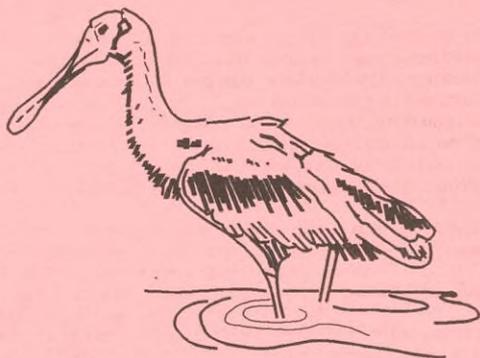


The Spoonbill



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Judith Mueller Boyce, Editor; Don Richardson, Technical Consultant

VOLUME XLI, No. 5
May, 1992

COMING EVENTS

Saturday, June 6: OG FIELD TRIP/PICNIC AT BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK. Meet the oldtimers as well as newcomers at our 3rd Annual OG End-of-the-Year Pot Luck Picnic. Meet at the park headquarters at 7:30 A.M. for a half day of enjoying some of our local nesting birds. At noon we will put down our binoculars and pick up forks and knives for lunch. Bring your favorite, easy to make and serve dish to share with fellow OGers. Be prepared for a great time, hot weather and mosquitoes. To reach Brazos Bend State Park, follow US 59 south past the Brazos River, then follow the signs. For those without a Texas Conservation pass the entrance fee is \$5.00 per vehicle. Call David with questions at 855-2615.

Saturday, June 13: TEXAS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS BLOCKBUSTING EXPEDITION. Area and leader yet to be determined. Call Jerry Caraviotis for details at 668-2344.

Monday and Tuesday, June 15 and 16: TEXAS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS BLOCKBUSTING EXPEDITION. Leader: P. D. Hulce. Area: The Fennessey Ranch between Welder NWR and Corpus Christi along the Mission River in Refugio County. Fennessey is a private ranch which is open on a limited basis to "ecotourism" activities such as birdwatching. There may be a small fee to enter. Call P.D. for details at 863-1142.

Saturday, June 20: TEXAS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS BLOCKBUSTING EXPEDITION. Leader: Bob Honig. Area: Goliad, Texas. For more information call Bob at 665-6963.

Saturday, June 27: TEXAS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS BLOCKBUSTING EXPEDITION. Leaders: Peter Gottschling and Lynne Aldrich. Area: Crockett, Texas. For details call Peter and Lynne at 996-1109.

Monday, August 3: ORNITHOLOGY GROUP MEETING. 7:30 P.M. Harris County Bayland Community Center (north side of Bissonnet just west of Hillcroft. Program will be announced in the July issue of The Spoonbill.

Thursday-Sunday, September 17-20: ROCKPORT'S HUMMER/BIRD CELEBRATION. Speakers this year include our own David Bradford, David Dauphin and Ted Eubanks, Jr. as well as Kenn Kaufman and Pete Dunne among others. For a brochure, call Rockport/Fulton Area Chamber of Commerce 1-800-242-0071.

Sunday, October 4: OG PELAGIC TRIP OUT OF PORT ARANSAS on the Scat-Cat. Leave Port Aransas at 5:30 A.M. and return about 6:30 P.M. The trip, led by Mike Austin, is for birders only and still costs just \$40.00 per person. To reserve a spot on the trip mail a \$40.00 check, made payable

to Scat-Cat Inc., to David Bradford, 18046 Green Hazel Drive, Houston, TX 77084. This is refundable in full until August 20, 1992. After this date no refunds will be made. The boat holds 90 passengers and the last two OG pelagic trips had long waiting lists. Mail your full payment to David as soon as possible. No ice chests are allowed on board. Soda and sandwiches will be sold on board. We have group rates at the Seaside Inn in Port Aransas, only minutes from the boat. Singles are \$35.00 per night. To reserve a room call 512-749-4105 ASAP and mention you are on the OG pelagic trip. Direct any questions to David Bradford at 713-855-2615.

NEWS BRIEFS

.....THE PURPLE MARTIN HOUSE DONATED BY THE OG FOR THE HERMANN PARK ROSE GARDEN has been purchased by Bill Goloby. Kudos are due for Norma Barnes for finding an excellent price at Kelly's Hardware in Bellaire. The new house is an aluminum 24-apartment TRIO brand, similar to but larger than the Purple Martin houses in Russ Pittman Park and Boy Scout Woods. Installation will be made in late February of 1993 by the sundial in front of the Garden Center and will belong to the City of Houston. Many thanks to Bill Goloby and Norma Barnes. Frank Peace

.....MINUTES OF MAY 4, 1992 OG MEETING: Don Richardson shared his knowledge of bird-songs of Jones Forest during his final Learning Corner presentation. Don's sessions have been very well attended and appreciated.

Gail Luckner, Program Chairperson, opened the meeting in Chairman Bob Honig's absence. Gail announced the following positions are still open: Field Trip, Aluminum, Learning Corner and UTC Birding Map update coordinator.

Ed Lebeau, Treasurer, reported membership below expectations causing a shortfall of \$800.00. The deficit will be covered by the OG account.

Attendance was light, prompting a suggestion that meeting on Monday should be reconsidered.

Gail requested notable bird sightings. Mentioned were Bobolinks, Ash-throated Flycatcher and Peregrine Falcon.

Gail introduced the evening's speaker, P.D. Hulce. P.D. joined the Seattle Audubon Society on a tour of Russia's Far East. His slide presentation consisted of beautiful birds and landscapes. Especially interesting: Lake Baykal, the deepest lake in the world, 400 miles long, with 336 rivers flowing in and one flowing out. Colorful buntings, thrashers, a Northern Hobby, White-throated Needle-tailed Swifts were just some of the 199 species the

group observed in Russia. Thanks to P.D. for his presentation. **Christine Bourgeois, Secretary**

.....**BUG-ATERIA!** ON A RECENT TRIP THROUGH SOUTHERN ARIZONA, I crossed paths with a very smart and energetic Cactus Wren. The sun was not up on this cold and brisk morning in the parking lot of Green Valley's only motel. As I was taking my possessions to the car, I nearly stepped on this little brown bird that darted out from underneath a car. Frightened, but not deterred, it quickly retreated to safety. From my car I could see what this little feathered friend was up to.

It would walk along the curb picking off the remains of insects that had accumulated on car bumpers. The fronts of the cars protruded over the curb so the wren did not have to stretch or jump much for its food. If the morsel was high on the bumper, it would jump for it.

My thoughts as I watched this friend enjoying breakfast ranged from "Bug Flakes" to instant dehydrated insects--just add water. This wren had its own "cafeteria line" from which to select what is good to eat.

My experience with Cactus Wrens is that they are often late sleeping birds preferring to stay in their cozy nests until the day begins to warm. Either this one didn't read the script or it found it hard to make a living in the deserts of Arizona. I didn't see any of its mates down the long sidewalk, so I presumed that it preferred to dine alone. I will long remember this first bird of the day and its ability to make a living in a seemingly barren and bleak motel parking lot. **Bill Lindemann**

.....**IF YOU DIDN'T GET A PHOTO OF THE BARROW'S GOLDENEYE AT OCCIDENTAL CHEMICAL'S POND**, Houston photographer Don Francis has prints available for \$25. Call Don at 713/649-3909.

