



LATE FLASH: Purple Martins congregating in West University Village Shopping Center. Estimated 20 to 25,000 at least. Best viewing: 8:30 to 9:00 pm at corner of Dunstan and Kelvin. Park on bank parking lot, northeast corner. May stay until July 15 or 20.

# THE SPOONBILL

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## NO MORE BIRDING FOR AKM

Arlie McKay, whom everyone knew as THE birder in this area, died June 24, 1975, from injuries received in an automobile accident. He was a contributor to the SPOONBILL from its inception in 1952, and no Clearing House was complete without his observations. We who knew him have been grieving for Arlie because his diminishing eyesight was curtailing his enjoyment in birding, but now we grieve for ourselves for the loss of this wise, warm and witty man.

## ARLIE - by T. Ben Feltner

With the death of Arlie McKay the OG has lost one of the greatest and best loved of its members. The man was quite possibly the best field birder in the state, but he was more than that. It is fashionable these days to place great emphasis on listing. To see five hundred or six hundred species of birds remains the goal of many of us. Perhaps we have attached too much of our ego to these aims. It is interesting to note that Arlie never played this game except on a personal basis.

Long ago he realized that he would never travel extensively, so he set about defining his own birding boundaries and from that time on contented himself with those self-imposed perimeters. Only Arlie knew just what those boundaries were, but it was a small area which included part of Chambers County and a bit of Harris County.

Up until recently Arlie birded and recorded every individual bird that he saw or heard each day of his life. He started in 1932 and from that time on he was constant with his records. I am sure that he never saw over 500 birds, but he knew the birds he saw intimately, and his expertise in the field in the checklist area is unsurpassed.

The last time I birded with Arlie he showed several of us the Rock Wren. His hearing was poor, and cataracts had precluded his seeing even the most common birds that day, and I realized slowly that he had initially identified the bird by its outline only, and the fact that he knew what it wasn't. It is a tribute to his skill that he added a number of birds to the checklist.

He was perhaps the only person whose word was totally reliable. When he reported a rare bird you could depend on it. Black Swift, Barrow's Goldeneye, Smooth-billed Ani, Varied Thrush, Sooty Tern--these were a few of the unusual species that he found, and although there is no irrefutable proof that he ever saw them, and many experts will not accept them, there is no doubt in my mind. If Arlie had reported a Whiskered Auklet in Old River there would have been one there.

In spite of the fact that he constantly found rare and unusual species, and was an excellent field birder, he always remained self-effacing and never presumed that he knew more than anyone else, although he did. No one was ever too much trouble for Arlie, and everyone was greeted with the same effervescing, pixyish grin, and barraged with his anecdotes, which more often than not, centered around his own very few field mistakes.

Arlie is not listed in the top ten in the country or even in the state, but in my opinion there is no better birder among them. I sincerely hope that his daily records will be secured for the OG archives as there is no more complete set of records among us. The spot vacated by his death will remain empty forever.

## RARE, RARE BIRD REPORTED IN WIMBERLEY

A Green Violet-eared Hummingbird (perhaps only the second record in the U.S., one was seen in Austin several years ago) is being seen at Mrs. Henry Dunlap's feeder in Wimberley. If you wish to see the bird, she asks that you call her during the day at 847-2570 -- after five and week-ends at 847-2520. Barbara Ribble of Austin reported this to Margaret Anderson July 8th.

COMING EVENTS

Thursday OG meeting, 7:30 pm, Fonde Recreation Center on Memorial Dr. Bill Mealy,  
Aug. 7 our program chairman, says the theme of this year's programs will be travel.  
So what better way to start than to share with some of our members some of  
their birding vacations. Bring your aluminum!

Holly hobart reports there is no field trip planned for the Audubon Society in August.  
Wes Cureton, field trip chairman for OG, says tentative plans are in the making for  
a late August outing, but details will have to be in the August SPOONBILL.

A COMING EVENT HAS ARRIVED

A coming event we have been expecting for some nine months has arrived, and we have a  
new birder! Miss Cynthia Lou Nimmons joined our group, Tuesday, July 1,, weighing in  
at 7lb. 12 oz. Congratulations to Paul and Phyllis. Knowing Paul, we'll probably meet  
her on our first field trip!

