(6)	24	DMB
Plover, Snowy(2/17)	G/SLPG/B	(1-16)	22/24	BOG, DMB
Plover, Wilson's(1/2)	G/BF	(2)	24	DMB
Plover, Semipalmated(4/321)	G	(3-300)	15/31	
Plover, Piping(4/109)	G	(10-45)	15/31	
Killdeer(12/635)	BG	(2-250)	1/31	
Oystercatcher, American(3/23)	G	(2-11)	15/31	DMB, EM
Stilt, Black-necked(4/240)	BG	(1-125)	1/29	
Avocet, American(6/4072)	BFG	(1-2500)	15/31	
Yellowlegs, Greater(9/930)	BCFGH	(2-801)	1/31	
Yellowlegs, Lesser(6/576)	BCG	(12-400)	1/31	
Willet(5/915)	BG	(25-750)	1/31	
Sandpiper, Spotted(3/4)	BCG	(1-2)	1/16	M, JH, PM
Curlew, Long-billed(6/60)	BG	(1-24)	1/31	
Godwit, Marbled(4/190)	G	(2-150)	1/31	
Turnstone, Ruddy(3/80)	G	(20-35)	5/31	BOG, DMB, EM
Knot, Red(3/66)	G	(5-50)	15/31	DMB, EM
Sanderling(5/1805)	GJ	(40-1500)	1/31	
Sandpiper, Western(6/6454)	BG	(4-5000)	1/31	
Sandpiper, Least(5/358)	BG	(8-150)	1/31	
Sandpiper, Baird's(1/1)	C	(1)	30	AO
Sandpiper, Pectoral(1/40)	U	(40)	1	EM
Dunlin(6/399)	BCG	(4-150)	15/31	
Sandpiper, Stilt(4/97)	CG	(6-60)	1/31	
Sandpiper, Buff-breasted(1/1)	G	(1)	1	EM
Dowitcher, Short-bil.(6/1795)	BGU	(10-1000)	1/31	
Dowitcher, Long-bil.(6/7038)	CPGU	(13-5000)	1/24	
Snipe, Common(4/60)	B, C, G	(2-50)	15/29	
Woodcock, American(1/1)	H	(1)	23	WG
Gull, Laughing(8/35559)	BG	(1-25000)	1/31	
Gull, Franklin's(3/17)	G/SLP	(2-8)	15/24	BOG, EM, DMB
Gull, Ring-billed(5/583)	G	(2-500)	1/24	
Gull, Herring(4/141)	BG	(1-75)	15/31	
Tern, Gull-billed(4/48)	BG	(4-22)	1/24	
Tern, Caspian(7/490)	BG	(1-400)	1/31	
Tern, Royal(5/23800)	GJ	(50-20000)	1/31	
Tern, Sandwich(5/242)	GJ	(3-115)	1/31	
Tern, Common(5/1692)	GJ	(1-1500)	1/31	
Tern, Forster's(7/1723)	BFG	(1-850)	1/31	
Skimmer, Black(4/5800)	GU	(200-4000)	15/31	
Dove, Rock(7/648)	CPGH	(3-500)	1/31	
Dove, White-winged(4/26)	GH	(1-12)	7/31	
Dove, Mourning(11/465)	BCFGH	(1-150)	1/31	
Dove, Inca(7/90)	GH	(1-30)	1/31	
Ground-Dove, Common(1/1)	G/GI	(1)	2	LP
Cuckoo, Yellow-billed(3/4)	BGJ	(1-2)	1/15	EM, PM
Barn-Owl, Common(5/12)	BGHJ	(1-4)	1/3	
Screech-Owl, Eastern(4/5)	CH	(1-2)	1/10	
Owl, Great Horned	H	(1-1)	18	AG
Owl, Barred(5/17)	BF	(1-8)	2/29	
Nighthawk, Common(2/6)	GH	(2-4)	15/30	JH, PM
Hummingbird, Ruby-thr.(2/6)	G	(1-5)	1/15	EM
Kingfisher, Belted(13/73)	BCFGH	(1-30)	1/31	
Woodpecker, Red-bellied(9/58)	BCFGH	(1-25)	1/31	
Sapsucker, Yellow-bel.(4/24)	BCG	(1-20)	15/24	
Woodpecker, Downy(4/10)	BF	(1-5)	1/15	
Woodpecker, Hairy(2/2)	CG	(1-1)	15	EM, JH
Flicker, Northern(9/37)	BCFGH	(2-10)	7/31	
Woodpecker, Pileated(5/21)	BCF	(1-12)	1/29	
Flycatcher, Olive-sided(1/1)	G	(1)	15	JH
Wood-Pewee, Eastern(4/19)	B, C, G	(2-10)	1/31	