.....**IT'S FOR THE BIRDS!** NESTLED IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS IN THE midst of high-rise buildings, honking cars, asphalt roads and neatly manicured lawns is an 8-acre clump of trees that is used as a nesting colony by five species of herons and egrets. The island of wildlife habitat provides a place of refuge for a plethora of wildlife in the surrounding asphalt jungle of man's invention.

The nesting colony of birds, also known as a rookery, is located at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and is one of the oldest heronries in the state. For the past 28 years, birds have congregated yearly and raised their young only feet from man's hustle and bustle.

While the area is protected from threats for now, that has not always been the case. In the spring of 1988, the heronry was accidentally damaged by a construction crew building a student recreation facility on the university's crowded campus. Upon notification of the construction project, Dr. Ray C. Telfair II, habitat assessment biologist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, assessed the damage on the site and offered recommendations to enhance the area for wildlife while allowing necessary construction to continue without causing further damage.

Through the cooperation of the department and the university, the story now has a happy ending.

The institution place a high priority on preserving the unique advantage of having the colony located on university property. Suggestions were made in the layout of the recreation areas to minimize any potential disturbances to the layout of the recreation areas to minimize any potential disturbances to the "off limits" nesting area. Trees and other vegetation were planted and a buffer zone was established to give the birds a sense of security. Construction of the recreational facility occurred over a period of three winters. Work stopped and started as the birds arrived to nest and departed on their migration south. The colony is flourishing and expanding, and now that the rookery is stabilized, the medical center plans to make further enhancements over the coming years to attract a greater variety of bird species.

The medical center is located at 5323 Harry Hines Blvd. The birds migrate to the area as early as late February and remain until late September or early October each year. In addition to the five species of herons and egrets, 14 other bird species nest there and 90 other species use it during spring, fall and winter migration. Several of these species were unexpected and others very rare. Next time you are in Dallas, add the medical center to your itinerary. **TPWD News, March 27, 1992.**

NOEL'S NICHE LOOKING BACK

By Noel Pettingell
10 YEARS AGO\FROM MAY 1982 SPOONBILL

BALD EAGLES PRODUCE 16 YOUNG IN TEXAS

Texas Parks and Wildlife biologists have counted 16 young Bald Eagles produced this year--double that of last year. This nesting year has been the best for Texas' Bald Eagles since the department began researching eagle populations in 1971 and probably as far back as 1950, John Smith (biologist at Rockport) said. Symbolically, this year dubbed "year of the eagle," celebrates the 200th anniversary of the Bald Eagle being selected for the national seal.

Smith counted the eagles on an aerial survey of the 16 known aeries located in the Coastal Bend and in northeast Texas. He listed production in Victoria, Goliad, Calhoun, Refugio, Colorado, Brazoria, Matagorda and Fort Bend counties along the Coastal Bend.

Four of the known sites failed to produce young this year and one failed to produce for the sixth straight year. Unproductive nests were reported in Goliad and Brazoria counties along the Coastal Bend and Red River County in northeast Texas. (from Texas Parks and Wildlife News, May 5, 1982 issue).

OG FIELD TRIP TO GALVESTON ISLAND - WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1992 by Gail Diane Luckner

A fine assortment of waders, two female Blue Grosbeaks, and closeup views of three Fulvous Whistling Ducks delighted 21 birders at the east end of Galveston Island on the morning of 13 May for the mid-week OG field trip. When a Purple Gallinule popped up out of the grass and perched in a small bush while Brown Pelicans soared overhead, we knew it was going to be a great day.

On the east end mudflats, birders were able to carefully study seven species of terns as trip leaders Gail Luckner and Winnie Burkett discussed field marks and picked out Common, Caspian and Sandwich Terns from among the large flock of Royal Terns. Semipalmated and Wilson's Plovers made appearances, and American Oystercatchers and Black Skimmers loafed on the far shore.

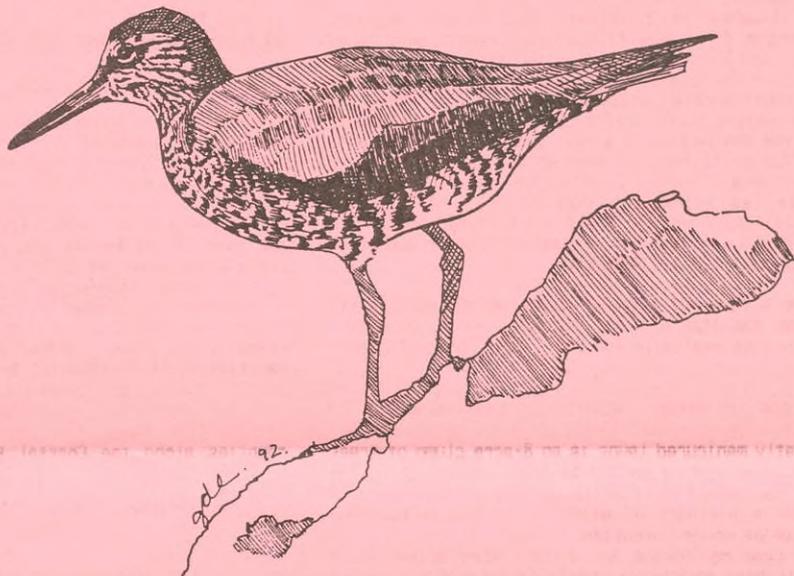
Shed of their drab winter plumage, Sanderling, Dunlin and Willet showed off their bright nuptial colors. To the surprise of the entire group, three Least Bitterns lurked among the rocks along the shoreline with Ruddy Turnstones and Spotted Sandpipers. A large number of Clapper Rails were seen here, both in the marshy areas and along the road. Many downy black chicks accompanied the adults, and several in the group commented about the abundance of this bird in the area.

After viewing a canopy-feeding Reddish Egret and several Green-backed Herons, we then proceeded to Eight Mile Road to search the cow pastures for upland shorebirds. We

were rewarded almost immediately with good looks at Stilt Sandpiper which as a lifer for some of the birders. Downy Black-necked Stilt chicks foraged among White and White-faced Ibis. A great commotion began when Laughing Gulls circled and dove at the stilt chicks. Apparently attempting to prey on the young stilts, the gulls were chased by the agitated adults.

Our day ended at about 12:30 P.M. with a stroll along a lake in the area. Marbled Godwit and Black Tern rounded out the 60 species of birds viewed on the trip.

Mid-week field trips will resume in September. Wave a great summer!



WANDERING TATTLER WANDERS TO GALVESTON
by Gail Diane Luckner

On the afternoon of April 23, 1992, a group of British birders located a Wandering Tattler feeding along the rocky seawall shore on Galveston Island. This sighting proved to be the first record of this Alaskan breeder in Texas. The bird was seen daily through April 28 and sporadically after that.