SUMMER BIRDING AT THE LITTLE THICKET NATURE SANCTUARY - by Paul & Phyllis Nimmons

Most of us rarely go birding in the summer. We had the opportunity (with a small  
"o") when a Yankee friend and birdwatcher came to Houston for a convention. After  
making a one-day trip to Austin in search of the golden-cheeked warbler, (which we  
found at the Audubon Sanctuary), we headed for the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary  
on Sunday June 8 via Anahuac and High Island. We went to the Sanctuary for the spe-  
cific purpose of helping our friend find a Swainson's warbler. We arrived about 4:00  
o'clock with tape recorder in hand and heard the first of at least four Swainson's  
warblers. However, we were unable to spot any of the elusive critters and began to  
imitate a screech owl at about 5:30. Although we never saw the warbler, we were a-  
mazed at the list of birds attracted to the screech owl call between 5:30 and 7:00.  
In that short time span, in the limited area between Cove and Enchanted Isle we iden-  
tified: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Screech Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpeck-  
er, Downy Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pee-  
wee, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, (3 +  
seen and heard), White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo (several), Red-eyed Vireo,  
Swainson's warbler, Worm-eating warbler (identified by sight, 20 feet up in a pine  
tree and later heard), Parula warbler, Pine warbler, Hooded warbler, Summer Tanager  
(two pairs =) and Cardinal. As we left we additionally saw Orchard Oriole and East-  
ern Bluebirds at the Sanctuary entrance.

Excited, we returned before dawn the following Saturday, June 14. We saw or heard al-  
most all the above birds, including the Worm-eating warbler, which, unfortunately we  
were only able to identify by its song. Additionally, we heard a Chuck-wills-widow,  
Painted Buntings, and Bobwhite, and saw Mourning Dove, Purple Martins, and Turkey  
Vultures.

ABOUT THE SANCTUARY

As our members know, but other readers may not, the Sanctuary is the property of the  
Outdoor Nature Club. Because of the threat of vandalism, and improper use by thought-  
less strangers, the gates must be kept locked. Each member is entitled to a key (50¢  
and a pledge to observe the rules governing the use of the Sanctuary). These keys, if  
you do not have one, can be obtained from Barney Barnette and Ed Taylor, two members  
of the Sanctuary Committee. Only members have access, though, of course, they may  
take guests with them when they visit the Sanctuary.

FROM THE LIBRARY - by Avis Brister

The OG owns some 60-odd books that are available for lending to its members. They  
run the gamut from large books with beautiful color plates to small pamphlets, many  
of an historical nature. "The Flame Birds" by Robert Porter Allen dates back to a  
study Mr. Allen conducted on Roseate Spoonbills in the early 40's. While most of the  
study was done in Florida, one year was spent researching the Spoonbills on the Texas  
coast. To those who know and appreciate this beautiful bird the book has many tid-  
bits of interesting information about its history and its habits.

If you would like to check out this, or any other book, I will be happy to arrange to  
bring it to you at the August meeting. Next month I'll tell you about another book  
in our library.

FROM THE READERS

Thanks to those of you who took the time to return the questionnaire sent out last month; I deeply appreciate your kind words and thoughtful suggestions. If you have not yet given me the benefit of your ideas regarding the SPOONBILL, please send them in. A recurring plea was for more accounts of local birding, and where to find birds reported. These must come from you, so let us have the benefit of your experiences birding our checklist area, and vicinity. I've drawn on my own experiences for a couple of "where-to-finds" on another page, plus directions to nesting Cliff swallows (in C-H notes), and you've just read Paul Nimmons' Sanctuary trip. So---if you want to read about 'em, tell me about 'em!

OF INCREASING AND DECREASING NUMBERS

\* We hear a lot about the decline of certain birds, but some are increasing. In the spring 1958 the sighting of Cattle Egrets in our area was worthy of letters to the SPOONBILL, and was capitalised and underlined in the Clearing House.