Flycatcher, Yellow-bel.(2/3)	J	(1-2)	1/15	EM
Flycatcher, Acadian(1/5)	G	(5-5)	1	EM
Flycatcher, "Traill's"(2/2)	GJ	(1-1)	15/24	EM,DMB
Flycatcher, Least(2/9)	G/HI J	(1-8)	1/24	EM,DMB
Phoebe, Eastern(8/52)	BCGF	(1-16)	15/30	
Flycatcher, Vermilion(5/5)	BFG	(1-1)	2/29	
Flycatcher, Great Cr.(1/1)	G	(1-1)	1/7	EM,GH
Kingbird, Western	G/SLP	(1-1)	15/22	EM,BOG
Flycatcher, Scis-tail.(13/293)	BCFGHU	(1-75)	1/31	
Lark, Horned(2/7)	BGE	(2-7)	15/29	BB,EM
Swallow, Tree(6/3544)	BCHU	(2-3000)	15/30	
Swallow, N. Rough-wing(6/315)	BCGHU	(1-300)	15/31	
Swallow, Bank(2/56)	B	(6-50)	15/22	BOG,PM
Swallow, Barn(7/709)	BFGHU	(1-500)	1/29	
Jay, Blue(11/204)	BFGHU	(260)	1/31	
Crow, American(8/910)	BCFU	(10-500)	1/29	
Crow, Fish(1/2)	J	(2-2)	15	EM
Chickadee, Carolina(7/115)	BCFH	(2-50)	1/29	
Titmouse, Tufted(6/79)	CFH	(1-25)	1/29	
Nuthatch, Brown-headed(1/2)	C	(2)	1	EM
Creep, Brown(1/1)	G	(1-1)	24	DMB
Wren, Carolina(12/43)	BCFGHU	(1-15)	1/31	
Wren, House(7/45)	BCFGHU	(1-30)	1/31	
Wren, Sedge(5/59)	BCGH	(1-40)	15/31	
Wren, Marsh(3/14)	BC	(1-8)	22/30AO, BB, BOG	
Kinglet, Golden-cr.(14/46)	G	(1-40)	15/31	
Kinglet, Ruby-crowned(8/62)	BFGU	(1-26)	15/31	
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray(8/141)	BCGHU	(1-40)	1/31	
Bluebird, Eastern(1/18)	F	(18-18)	16	AG
Thrush, Swainson's(2/2)	JH	(1-1)	1/15	WC,EM
Thrush, Hermit(2/5)	B/SB G/HI	(2-3)	22/24	DMB,BOG
Catbird, Gray(5/50)	GJU	(2-20)	1/31	
Mockingbird, Northern(15/229)	BFGHU	(1-50)	1/31	
Thrasher, Brown(11/445)	BCFGU	(1-250)	1/31	
Pipit, Water(2/11)	BF	(1-10)	22/29	BOG,DR
Pipit, Sprague's (1/1)	G	(1-1)	3	AO
Shrike, Loggerhead(12/350)	BFGU	(1-150)	1/31	
Starling, European(12/2876)	U	(6-800)	1/31	
Vireo, White-eyed(4/41)	U	(3-30)	1/31	
Vireo, Solitary(2/2)	GJ	(1-1)	1/24	DMB,EM
Vireo, Yellow-throated(1/1)	G/HI	(1-1)	24	DMB
Vireo, Warbling	G	(1-1)	1	EM
Vireo, Philadelphia	G	(1-1)	1	EM
Vireo, Red-eyed(3/3)	G	(1-1)	1/15	DM
Warbler, Tennessee(4/23)	BCG	(1-20)	1/30	
Warbler, Orange-crowned(4/14)	BGJ	(1-7)	15/31	
Warbler, Nashville(3/6)	GHJ	(1-3)	1/24EM, DMB, WC	
Parula, Northern(3/5)	G	(1-2)	15/31	DMB,EM
Warbler, Yellow(2/3)	G	(1-1)	1/24	DMB,EM
Warbler, Magnolia(4/19)	GU	(1-12)	1/31	
Warbler, Black-throated Blue	G/HI	(2-2)	24	DMB
Warbler, Yellow-rumped(2/2)	GH	(1-1)	15/24	DMB,WC
Warbler, Black-thr Green(5/19)	G	(1-15)	1/31	
Warbler, Blackburnian(2/2)	GH	(1-1)	1	PG,EM