Like many shorebirds, Wandering Tattler is a long-distance migrant, traveling each fall from its breeding grounds in southern Alaska and British Columbia to wintering grounds in southern California and western Mexico south to Peru. Some spend the winter on remote Pacific islands and along the eastern coast of Australia.

With a diet consisting mainly of aquatic insects and mollusks, Wandering Tattler feeds along rocky shores and bobs and teeters while foraging, much in the manner of Spotted Sandpiper. Its nest is usually a simple scrape in a gravel bar along a mountain stream, although some pairs add roots and twigs for a more elaborate structure. Although the birds have unwebbed feet, both adults and chicks are good swimmers.

A basically brownish-gray bird with yellow legs and a Willet-like bill, in alternate plumage Wandering Tattler is easily separated from the similar Asiatic species Gray-tailed Tattler by the heavily and extensively barred underparts. In basic plumage the birds are problematic, both being brownish-gray above and white below with a gray wash on the throat and breast. However, on standing birds wingtips extend beyond the tail on Wandering Tattler while on Gray-tailed the wingtips are even with the end of the tail. This feature is diagnostic in all plumages. In North America Gray-tailed Tattler has so far been seen only in Alaska. For additional information on Wandering Tattler, see Shorebirds: An Identification Guide (Hayman, et al; 1986).

As with all very rare or vagrant bird sightings in Texas, details should be submitted to Greg Lasley, Texas Bird Records Committee, 305 Loganberry Court, Austin, Texas 78745-6527.

OG "Potluck" PICNIC

Bring food
to share,
family and
friends!



Sat., June 6, 7:30 AM
Brazos Bend State Park
Headquarters

CLEARING HOUSE

April, 1992

Editors: Phyllis and Tony Frank

April was a very exciting month on the Upper Texas coast with a total of 253 species reported. As usual spring migration was well underway, and although no spectacular fallouts were reported, species diversity was good with 33 species of warblers reported for the month. Did anyone else think that the numbers of Blackpolls were higher and more uniformly distributed throughout the month than in recent years? The highlight for the month was the alternate plumaged Wandering Tattler discovered in Galveston by British birders. This bird upon acceptance by the Texas Birds Record Committee will be the first Texas record of this species. Another first for the UTC was the report of a Varied Bunting.

Many thanks to everyone who submitted reports. As always early reports will be appreciated, but they are due by June 3rd. The CH format remains the same this month. The listing uses the following format: bird name, early late dates, reports/total and summary by county or detailed listing. The format of the county summary is as follows: county designation - number of reports/number of birds. The detailed listing format is as follows: county-(number of birds) day, observer code. Very rare birds are underlined. Birds with no previous record on date or vagrant status appear in bold. Birds new to the checklist are capitalized and underlined. Please remember to submit notes on all those good birds. And with all the reminders completed - on to the birds.

Loon, Pacific 18-27 2/2 GA-(1)18,MDT; GA-(1)27,GL
Loon, Common 12-18 2/42 GA-(6)12,DG; GA-(36)18,MDT
Grebe, Pied-bill 2-30 15/54 CH-7/14 GA-7/37 WA-1/3
Pelican, Amer Wht 2-30 14/1760 U-3/78 CH-1/4 GA-10/1678
Pelican, Brown 5-30 12/228 U-4/138 GA-8/90

Corm, Dbl-crested 1-30 22/484 U-5/111 BR-1/250 CH-5/15
GA-11/108
Corm, Neotropic 1-30 18/118 U-5/21 CH-2/12 GA-9/81
JE-2/4
Anhinga 2-26 5/18 U-1/1 CH-3/13 FB-1/4
Bittern, American 5-25 6/20 CH-6/20
Bittern, Least 5-30 9/19 U-2/4 CH-6/14 GA-1/1
Heron, Great Blue 2-30 24/110 U-5/34 CH-7/25 GA-7/38
HA-1/3 JE-3/4 WA-1/6
Egret, Great 1-30 29/661 U-9/162 CH-6/61 GA-8/379
HA-2/2 JE-3/12 WA-1/45
Egret, Snowy 2-30 21/323 U-7/139 CH-4/10 GA-6/135
JE-3/16 WA-1/23
Heron, Little Blu 1-30 21/171 U-5/83 CH-7/40 GA-5/22
JE-3/8 WA-1/18
Heron, Tricolored 1-30 22/203 U-5/34 CH-5/44 GA-9/120
JE-2/2 WA-1/3
Egret, Reddish 5-30 11/27 U-3/5 CH-1/1 GA-7/21
Egret, Cattle 1-30 36/1567 U-8/386 CH-9/478
GA-13/426 HA-1/31 JE-4/211 WA-1/35
Heron, Grn-backed 4-30 23/120 U-7/63 CH-6/19 GA-7/30
JE-2/6 WA-1/2
Nt-Heron, Blk-crn 1-30 9/29 U-4/8 CH-2/16 GA-2/4 JE-1/1
Nt-Heron, Yel-crn 2-30 11/55 U-3/4 CH-4/33 GA-1/2 HA-1/1
JE-2/15
Ibis, White 5-30 18/1812 U-5/880 CH-8/852 GA-5/80
Ibis, Glossy 18-18 1/1 CH-(1)18,E
Ibis, White-faced 5-30 18/452 U-5/132 CH-7/282 GA-5/36
JE-1/2
Spoonbill, Roseat 5-30 24/428 U-6/86 CH-7/40 GA-10/299
JE-1/3
Whsl-Duck, Fulvs 4-30 19/2824 U-5/48 CH-9/2696
HA-1/45 JE-3/20 WA-1/15
Whsl-Duck, Blk-bd 4-4 2/14 HA-(12)4,PTF; WA-(2)4,PTF
Goose, Canada 4-4 1/1 WA-(1)4,PTF
Duck, Wood 9-26 2/10 CH-(4)9,GL; CH-LC(6)26,NPD
Teal, Green-wing 2-30 5/127 CH-3/57 GA-1/20 WA-1/50
Duck, Mottled 2-30 28/280 U-5/30 BR-1/2 CH-10/146
GA-5/46 HA-1/20 JE-5/16 WA-1/20
Mallard 5-23 3/7 CH-2/5 GA-1/2
Teal, Blue-winged 1-30 28/1853 U-6/466 CH-6/349
GA-8/633 HA-1/80 JE-6/195 WA-1/130
Shoveler, Northrn 2-30 15/325 U-1/8 CH-4/113 GA-7/113
HA-1/20 JE-1/1 WA-1/70
Gadwall 2-29 9/168 U-1/4 CH-1/108 GA-7/56
Wigeon, American 2-29 5/40 CH-1/4 GA-4/36
Goldeneye, Common 2-2 1/1 CH-(1)2,GL
Merganser, Red-br 1-30 8/11 U-1/2 CH-1/1 GA-6/8
Duck, Ruddy 2-2 1/47 CH-(47)2,GL
Vulture, Black 1-30 8/25 U-2/4 CH-3/14 GA-2/4 JE-1/3
Vulture, Turkey 1-30 15/45 U-4/13 CH-5/16 GA-3/11
HA-1/3 JE-2/2
Osprey 1-19 6/10 U-1/2 BR-1/1 CH-2/2 GA-2/5
Kite, Blk-shouldr 5-30 13/17 U-2/3 GA-8/11 HA-2/2 JE-1/1
Kite, Mississippi 4-29 3/18 CH-1/2 FB-1/1 JE-1/15
Eagle, Bald 4-4 1/2 FB-(2)4,PTF
Harrier, Northern 5-29 13/34 U-3/4 BR-1/1 CH-5/19
GA-3/9 JE-1/1
Hawk, Sharp-shin 4-27 5/5 CH-2/2 GA-2/2 WA-1/1
Hawk, Cooper's 1-1 2/4 GA-(3)1,GL; HA-(1)1,GL
Hawk, Red-shouldr 2-24 3/6 CH-1/2 FB-1/3 U-1/1
Hawk, Broad-wingd 1-19 2/692 U-(1)19,X; GA-(691)1,GL
Hawk, Swainson's 4-24 5/5 U-1/1 CH-1/1 FB-1/1
HA-1/1 WA-1/1
Hawk, White-taild 11-11 1/1 HA-CP(1)11,NP
Hawk, Red-taild 2-23 4/5 CH-3/4 JE-1/1
Caracara, Crested 4-4 2/2 FB-(1)4,PTF; WA-(1)4,PTF
Kestrel, American 2-16 8/18 CH-4/11 FB-1/2 GA-3/5
Merlin 1-21 4/5 CH-2/3 HA-1/1 JE-1/1
Falcon, Peregrine 18-18 2/2 CH-(1)18,E; CH-(1)18,LM
Bobwhite, Northrn 4-30 4/19 CH-3/4 WA-1/15
Rail, Yellow 18-23 3/10 CH-(6)18,LM; CH-AW(3)19,X;
CH-AW(1)23,WB
Rail, Black 19-19 1/1 CH-AW(1)19,X
Rail, Clapper 18-30 12/43 U-4/20 CH-3/13 GA-4/9 JE-1/1
Rail, King 4-30 9/15 U-2/3 CH-4/9 GA-2/2 WA-1/1