\* Texas Parks & Wildlife News reports that adult White-winged doves have returned to the Rio Grande Valley this year in near-record numbers. Not since 1966 have there been more whitewings in Texas. Population counts by TP&W biologists have tallied some 675,000 birds--a 28 percent increase over the 1974 total of 529,000 birds.

\* Also from TP&W News: "A band of champions by federal decree is coming to the aid of an intriguing, endangered bird, the red-cockaded woodpecker. The Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior has asked some distinguished scientists and consultants to develop and help implement a plan to restore this bird to a healthy state and protect nesting habitat.

"Modern forestry practices tend to eliminate the aging pine trees the red-cockaded woodpecker requires for its nests and roosts. Unlike other woodpeckers, this one makes its home only in the mature, living pine trees which are most often infected with "red heart." Seldom occurring in trees less than 80 years old, this fungus disease rots trees from the inside out, a condition that makes the bird's excavating chore easier.

"An unsolved mystery is how the woodpecker recognizes the preferred diseased trees, which appear healthy on the outside. Both the males and females, in separate trees, peck 12-inch-deep cavities through the living outer wood and make a snug hollow in the heart of the tree. Nesting takes place in the cavity carved out by the male. The birds then drill many small holes into the sapwood surrounding the cavity. A continuous flow of sticky pitch oozes, coating the tree trunk with a white sheen visible from some distance. Exact purpose of the coating is unknown, but conjectures are that it may discourage ants, flying squirrels or snakes, or may help the bird locate its home tree. Another advantage is that the living, pitch-coated homes of the red-cockaded woodpeckers usually survive forest fires unscathed, whereas dead-tree homes of other woodpeckers are rapidly consumed by fire. In today's managed forests, however, few trees are permitted to become old enough to be eligible residences for the red-cockadeds.

"Although the U.S. Forest Service and state and private groups have for some time been preserving particular trees, the new scientific recovery team will further develop and coordinate efforts to save this bird."

AROUND AND ABOUT

\* Stopped in the other day to check with Larry Ivy and Ken Schwindt at the Brazoria NWR office in Angleton, and saw some slides of their goose banding and the Yellow Rail banding programs. Ken says they banded 27 Yellow Rails and one Black Rail this spring. He also says recent studies of Yellow Rails (including some bred in captivity) have shown that early information (such as Bent) were incorrect in attributing the little white spots sometimes seen on head and back to juveniles. The spots are on adults. And he says they have found that bills of the breeding males turn orange, then yellow, starting last of April and first of May. Some of their slides show this bill color. There is no public access to Brazoria, such as Añahuac NWR (other than occasional programmed field trips), but sometime when you are down Angleton way, stop in and get acquainted with these young men, and find out what goes on on that refuge.

\* Vic Emanuel reports that the state's No. 1 Birder, Edgar Kincaid, had a Black-throated Blue warbler singing in his yard the first part of June. This migrant, who is usually seen in April, was a "lifer" for Mr. Kincaid!

\* There is a new Checklist of the Birds of Dallas County that would be an excellent addition to your collection of checklists of various areas of this state. Published by the Dallas Museum of Natural History, in conjunction with the Dallas County Audubon Society, Hazel Nichols (whom so many of you know) is co-compiler. In booklet form it has space for notes opposite each page listing birds. It costs \$1.00 (incl. postage and handling), and may be ordered from: Dallas Museum of Natural History, PO Box 26193, Dallas, Texas 75226.

\* An item from the Houston Post tells of G. Stuart Keith, who lays claim to having seen more species of birds than anyone else ever, but his 5,200 total still is about 3,400 short of perfection. He is a research associate in the ornithology department of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City since 1958, and is president of the American Birding Association, Inc. Keith's hobby and his work have taken him to every continent except Antarctica in quest of birds both common and rare to add to his life list of sightings and for collection of specimens for the museum. (With a list like that, how could you remember what you've seen and what you haven't?)

\* David and Dorothy Lefkovits sent this note about their Buff-bellied Hummingbird so many of you saw this winter and spring. "We saw it first on December 23 feeding at our Turk's Cap, and saw or heard it every day through April 24. On April 11 we saw two Buff-bellies, one in our shrimp plant and one in the wisteria next door. Previously, and we didn't record the date, Nettie Busby had seen two when she came to check the feeders while we were out of town. We had suspected there were two at various times, because they appeared in several different places as we walked around the yard".