Warbler, Pine(2/21)	C	(6-15)	1/15	EM
Warbler, Prairie(1/1)	J	(1)	15	EM
Warbler, Palm(2/7)	HB/SB	(1/6)	15/22	BOG
Warbler, Black-&white(5/38)	GU	(1-20)	1/31	
Redstart, American(4/54)	GJU	(2-40)	1/24	
Ovenbird(3/4)	G	(1-2)	1/31	DMB,EM
Warbler, Mourning(1/2)	J	(2-2)	1	EM
Yellowthroat, Common(8/204)	BGFHJU	(1-140)	1/31	
Warbler, Hooded(2/2)	G	(1-1)	7/31	DMB, JH
Warbler, Wilson's(5/44)	BGHJU	(1-30)	1/24	
Warbler, Canada(2/21)	GU	(1-20)	1/31	EM,DMB
Chat, Yellow-breasted(1/2)	J	(2-2)	1	EM
Tanager, Summer(2/3)	GH	(1-2)	15/24	DMB,WC
Cardinal, Northern(12/181)	BFGHU	(1-40)	1/31	
Grosbeak, Rose-breasted(1/1)	G/HI	(1)	24	DMB
Grosbeak, Blue(2/16)	HJ	(1-15)	1/15	EM,WC
Bunting, Indigo(8/77)	BGHJU	(1-26)	1/31	
Bunting, Painted(2/4)	J	(2-2)	1/15	EM
Sparrow, Clay-colored(1/1)	H	(1)	15	WC
Sparrow, Savannah(5/165)	BCGH	(5-85)	22/30	
Sparrow, Le Conte's(1/2)	B/BW	(2)	29	BB
Sparrow, Sharp-tailed(2/6)	GB/BW	(3-3)	15-29	BB,EM
Sparrow, Seaside(3/37)	BG	(3-10)	15/22	
Sparrow, Lincoln's(4/20)	BGH	(2-10)	15/24	
Sparrow, Swamp(7/65)	BGHJ	(1-35)	15/31	
Sparrow, White-throated(2/3)	CG/HI	(1-2)	15/24	DMB,EM

Sparrow, White-crowned(2/3)	GB/SB	(1-2)	15/22	BOG
Blackbird, Red-wing(10/5255)	GFU	(10-2000)	1/31	
Meadowlark, Eastern(9/464)	BCFGHU	(2-200)	1/29	
Blackbird, Yellow-headed(2/2)	B/SBC	(1-1)	8/30	AG,AO
Grackle, Great-tailed(11/643)	BFGHU	(3-150)	1/31	
Grackle, Boat-tailed(4/7490)	BJU	(40-4000)	1/24	
Grackle, Common(6/2460)	BCU	(10-2000)	1/29	
Cowbird, Brown-headed(7/1569)	BFGHU	(4-500)	1/29	
Oriole, Northern(2/2)	BJ	(1-1)	1/31	
Sparrow, House(10/197)	U	(6-50)	1/31	

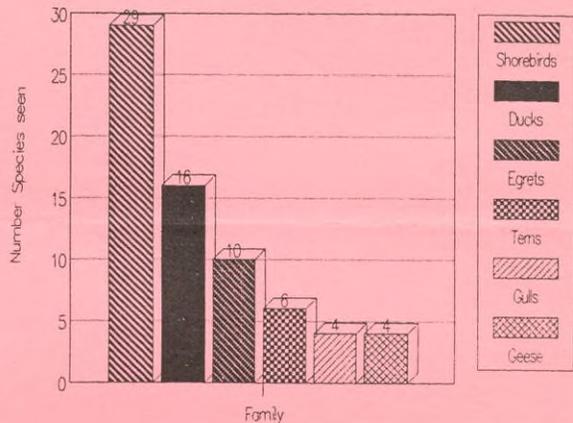
As mentioned in early editions of the Clearing House this year, we only accept sightings on the CH submittal form or else short hand written entries which include the sort number from the form as well as county and totals information.