Rail, Virginia 5-30 5/9 U-1/1 CH-4/8
 Sora 5-30 15/34 U-3/5 CH-9/21 GA-1/6 JE-2/2
 Gallinule, Purple 5-30 14/147 U-3/52 CH-11/95
 Moorhen, Common 2-30 26/957 U-5/165 CH-10/693
 GA-5/52 JE-6/47
 Coot, American 2-30 20/488 U-4/46 CH-10/380
 GA-4/53 JE-2/9
 Plover, Blk-belli 5-30 16/939 U-6/201 GA-9/708 JE-1/30
 Golden-Plover, Ls 1-30 16/786 U-3/12 CH-6/46 GA-4/77
 HA-2/131 WA-1/520
 Plover, Snowy 5-26 7/19 GA-7/19
 Plover, Wilson's 5-30 11/85 U-2/7 GA-9/78
 Plover, Semipalm 5-30 16/1096 U-5/822 CH-2/11 GA-9/263
 Plover, Piping 5-29 9/106 U-1/6 GA-8/100
 Killdeer 1-30 28/474 U-7/315 CH-8/58 GA-8/44
 HA-3/25 JE-1/2 WA-1/30
Plover, Mountain 4-4 1/1 WA-(1)4,PTF
 Oystercatcher, Am 11-12 2/4 GA-(2)11,JW; GA-(2)12,DG
 Stilt, Black-neck 2-30 32/361 U-6/178 BR-1/2 CH-8/56
 GA-9/57 HA-1/10 JE-6/28 WA-1/30
 Avocet, American 5-30 10/10309 U-1/7 CH-1/5000
 GA-7/5301 JE-1/1
 Yellowlegs, Great 1-30 23/442 U-6/273 BR-1/2 CH-6/44
 GA-5/30 HA-2/27 JE-2/6 WA-1/60
 Yellowlegs, Less 1-30 24/1786 U-6/1677 BR-1/3 CH-6/35
 GA-6/33 HA-2/11 JE-2/7 WA-1/20
 Sandprr, Solitary 4-29 9/18 U-2/3 CH-1/1 GA-4/9
 JE-1/4 WA-1/1
 Willet 1-30 21/856 U-6/351 CH-4/93 GA-10/382
 JE-1/30
TATTLER, WANDER 26-27 3/1 GA-(1)26,A; GA-(1)26,GL; GA-
 (1)26,PTF;
 GA-(1)27,GL;
 Sandprr, Spotted 9-30 11/17 U-4/6 CH-2/2 GA-3/4 JE-2/5
 Sandprr, Upland 1-25 8/155 FB-1/20 GA-3/16 HA-2/53
 JE-1/16 WA-1/50
 Whimbrel 5-30 18/813 U-5/755 CH-4/31 GA-9/27
 Curlew, Long-bill 5-30 12/44 U-3/5 CH-2/7 GA-7/32
 Godwit, Hudsonian 27-30 3/34 U-2/18 CH-1/16
 Godwit, Marbled 5-30 10/169 U-1/3 CH-1/1 GA-8/165
 Turnstone, Ruddy 1-30 19/458 U-6/192 CH-2/19 GA-10/243
 JE-1/4
 Knot, Red 5-30 10/281 U-2/100 CH-1/1 GA-7/180
 Sanderling 5-30 13/1726 U-4/176 GA-8/1490 JE-1/60
 Sandprr, Semipalm 11-29 6/999 U-4/497 GA-2/502
 Sandprr, Western 5-30 14/1380 U-5/228 CH-1/20
 GA-6/1072 JE-2/60
 Sandprr, Least 2-30 14/191 U-5/122 CH-3/39 GA-5/29
 JE-1/1
 Sandprr, Wht-rump 23-30 3/7 U-2/6 GA-1/1
 Sandprr, Baird's 18-29 3/9 U-1/3 CH-1/5 JE-1/1
 Sandprr, Pectoral 2-30 16/264 U-5/145 CH-6/46 GA-3/23
 JE-1/10 WA-1/40
 Dunlin 4-30 11/5918 U-4/5120 CH-2/145
 GA-4/593 WA-1/60
 peep, sp. 16-16 1/4 GA-1/4
 Sandprr, Stilt 18-29 3/58 U-3/58
 Sandprr, Buf-brst 5-5 1/2 GA-(2)5,PTF
 Dowitcher, S-bill 11-30 10/557 U-4/224 GA-6/333
 Dowitcher, L-bill 12-30 10/1539 U-3/1130 CH-2/300
 GA-2/32 JE-3/77
 dowitcher, sp. 2-26 6/2144 U-1/250 CH-3/294
 GA-1/100 WA-1/1500
 Snipe, Common 2-19 9/30 U-2/13 CH-3/5 GA-2/5
 JE-1/2 WA-1/5
 Phalarope, Wilson 19-30 4/14 U-2/2 JE-2/12
 Gull, Laughing 1-30 23/6638 U-7/3550 CH-4/135
 GA-11/2653 JE-1/300
 Gull, Bonaparte's 5-29 8/179 GA-7/174 JE-1/5
 Gull, Ring-billed 1-30 13/319 U-3/140 CH-2/31 GA-7/136
 JE-1/12
 Gull, Herring 1-30 14/145 U-4/65 CH-2/11 GA-7/61
 JE-1/8
 Tern, Gull-billed 12-29 8/59 U-2/11 CH-2/34 GA-4/14
 Tern, Caspian 5-30 13/60 U-4/10 CH-2/6 GA-6/43 JE-1/1
 Tern, Royal 1-30 14/1332 U-4/265 GA-9/667 JE-1/400
 Tern, Sandwich 9-30 7/59 U-3/12 GA-3/32 JE-1/15
 Tern, Common 11-29 7/29 U-2/9 GA-4/8 JE-1/12
 Tern, Forster's 1-30 20/1066 U-6/430 CH-4/70
 GA-8/496 JE-2/70
 Tern, Least 5-30 14/1424 U-4/322 GA-9/1099 JE-1/3
 Tern, Black 18-30 10/190 U-3/24 CH-3/6 GA-4/160
 Skimmer, Black 5-29 9/171 GA-8/169 JE-1/2
 Dove, Rock 1-30 19/460 U-6/225 CH-1/2 GA-7/136
 HA-2/70 JE-3/27
 Dove, White-winged 5-29 4/31 GA-3/30 JE-1/1
 Dove, Mourning 1-30 34/508 U-7/289 BR-1/13 CH-8/71
 GA-9/55 HA-3/35 JE-6/45
 Dove, Inca 1-30 21/52 U-2/3 GA-11/22 HA-4/16
 JE-4/11
 Parakeet, Monk 1-30 1/3 HA-(3)1-30,PM
 Cuckoo, Blk-billd 23-30 4/8 U-(2)30,Y; GA-BF(1)23,WB;
 GA-HI(1)26,JJW; GA-HI(4)27,DM
 Cuckoo, Yel-billd 9-30 18/84 U-5/37 GA-11/44 HA-1/1 JE-1/2
 Roadrunner, Great 9-9 1/1 CH-(1)9,GL
 Ani, Groove-billd 12-12 1/1 GA-(1)12,DG
 Owl, Barn 17-27 6/14 U-1/1 GA-5/13
 Screech-Owl, East 4-4 1/1 HA-(1)4,PM
 Owl, Great Horned 18-18 1/1 GA-HI(1)18,MDT
 Nighthawk, Common 9-30 14/20 U-5/8 CH-3/3 GA-6/9
 Chuck-wills-widow 17-26 4/4 CH-1/1 GA-2/2 JE-1/1
 Swift, Chimney 1-30 21/594 U-5/42 CH-1/1 GA-5/465
 HA-5/58 JE-4/26 WA-1/2
 Hummer, Ruby-thrt 2-30 15/98 U-4/50 CH-1/1 GA-10/47
Hummer, Blk-chind 26-26 1/1 GA-HI(1)26,JJW
 Kingfisher, Beltd 2-26 22/41 U-3/5 CH-10/18 GA-7/16 JE-2/2
 Wdpeckr, Red-head 18-24 2/3 U-(1)24,A; CH-(2)18,MDT
 Wdpeckr, Red-bell 1-30 10/14 U-2/2 CH-2/3 GA-3/4 HA-3/5
 Sapsuck, Yel-bell 2-18 4/5 CH-1/1 GA-3/4
 Wdpeckr, Downy 1-30 7/10 U-3/4 GA-2/3 HA-1/2 JE-1/1
 Flicker, Northern 2-26 2/2 CH-(1)2,GL; CH-(1)26,JJW
 Wdpeckr, Pileated 2-19 3/4 CH-3/4
 Flycatch, Olv-sid 26-27 3/3 GA-3/3
 Wood-Pewee, East 5-30 12/79 U-4/17 CH-1/1 GA-6/46 JE-1/15
 Flycatch, Yel-bel 25-25 1/2 GA-HI(2)25,JW
 Flycatch, Acadian 18-29 6/25 GA-5/24 HA-1/1
 Flycatch, "Trail" 25-30 4/5 U-2/2 GA-2/3
 Flycatch, Least 23-30 5/6 U-2/3 GA-3/3
 empidonax, sp. 18-29 3/3 U-2/2 GA-1/1
 Phoebe, Eastern 2-29 4/22 CH-2/18 GA-2/4
Flycatch, Ash-thr 29-29 1/1 GA-HI(1)29,PD
 Flycatch, Gr Crst 1-30 10/26 U-3/7 GA-7/19
 Kingbird, Western 21-26 3/24 GA-(4)21,M; GA-HI(17)26,JJW;
 JE-(3)21,M
 Kingbird, Eastern 1-30 29/465 U-8/347 CH-8/52 GA-9/55
 HA-1/1 JE-3/10
 Flycatch, Ss-tail 2-30 24/101 U-7/53 CH-7/17 GA-6/9
 JE-3/7 WA-1/15
 Lark, Horned 4-4 1/5 HA-(5)4,PTF
 Martin, Purple 1-30 29/408 U-6/117 CH-5/46 GA-13/213
 HA-2/9 JE-2/18 WA-1/5
 Swallow, Tree 1-30 25/4070 U-6/3492 CH-10/460
 GA-8/116 HA-1/2
 Swallow, N R-wing 1-29 9/249 U-2/202 BR-1/10 CH-4/27
 GA-2/10
 Swallow, Bank 9-29 4/22 CH-2/7 GA-2/15
 Swallow, Cliff 18-25 3/3 CH-2/2 GA-1/1
 Swallow, Cave 22-22 1/2 JE-(2)22,WB
 Swallow, Barn 1-30 22/615 U-7/207 BR-1/15 CH-7/172
 GA-6/201 JE-1/20
 Jay, Blue 1-30 31/157 U-6/38 CH-3/10 GA-15/82
 HA-3/14 JE-4/13
 Crow, American 2-30 14/39 U-4/16 CH-4/10 GA-2/5
 HA-1/3 JE-3/5
 Crow, Fish 18-18 2/10 JE-SW(6)18,MDT; JE-(4)18,E
 Chickadee, Carol 1-19 5/21 U-1/5 CH-1/8 GA-1/2 HA-2/6
 Titmouse, Tufted 1-19 3/5 U-1/1 CH-1/2 HA-1/2
 Wren, Carolina 1-27 12/24 U-3/3 CH-1/3 GA-7/17 JE-1/1
 Wren, House 2-19 5/9 U-1/1 CH-1/4 GA-1/1 HA-1/2
 JE-1/1
 Wren, Sedge 2-23 7/53 U-1/25 CH-4/26 HA-1/1 JE-1/1
 Wren, Marsh 9-29 9/51 U-3/9 CH-3/19 GA-2/7 JE-1/16