\* A Tropical Parula Warbler, which has been present on and off all spring was found again on June 19th at the first roadside park on the King Ranch as one drives south on Hwy 77. And the Rufous-capped Warbler, which had not been reported since July of 1974, was present in the canyon on the south side of Pulliam Ridge, Big Bend National Park on June 21st. Observers were Ira Joel Abramson, Barbara Kendrick, Elaine Robertson and T. Ben Feltner.

#### CLEARING HOUSE, June 1975

(How to read the C-H: Name of bird: (how many), date, location, observers)

- Grebe, Eared: (3)14, Baytown tunnel, P&PN - see notes  
Cormorant, Olivaceous: (25 + or -)HL&P cooling ponds, (18)14, Baytown tunnel, P&PN; (1)8, High Is., P&PN, SW.  
Anhinga: (1-2)all month, Sugarland, HH.  
Bittern, Least: (5)8, Chamber's Co., P&PN, SW; (1)21, Sportsman's Rd., W. Galv., (1)21, Anahuac R., RK; (4)22, Manor Lake, A.  
Stork, Wood: (16)20, Richmond State School, HH; (5)22, Lake Jackson, A.  
Ibis, White-faced: (25 + or -)8, Chamber's Co., P&PN, SW; (2)12, Sportsman's Rd., W. Galv., P&MJ.  
Ibis, White: (3)8, Chamber's Co., P&PN, SW; (1)12, Sportsman's Rd., W. Galv., P&MJ  
Treeduck, Black, Black-bellied: (5 +)15, Smither's Lake area, DD, HH - see notes (Smither's Lake area map is in Sep. 1974 SPOONBILL--Ed.)  
Treeduck, Fulvous: (4)7, W. Harris Co., P&PN, SW; (1)27, Chamber's Co., WC.  
Teal, Blue-winged: (3)8, High Is., P&PN, SW.  
Duck, Wood: (8 +)28, Sugarland--5 imm., 1 adult male, 2+ adult females, HH.  
Duck, Ruddy: (2)14, Baytown tunnel, P&PN, SW.  
Kite, White-tailed: (1)15, River Rd. & Hwy 59, (6--2 adults, 4 imm.)15, Rabbs Prairie Rd. area, DD, HH (these locations shown on Smither's Lake map mentioned above); (2)7, Hwy 288 near Angleton, DH.  
Kite, Swallow-tailed: (1-2)all month, Lake Jackson area, Collins and others--see notes.  
Kite, Mississippi: (1)7, Lake Jackson, DH; (4)22, Lake Jackson, A--see notes.  
Hawk, Red-tailed: (2)near Crabb, Ft. Bend Co., DD, HH; (1)22, between Brazoria and West Columbia, A; (1)30, Hwy 523, Brazoria Co., P&MJ.  
Hawk, Swainson's: (1)8, Mont Belvieu, P&PN, SW; (1)no date, SW Freeway at W. Bellfort, HH; (1)24, 25, Johnson Space Center, RK&BL; (1)29, FM 2004 & 523, near Angleton, RK -- see notes.  
Rail, King: (1)7, W. Harris Co., (2)8, Anahuac, P&PN, SW.  
Rail, Clapper: (5 + or -)8, Anahuac R., P&PN, SW; (3)12, W. Galv. P&MJ.  
Gallinule, Purple: (2)8, Anahuac R., P&PN, SW.  
Gallinule, Common: (2)8, Anahuac R., P&PN, SW; (2 + 2 chicks)14, Baytown tunnel, P&PN.  
Plover, Wilson's: (1)8, High Is., P&PN, SW.  
Turnstone, Ruddy: (2)8, High Is., P&PN, SW.  
Curlew, Long-billed: (1)8, Anahuac R., P&PN, SW.  
Yellowlegs, Lesser: (1)8, High Is., P&PN, SW -- see notes

Sandpiper, Semipalmated: (1)8, High Is., P&PN, SW -- see notes.