Birds considered very rare or vagrant for the month based on the UTC checklist require field notes to be considered by the Clearing House.

The monthly species total would be higher but the following very rare for October birds need field notes to be included in this month's data base: Veery-JH; Black throated Gray Warbler-DM; Scarlet Tanager, Western Meadowlark-DMB. Please drop us a line on these noteworthy sightings.

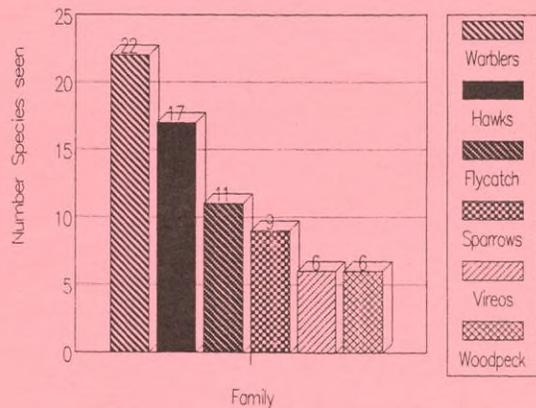
SELECTED SPECIES

OCTOBER, 1988



SELECTED SPECIES COUNT

OCTOBER, 1988



CLEARING HOUSE NOTES - OCTOBER, 1988

October field notes for some of the problematic very rare sightings:

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - (10/30/88) Submitted by Michael Austin
Small, brown calidrine in shallow, muddy pool just East of "the willows" at Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge with six Killdeer. Seen from 25 yards with 7x42 binoculars for two minutes. High overcast. Dark legs, dark, relatively straight bill. Head and back brown, lighter than chocolate brown of basic-plumaged Least. Much darker than back of basic-plumaged Western Sandpiper. No bright edges to feathers of back or primaries - therefore adult bird. Brown wash across upper breast, no superimposed streaking! Scalloping like Pectoral Sandpiper. Wash also terminated on upper, not mid, breast like a Pectoral. Very long-winged bird, with primaries extending well beyond tail at rest.

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT - (10/3/88) Submitted by Michael Austin
Lone bird, high overhead, flying Eastward over FM562 about two miles at junction with FM1985. Uttered sharp, strident, one and two syllabled pip,pit-it. Louder, more emphatic individual calls wider spaced temporally than Water Pipit. Personal early date

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD - (10/30/88) Submitted by Michael Austin
Single female in an enormous (1000+ individuals) flock of Brown-Headed Cowbirds feeding in rice stubble on the North side of FM1985 about five miles West of Texas 124. Viewed at thirty yards in full sunlight with 7x42 binoculars. About 1 1/2 as large as adjacent cowbirds. Predominantly brown (not as gray as female cowbirds) with cream throat, bright yellow upper breast, whitish lower breast. No white flecks in wing as observed in 20 second flight. Watched for about one minute on ground feeding. Mostly ventral views. Personal late date.

CLAY COLORED SPARROW - (10/15/88) Submitted by Wesley Cureton
Tan cheek patches with darker border. Light streak through crown. No hint of russet on crown. Gray nape contrasting with brown of head, back, and breast. Breast unmarked but tawny above. Slight dark whisker mark. Chip notes softer than chipping sparrows. Rump not seen, but these marks eliminate Chipping Sparrow. Second occurrence at White Oak Bayou. Observed ten minutes.

CLEARING HOUSE CODES

OCTOBER CONTRIBUTORS:

A= Mike Austin	EM= Ted Eubanks, Jim Morgan
AG= L Aldrich, P Gottschling	JF= Joe Farrell
AO= Mike Austin, Don Oldershaw	JH= Jan and John Hamilton
BB= Brazos Port Birders	LP= Libby Price
BH= Bob Honig	PG= Peter Gottschling
BOG= O.G led by Bob Honig	PM= Peggy Milstead
DM= Derek Muschalek	WC= Wesley Cureton
DMB= D. Mark Brown	WG= Wally Gardner
DR= Don Richardson	

COUNTY CODES: B-Brazoria; C-Chambers; F-Fort Bend; G-Galveston; H-Harris; J-Jefferson; W-Waller; U-UTC for multiple counties.