Kinglet, Ruby-crn 2-30 12/26 GA-11/21 JE-1/5
 Gnatcatch, Blu-gra 1-21 12/158 CH-2/5 GA-8/149 HA-1/2 JE-1/2
 Veery 5-30 13/76 U-4/19 GA-9/57
 Thrush, Gra-cheek 17-30 12/32 U-3/8 GA-9/24
 Thrush, Swainsons 17-30 14/179 U-3/14 GA-10/160 JE-1/5
 Thrush, Hermit 2-18 2/3 GA-HI(2)2, JW; JE-SW(1)18, MDT
 Thrush, Wood 5-30 13/140 U-2/31 GA-9/106 HA-2/3
 Robin, American 10-24 4/5 GA-3/4 HA-1/1
 Catbird, Gray 9-30 20/601 U-5/380 GA-12/183
 HA-1/2 JE-2/36
 Mockingbird, N 1-30 33/269 U-7/135 CH-7/26 GA-9/42
 HA-4/19 JE-5/22 WA-1/25
 Thrasher, Brown 1-29 17/59 U-1/3 GA-13/39 HA-1/1 JE-2/16
 Waxwing, Cedar 1-30 12/308 U-2/70 GA-8/178 HA-2/60
 Shrike, Loggerhed 1-30 37/215 U-7/77 BR-1/2 CH-10/49
 GA-12/37 HA-1/1 JE-6/49
 Starling, Euro 1-30 29/1534 U-7/705 CH-4/158
 GA-11/400 HA-3/51 JE-4/220
 Vireo, White-eyed 2-30 18/83 U-3/22 CH-1/1 GA-12/52 JE-2/8
 Vireo, Solitary 11-26 8/10 U-1/2 CH-1/1 GA-6/7
 Vireo, Yell-thrtd 2-30 12/65 U-4/29 GA-8/36
 Vireo, Warbling 21-30 6/7 U-3/4 GA-2/2 JE-1/1
 Vireo, Philadelph 18-30 7/30 U-3/7 GA-4/23
 Vireo, Red-eyed 1-30 20/531 U-6/224 GA-12/302
 HA-1/3 JE-1/2
 Warb, Blue-winged 2-27 16/38 U-2/4 CH-1/1 GA-11/29
 HA-1/2 JE-1/2
 Warb, Gold-winged 18-30 9/25 U-2/8 GA-7/17
 (Warb, Brewsters) 17-19 2/2 CH-(1)19, X; GA-HI(1)17, MDT
 Warb, Tennessee 2-30 20/262 U-4/80 CH-1/1 G4-1/3
 GA-12/158 JE-2/20
 Warb, Orange-crn 4-5 2/2 CH-(1)5, PTF; WA-(1)4, PTF
 Warb, Nashville 18-27 4/6 U-(1)26, A; CH-(1)18, LM;
 GA-HI(1)21, M; GA-HI(3)27, DM
 Parula, Northern 2-30 9/22 U-2/6 CH-1/2 GA-6/14
 Warb, Yellow 18-30 11/114 U-3/23 GA-7/81 JE-1/10
 Warb, Chstnt-side 1-30 14/183 U-5/79 GA-7/101 HA-1/2
 JE-1/1
 Warb, Magnolia 25-30 7/148 U-4/90 GA-3/58
 Warb, Cape May 17-17 1/1 GA-HI(1)17, MDT
 Warb, Yellow-rump 1-27 6/42 CH-1/28 GA-4/9 HA-1/5
 Warb, Blk-thr Grn 2-30 14/123 U-4/16 GA-8/104 HA-1/1
 JE-1/2
 Warb, Blackburn 2-29 11/53 U-3/12 GA-7/40 JE-1/1
 Warb, Yel-throat 18-27 3/3 CH-(1)18, LM; CH-LC(1)26, NPD;
 GA-HI(1)27, DM
 Warb, Pine 2-19 3/6 CH-(1)2, GL; CH-(4)18, MDT;
 CH-WM(1)19, X
 Warb, Palm 5-26 5/17 CH-5/17
 Warb, Bay-breast 23-30 7/64 U-3/38 GA-4/26
 Warb, Blackpoll 17-30 13/68 U-3/24 GA-8/42 JE-2/2
 Warb, Cerulean 2-30 10/39 U-3/7 GA-7/32
 Warb, Blk-and-wht 2-30 16/168 U-4/42 GA-11/123 JE-1/3
 Redstart, Amer 2-30 14/32 U-2/14 CH-1/1 GA-10/16 JE-1/1
 Warb, Prothonotry 2-27 14/32 U-1/1 CH-3/4 G4-1/1
 GA-7/19 JE-2/7
 Warb, Worm-eating 5-27 13/24 U-1/2 GA-10/17 JE-2/5
 Warb, Swainson's 5-18 6/6 GA-6/6
 Ovenbird 17-30 15/94 U-4/24 GA-9/65 JE-2/5
 Waterthrush, N 18-30 12/55 U-4/20 G4-1/1 GA-6/32 JE-1/2
 Waterthrush, Lou 2-25 7/14 U-1/5 CH-1/2 GA-5/7
 Warb, Kentucky 11-30 11/57 U-5/15 GA-5/41 JE-1/1
 Yellowthroat, Com 2-30 20/243 U-6/180 CH-3/9 GA-8/45
 HA-1/1 JE-2/8
 Warb, Hooded 2-30 19/123 U-4/21 CH-1/2 G4-1/5
 GA-12/85 JE-1/10
 Warb, Wilson's 21-21 1/1 GA-HI(1)21, M
 Warb, Canada 18-27 3/11 GA-3/11
 Chat, Yellow-brst 18-27 5/12 GA-3/10 HA-1/1 JE-1/1
 Tanager, Summer 1-30 21/165 U-5/56 CH-2/2 G4-1/2
 GA-11/101 HA-1/2 JE-1/2
 Tanager, Scarlet 5-30 20/260 U-5/129 GA-13/129 JE-2/2
 Cardinal, Northrn 1-30 24/217 U-7/96 CH-5/48 G4-1/5
 GA-8/46 HA-2/20 JE-1/2
 Grosbeak, Ros-brs 11-30 16/277 U-5/194 G4-1/6 GA-9/76
 JE-1/1

Grosbeak, Blue 9-30 14/136 U-6/113 CH-2/4 G4-1/4
 GA-4/13 JE-1/2
 Bunting, Indigo 5-30 23/658 U-6/350 CH-2/11 G4-1/25
 GA-12/269 JE-2/3
BUNTING, VARIED 7-7 1/1 BR-(1)7, WPB
 Bunting, Painted 9-29 10/25 U-3/7 G4-1/1 GA-4/13 JE-2/4
 Dickcissel 21-30 4/75 U-2/10 CH-1/50 JE-1/15
 Towhee, Rfus-side 17-26 6/7 U-1/1 GA-5/6
 Sparrow, Field 2-9 2/4 CH-(2)2, GL; GA-(2)9, GL
 Sparrow, Vesper 5-5 1/1 CH-AW(1)5, BBT
 Sparrow, Lincolns 5-27 6/31 U-1/15 CH-1/3 GA-3/7 JE-1/6
 Sparrow, Swamp 2-30 11/46 U-4/8 CH-3/30 GA-2/4
 JE-1/1 WA-1/3
 Sparrow, Wht-thrt 1-26 16/106 U-2/9 CH-1/40 GA-11/40
 HA-1/7 JE-1/10
 Sparrow, Wht-crn 1-18 3/10 CH-2/6 HA-1/4
 Sparrow, Harris' 1-1 1/3 HA-(3)1, GL
Junco, Dark-eyed 9-9 1/1 GA-(1)9, GL
 Bobolink 26-26 1/2 GA-BF(2)26, A
 Blackbird, Red-wg 1-30 32/7207 U-7/3250 CH-10/1749
 GA-8/511 HA-1/47 JE-5/650 WA-1/1000
 Meadowlark, East 2-30 23/251 U-7/105 CH-6/47 GA-4/20
 JE-5/19 WA-1/60
 meadowlark, sp. 18-21 2/80 U-2/80
 Blackbird, Yel-hd 21-21 1/1 JE-(1)21, M
 Grackle, Gr-tail 1-30 32/859 U-6/217 CH-8/231
 GA-10/257 HA-3/29 JE-5/125
 Grackle, Bt-tail 5-30 20/1152 U-6/700 CH-8/200 GA-3/22
 JE-3/230
 Grackle, Common 1-30 17/976 U-6/510 CH-2/160
 HA-4/86 JE-4/20 WA-1/200
 Cowbird, Brn-head 1-30 15/250 U-5/94 CH-2/27 G4-1/5
 GA-4/39 HA-1/72 JE-2/13
 Oriole, Orchard 2-30 23/269 U-7/151 BR-1/1 CH-5/15
 GA-8/76 JE-2/26
 Oriole, Northern 9-30 18/339 U-6/201 G4-1/2 GA-9/94
 HA-1/12 JE-1/30
 Goldfinch, Amer 1-28 4/35 CH-2/4 HA-2/31
 Sparrow, House 1-30 21/541 U-6/225 CH-3/9 GA-6/183
 HA-4/114 JE-2/10