REPORT BANDED LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES

Loggerhead Shrikes have been declining in numbers in their eastern and northern ranges. In Western Canada they are officially "threatened." The Canadian Wildlife Service is conducting a project to discover the migration routes and wintering grounds of their birds. Over a thousand nestlings were banded last summer in four colors: red bands in Manitoba, blue in Eastern Saskatchewan, yellow in Western Saskatchewan and white in Alberta.

The researchers are asking for our help in locating any of these birds wintering in our area. Please report any sightings, giving color of band, location and date of sighting. Send to Edmund S. Telfer, Research Scientist, Canadian Wildlife Service, 210 4999-98 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6B 2X3. If you would find it easier send reports to the Spoonbill editor, and they will be sent on.

ILLEGALLY IMPORTED PARROTS

In spite of controls the Department of Justice has made the estimate that "tens of thousands of parrots are smuggled across the Mexican border each year," according to "Traffic Alert," an article in Focus, publication of the World Wildlife Fund, (Vol. 10, No. 4, Sep./Oct., 1988). Besides the birds that are smuggled, many with documents are labeled as another species, one that is not threatened, or show a false country of origin because they actually come from a threatened population.

How can buyers avoid buying illegal parrots? They should, of course, "look for a U.S. Department of Agriculture leg band," which smuggled birds will not have, and "be wary of purchasing sick birds or those which seem especially stressed" from the often harsh shipping conditions smugglers subject birds to.

The advice of a pet shop owner is not enough because "the pet shop owner will not know where the species originated. Then the buyer should seek advice from a knowledgeable bird veterinarian or from a local bird club."

Rather than captured parrots, "captive-bred birds are often the best choice to buy as pets because they generally enter domestic trade legally, and are usually healthier and tamer than their wild counterparts."

We can help wild populations of parrots by reporting any illegal birds we see being sold, and by advising friends who intend buying to take the proper safeguards beforehand.

We tend to think only of environmental hazards to birds, but we need to think too about the many species entering the pet market. We can thank Bob Honig for reminding us.

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

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

UTC RARE Bird Alert Tape, sponsored by Piney Woods Wildlife Society: 821-2846.

FOR LOCAL nature societies' meetings and field trips call the Audubon Society's "Voice of the Naturalist" tape: 932-1639.

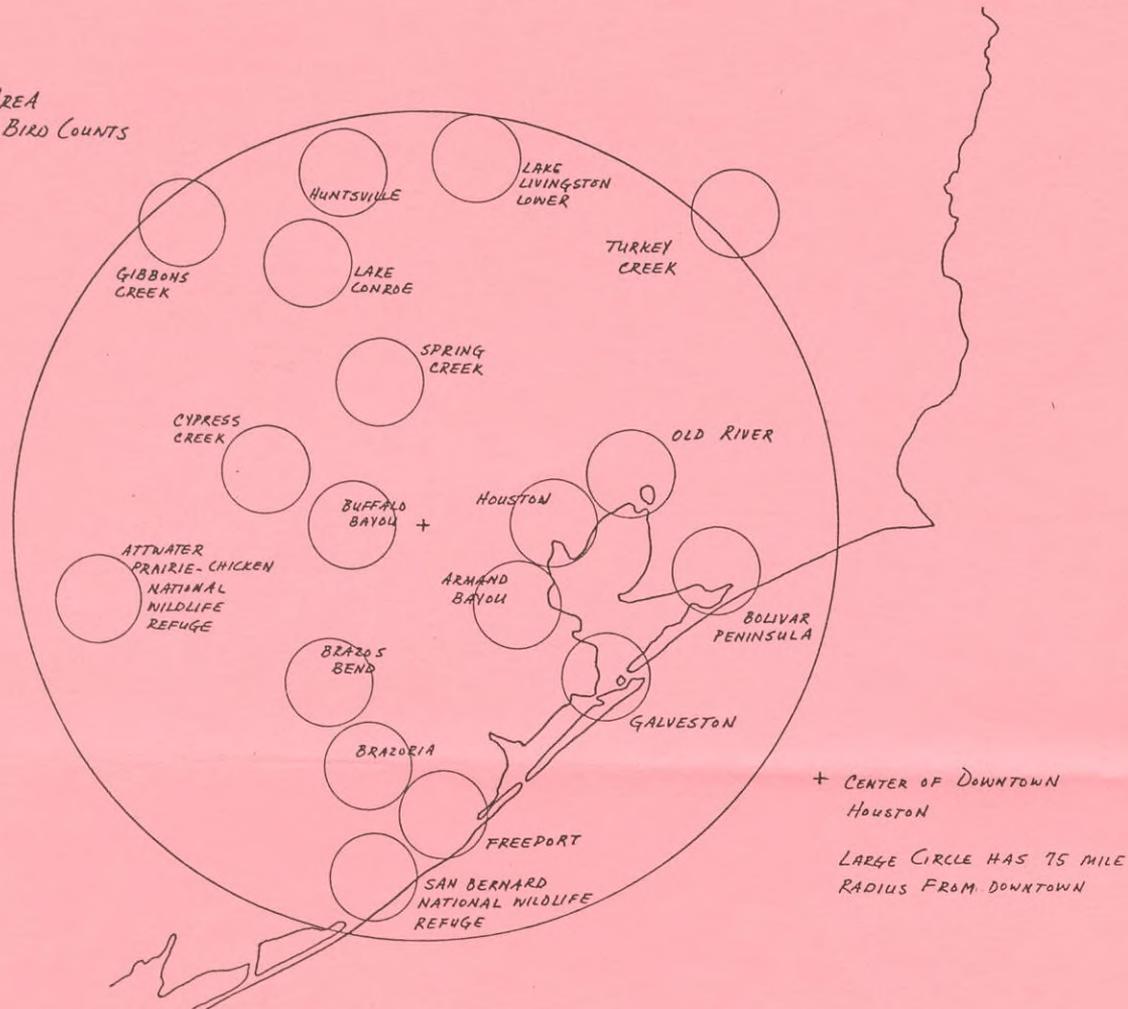
LONE STAR Rare Bird Tape, sponsored by Audubon Society. In 713 area call 747-8826. Out of town call 1-800-TBT-BIRD. When in town do NOT call the 800 number, please - it costs!