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS: 91683

LIST OF OBSERVER CODES: P.D. Hulce, Don Francis (A); Bill & Bryan Tarbox (BBT); Don Richardson, Gil Douglas (DG); Don & Lee Richardson (DLR); Derek Muschalek (DM); Jim Morgan, Ted Eubanks, Jr. (E); Gail Luckner (GL); John & Jana Whittle (JJW); Julia & Trevor Ricketts (JTR); John Whittle (JW); Gail Luckner, Steve Matherly (LM); Jim Morgan (M); Derek Muschalek, Jim Day, Rob Thacker (MDT); ML & Ellen Owens (MO); Noel Pettingell (NP); Noel Pettingell, David Veselka (NPD); P.D. Hulce (PD); Peggy Milstead (PM); Phyllis & Tony Frank (PTF); John Whittle, Mike Bowen (WB); Warren Pruess, Garry Brooks (WPB); P.D. Hulce, Mark Scheuerman, Rob Van Zandt (X); P.D. Hulce, Steve Schultz (Y).

LIST OF LOCATION CODES:

Anahuac NWR (AW)
 Bolivar Flats (BF)
 Challenger 7 Park (CP)
 High Island (HI)
 Lake Charlotte (LC)
 Sea Rim St. Park (SR)
 Sabine Woods (SW)
 Texas City Dike (TCD)
 White Memorial Park (WM)
 Yacht Basin Road (YB)

LIST OF COUNTY CODES:

Brazoria (BR); Chambers (CH); Fort Bend (FB); Galveston (GA); Harris (HA); Jefferson (JE); Upper Texas Coast (U); Waller (WA).

Pacific Loon - G. D. Luckner April 27, 1992

Observed at Offats Bayou with a mixed flock of Common Loons and Red-breasted Mergansers from a distance of

about 200 feet with a spotting scope. The bird stood out immediately as noticeably smaller and darker than the Common Loons, most of which were in basic plumage. The bird appeared uniformly dark with black head, nape and back. White cheeks and throat, white extending in an even unbroken line down the front and sides of the neck to and including the breast. A chin strap may have been present or may have been a shadow. Bill relatively small and thin and held horizontally. The dark crown seemed to cover the eye so that the eye was not visible.

Common Goldeneye - G. D. Luckner April 2, 1992

Observed in a freshwater marsh and seen in good light for about 15 minutes from a distance of 175 feet with a spotting scope. A medium sized diving duck. "Puffy" head entirely dark reddish-brown and unmarked sloping forehead creating an open angle between the bill and the forehead. Bill unmarked dark gray. Yellow eye. Neck white and appeared as a wide ring between the head and the body. Breast gray. Upperparts dark gray; flanks lighter gray. A whitish patch was visible on the wing, but was not seen well enough to determine exact placement.

Bald Eagle - P. and T. Frank April 4, 1992

Large raptor circling overhead with all white tail and all white head. Body and wings were dark.

Mountain Plover - P. and T. Frank April 4, 1992

Pale brown large plover. Ploverlike bill all black. Back was pale brown with feathers on coverts narrowly edged in white. The appearance on the back was a much more even brown shade than in nearby Lesser Golden Plovers. Large white supercilium extending to white forehead. In flight, the bird had a noticeable white wing stripe. Underside of wings were white not light grayish as in nearby Lesser Golden Plover. Breast and belly were white. Legs appeared light gray.

Wandering Tattler - G. D. Luckner April 26-27, 1992

A medium sized, long-legged shorebird, smaller than a Willet and larger than a Ruddy Turnstone. Crown unmarked slate gray, extending down the nape to and including the back. White supercilium flecked with gray, meeting on the forehead at the base of the upper mandible. Dark gray eyeline, particularly dark at the lores. Bright white eyering, broken pre- and post-ocularly. Dark eye; white eyelids. Long, straight, heavy bill; dark gray, becoming black about halfway down its length to the tip; base of lower mandible pinkish-yellow. Long nasal groove extending at least two-thirds of the length of the culmen (visible in photos). Face white, heavily but finely streaked with gray, extending onto anterior portion of the nape. Throat white, finely streaked with gray. Breast, belly and flank white, heavily barred with dark gray; more lightly barred in center of belly. Lower central portion of belly and vent white. Crissum and undertail coverts white and heavily barred with dark gray. White thighs. Legs long, thick, and deep yellow; feet deep yellow. Upperparts unmarked and entirely glossy slate-gray lightly tinged with olive. Feather edges on the scapulars appeared worn. Primaries dark gray and extended slightly beyond the end of the tail. When seen briefly in flight from above, the wings appeared long, pointed and unmarked; upperside of the retrices appeared unmarked. No vocalization. Bird appeared in good health.

Wandering Tattler - Detail were also submitted by P. and T. Frank and P. D. Hulce. Additional notes from above were dark gray upper and lower wing surfaces when observed in flight (P. and T. Frank).

Black-chinned Hummingbird - J. and J. Whittle April 26, 1992

One male was observed at Boy Scout Woods near honeysuckle. Bird was flying, perched briefly and then hovered briefly facing observers before departing. Hummingbird the size and shape of Ruby-throated Hummingbird

which was common in the area. The head was dark almost black without any obvious green coloration as viewed from below and from the side. When the bird hovered facing us, the gorget was a black chin with an iridescent purple/violet band on the lower throat. Tail was dark without any white. Bill was long similar to Ruby-throated. The color of the gorget was relied on for identification. Observers have seen many Ruby-throated and are confident the color was not an artifact of the excellent lighting conditions.

Ash-throated Flycatcher - P.D. Hulce April 29, 1992

Slim Myiarchus with a slightly bushy brown crown and a silver gray throat; light yellow belly; noticeable rufous in the wings; tail feathers rufous only on inner webs and tips; seen in scrub on north side of Smith Oaks. Also observed by M. Scheuermann and K. Taylor.

Cave Swallow - J. and J. Whittle April 22, 1992

Observed at boathouse at Sea Rim St, Park. Brown winged swallow with some translucent quality to the outer wings; buffy rump; pale rufous to cinnamon forehead; bluish crown; buffy throat; squared off tail; short and thin bill. The color of the forehead eliminated Cliff Swallow.

Varied Bunting - G. Brooks, W. Pruess April 7, 1992

Approximately 5-inch bird observed feeding on composites and grasses near willows and sea myrtle on high ground along road bed through marsh. Perched in willows and larger composites before resuming feeding.

When first located, it was perched several feet off the ground in good light. A partial, bright reddish orange eye ring was observed. The eye ring appeared broken at the forward margin of the eye where it merged with broadening black border at base of a heavy finch-type beak. The beak color appeared light gray in best light (tan in sunset light). Lower portion of eye ring was most prominent and always visible. Bright light blue across forehead. Bright red patch on back of head onto nape. Dark reddish-purple back, breast and folded wing tips. Blue-black sides of neck and head. Wings, undertail coverts and lower belly also blue-black. Bright blue rump and blue highlights in some outer tail feathers observed in flight. Reddish-purple in breast gradually changed to brighter reddish-orange towards throat where the reddish-orange became intense and concentrated in a bright throat spot. Legs appeared black. No similarly plumaged species known to observers. Attempts to relocate and photograph next day were unsuccessful.

Dark-eyed Junco - G. D. Luckner April 9, 1992

An unmarked, grayish-brown sparrow with a pale pinkish bill. Throat and breast unmarked grayish-brown; belly and crissum unmarked white. Upperside of retrices: central third grayish-brown; outer thirds white entire length. Observed in excellent light of 2 minutes feeding on the ground with Field Sparrows and Indigo Bunting. Also observed by Winnie Burkett.

CONTACTS

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- OG FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN, DAVID BRADFORD**, 18046 Green Hazel, Houston, 77084, 1-713-855-2615.
- SEND CLEARING HOUSE** bird sightings to: Clearing House, (OG), P.O. Box 271374, Houston 77277.
- TEXAS RARE BIRD ALERT TAPE**, sponsored by Houston Audubon Society, 992-2757.
- SEND SPOONBILL MATERIAL** to Editor, Judy Boyce, 5546 Aspen, Houston 77081, Home: 668-5359, Work: 771-2432 Fax: 713/771-2432 Monday-Friday, business hours.
- OG MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**, dues, subscriptions and address changes. Edward J. Lebeau, Jr., 5459 Beechnut, Houston, Texas 77096 (713) 664-4900. Annual dues \$15. Non-member Spoonbill subscriptions \$13.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

A disturbing incident during a recent field trip (not an OG field trip, I'm glad to say) prompted this column. The incident in question: the extended use of a recorded song to lure a Black-capped Vireo into view.

Harassment of any federally listed threatened or endangered species, such as the Black-capped Vireo, is a crime. Use of recorded calls, or even "pishing" or squeaking, can be very disruptive to a nesting bird. In fact, the Federal Register announcement listing the Black-capped Vireo as endangered noted that use of such recordings had resulted in numerous territory abandonments by that species. In the aforementioned incident, the bird was the only singing male known to be in the immediate area; that the site was a well known birding location further exaggerated the potential pressures on that individual vireo.

In such cases, birders must exercise restraint, especially if endangered or threatened species are involved. However, continued harassment of any individual breeding bird may result in territory abandonment, even by species not endangered or threatened. This may not be a crime. It may not jeopardize the entire species. But it just isn't right. So use judgment if you feel you must use a tape: play it briefly (play it never for endangered or threatened species!), then move on.

The vireo incident is likely a case of listing gone awry, the pursuit of a species taken to a point where the welfare of the bird is overlooked. But the lure of the list cannot justify such conduct. Certainly there is at least a bit of a luster in every birdwatcher: we all like to see a diversity of species. Furthermore, the desire to accrue a large list is a motivation to develop skills that are useful in other meaningful pursuits (e.g., research projects or breeding bird atlasings). However, when birding becomes little more than a quest to check off the next species on a

life list, losing sight of the bird as part of its environment, it is simply a game, the bird merely a mark on a score card. (If you doubt that significant numbers of birders are totally absorbed in the game, just look at recent issues of Winging It, the newsletter of the American Birding Association: in March, three pages on the debate about whether species heard but not seen are countable on a life list; in April, the entire issue devoted to lists of names of those with the longest life lists in various states and regions. This tells me that many who are considered to be at the forefront of birding have very misdirected priorities. It is also why I usually call myself a birdwatcher, not a birder.) Yet there is nothing wrong with playing a game, as long as it is played ethically. However, this game should never become the focus of an organization like the OG, which, as part of the ONC, should continue to devote its energies to the study of ornithology as a subset of natural history.

C. Brooke Worth, an admitted "inveterate list maker," puts things in perspective in his 1967 book, A Naturalist in Trinidad: "By the time you are as incurably doomed as I am, the enterprise has become a meaningless travesty. My 'world' list of 1,561 species ... brings sighs of envy ... (and) looks mighty good to me, too--I love it and am proud of it. But does it mean that I could recognize all these birds if I were to see them again? Not for a minute! When I go through my notebooks ..., I can accurately visualize no more than a third of them, perhaps fewer than that. The rest are only names, although I know what each one should mean. In a way the magic number has less to do with birds than with myself. It is as if a gourmet had kept a tally and could say, 'I have had 1,561 excellent meals in my life,' without being able to remember much of what he had eaten while vividly recalling gustatory and gastric satisfaction. The life list, then, is first a status symbol among bird watchers* One thing it is not, and that is ornithology." Bob Honig

* Editorial note: today these status seekers eschew the term "birdwatcher," evidently feeling it has an amateurish implication, when in fact it better embodies the approach of a true naturalist.]

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