SEND material for Spoonbill to Editor, Libby Price, 3715 Sunset, Houston 77005, 665-1159.

SEND dues, subscriptions and address changes to Jerry Patrick, 814 St. Francis, Houston 77079. Members' annual dues: \$15 (ONC \$5, OG \$10). Spoonbill subscriptions for non-members: \$13.

1986 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS
Data and map by Mark Brown

HOUSTON AREA
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS



Participants	Species	Count	Participants	Species	Count
126	212	Freeport	26	98	Gibbons Creek
47	93	Spring Creek	20	146	Cypress Creek
44	162	Attwater	19	139	Armand Bayou
42	172	Houston	14	92	Lake Conroe
39	138	Brazoria	14	127	Old River
36	175	Bolivar Peninsula	12	77	Turkey Creek
36	151	Galveston	10	154	San Bernard
35	129	Brazos Bend	9	88	Huntsville
34	106	Buffalo Bayou	6	92	L. Livingston-Lower

1988 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

SAT., DEC. 17: HOUSTON, TEXAS

Sponsored by the Ornithology Group of the Outdoor Nature Club. Call Richard Uzar at 527-0454 (h) or 660-9460 (w) or call P. D. Hulce at 643-1660 (h) or 520-3294 (w).

SAT., DEC. 17: ARMAND BAYOU

Call George Regmund at 474-2551.

SAT., DEC. 17: BRAZORIA, TEXAS

Sponsored by Brazosport Birders. Call Tom Taroni at (409) 297-5563.

SAT., DEC. 17: TURKEY CREEK

(Big Thicket Nat. Preserve) Contact David Baker at (409) 899-1878.

SAT., DEC. 17: VICTORIA, TEXAS:

Call Peter Riesz at (512) 575-4600.

SAT., DEC. 17: WEST CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

Contact Gene Blacklock at Welder Wildlife Foundation, PO Drawer 1400, Sinton TX 78387, or call (512) 364-2643 (w).

SUN., DEC. 18: CORPUS CHRISTI, FLOWER BLUFF

Call Frank Bachman at (512) 853-6774.

SUN., DEC. 18: FREEPORT, TEXAS

Sponsored by the Houston Audubon Society. Regular participants contact your area leaders. New participants should contact the HAS office at 932-1639 or Jim Morgan at (713) 461-3080 before Dec. 14. In the Freeport/Lake Jackson area call Tom Collins at (409) 297-3954. This count consistently leads the nation in total number of species.

TUES., DEC. 20: SAN BERNARD NWR

Call Mark Brown at 963-0936.

WED., DEC. 21: ATTWATER NWR

Participants should contact the refuge at (409) 234-3021, Steve La Buda, compiler. Often the best inland count in the nation.

WED., DEC. 21: BOLIVAR PENINSULA

Compiler Bill Graber, (409) 866-5452. Houston residents can call David Dauphin at 383-3955.

WED., DEC 21: WELDER WILDLIFE REFUGE

Contact Gene Blacklock: Welder Wildlife Foundation, PO Drawer 1400, Sinton TX 78387 or call (512) 364-2643.

MON., DEC. 26: BUFFALO BAYOU, TEXAS

Meet at 6 a.m. at the Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Call Bob Honig at 776-8619 (h) or Doug Williams at 681-8433 (w).

MON., DEC. 26: GALVESTON, TEXAS

Contact Arch Dillard at (713) 996-0107 or 142 Imperial Dr., Friendswood TX 77546.

FRI., DEC. 30: BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK

Meet at 6 a.m. at the Interpretive Center. Bring dinner/snacks for countdown at the center. Call Bob Honig at 776-8619 (h), Doug Williams at 681-8433 (w) or Lynne Aldrich or Peter Gottschling at 996-1109 (h).

FRI., DEC. 30: EL NARANJO, TAMPS., MEXICO

Contact Nick Jackson at 1301 Kamira, Kerrville TX 78028 or (512) 257-2052 (h).

SAT., DEC 31: BEECH CREEK

(Big Thicket Nat. Preserve) Call David Baker at (409) 899-1878.

SAT., DEC. 31: RIO CORONA, TAMPS., MEXICO

Call Gene Blacklock as listed under Welder.

SAT., DEC. 31: SPRING CREEK

Sponsored by the Piney Woods Wildlife Society. Call Gary Clark at 367-2042 or Mike Austin at 482-1454.

SUN., JAN. 1: CYPRESS CREEK

Call Ted Eubanks, Jr. at 666-7639 or Fred Collins at 493-5409.

THE ROADS OF TEXAS

BOOK REVIEW..by Connie E. Clark

Those of us who have enjoyed using the County Maps of Texas issued by the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation, or purchased individual county maps, but have found them difficult to read and/or clumsy to handle, are in luck. Shearer Publishing, in cooperation with SDHPT and Texas A&M Cartographics Laboratory have packaged these county maps in a handy form for the back roads traveler.

The Roads of Texas contains detailed maps, in color, with larger type and in an easy-to-handle 11" x 15" paperbound atlas. The maps follow each other horizontally like Key Maps. The legend includes such items as gravel and soil-surfaced roads, private roads, gates, cattleguards, flowing streams, intermittent streams and lakes (in blue), parks and picnic grounds (in green), escarpments, elevations, airports, private runways, cemeteries, grain elevators, landfills and many more. The one-inch-equals-six-mile scale is almost large enough for birders to be able to "mark the spot" for a return or reference to an unusual sighting or birding spot.

Users will also find a bonus in the front pages, which contain lists of state and national recreation facilities, parks and forests, including addresses and phone numbers. This has proven handy for calling ahead for facility hours, fees or road and weather conditions, etc.

If you've ever been lost in the backwoods without the guidance of county road maps, you are

in for a treat. If you've ever thought, while driving in Texas, "I wonder where this gravel road goes," or "is this a shortcut to the FM?" take a look at this book of maps. As Leon Hale of the Houston Chronicle writes in the foreword: "I warn you, the pretty maps in this atlas will make you want to go places." The Roads of Texas was first published in spring, 1988, and is available in bookstores for \$12.95.

RANCHO DEL CIELO CBC REINSTITUTED

Texas Southmost College in Brownsville has reinstated the Rancho Del Cielo Christmas Bird Count after a lapse of several years. The count will be conducted on a tour, December 27 through January 1, which costs \$375. The money is to be paid to the Gorgas Science Foundation and will be used entirely for scholarship aid to students. The count circle covers six distinct ecological zones on the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Madre Oriental. Its scientific importance was recognized when it was declared a reserve in UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program.

The deadline for registration is December 1; apply at once if you wish to join the tour. Only 22 people will be accepted. For details call the editor who has the brochure, or Larry Lof, Director, Rancho del Cielo, 83 Fort Brown, Brownsville TX, 78520, (512) 544-8271.

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