PHALAROPE, NORTHERN: (1) May 4, Freeport, Tom & Sherry Collins, Larry & Martha Ballard, Avocet, American: (2) 12, W. Galv., P&MJ --see notes

Tern, Black: (50 + or -) 14, Baytown tunnel, P&PN, SW

Dove, Inca: (2) 7, 22, Lake Jackson, DH, A.

Dove, Ringed-turtle: (2) 2, (1) 11, Bellaire, P&MJ

Cuckoo, Yellow-billed: (1) 14, Baytown tunnel, P&PN; (1) 6, White Oak Bayou, WC; (2) 30, Lake Jackson (Dow Co. park) P&MJ.

Nighthawk, Common: (100 +) 8, Chamber's Co., P&PN, SW.

Woodpecker, Pileated: (1) 8, Anahuac, P&PN, SW.

Woodpecker, Red-headed: (5 +) 8, Chamber's Co., P&PN, SW.

Lark, Horned: (1) 8, High Is., P&PN, SW.

Swallow, Cliff: (10 +) 23, (12 +) 28, Hwy 59 at Oyster Creek -nesting-HH -- see notes (6-8) 26, (15 +) July 1; same place, P&MJ, Jane Dodge --see notes

Thrasher, Brown: (1) 12, Hermann Park Zoo, DD -- see notes.

THRASHER, CURVED BILL: (1) 12, Nottingham Ranch Rd., W. Galv., P&MJ (seems to have taken up permanent residency)

Vireo, Yellow-throated: (1) 15, near Cobb, Ft. Bend Co., HH.

Oriole, Orchard: (5 + or -) 8, Anahuac, P&PN, SW.

Grackle, Boat-tailed: (20 + or -) 8, Anahuac R., P&PN, SW.

Sparrow, Henslow: (4) 15, Mykawa Rd. (see map on other page) P&MJ.

Sparrow, Backman's: (1) 8, Anahuac, P&PN, SW --see details.

#### CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

T&SC	Tom & Sherry Collins	P&MJ	Paul & Margaret Jones
WC	Wesley Cureton	RR	Randy Korotev
DD	David Deifik	BL	Betty Lobos
DH	Dan Hardy	P&PN	Paul & Phyllis Nimmons
HH	Holly Hobart	SW	Stan Wecker
A	David Braun, Mike Braun, Orlyn Geddis, Dan Hardy		

#### CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

The following species were seen in usual numbers and habitat: Great Blue Heron; Green Heron, Little Blue Heron, Cattle Egret, Reddish Egret, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Louisiana Heron, Black-crowned Nightheron, Yellow-crowned Nightheron, Roseate Spoonbill, Mottled Duck, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bobwhite, Coot, White Ibis, Black-necked Stilt, Laughing Gull, Forster's Tern, Least Tern, Royal Tern, Black Skimmer, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Common Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, White-eyed Vireo, House Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Redwing Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Cardinal, Painted Bunting, and Dickcissel.

Eared Grebe: 20 Power Balscope; swimming and diving with 2 Ruddy Ducks; 125-150 yards; good light; observed for 10 minutes. Details: much smaller head and much thinner neck than accompanying Ruddy Ducks, thinner bill than Pied-bill; gold ears, dark neck and back, white belly, white under tail, red sides, pointed, not rounded head, white speculum. Birds would sometimes sink as well as dive. Observers had never seen either eared or horned grebes in breeding plumage before but had seen many winter Eared Grebes. --Paul and Phyllis Nimmons

Black-bellied Treeduck: Smither's Lake area: D. Deifik, H. Hobart; observed at distances from 50 to 60 yds. to a couple of hundred yards. Seen in flight and at perch in dead trees. I was using 10x50 binoculars, Deifik 8x. The birds were observed flying and around an area known as Worthington Lake. Three birds were sitting in dead trees that had been flooded out; the water appeared to be 1-3 feet deep with brush in it. Birds were observed for 15+ minutes (at our leisure). All field marks were observed: reddish bill, brown neck and chest, black belly, large white area on wings, long-necked shape in flight, eye-ring and pink feet. --Holly Hobart

Mississippi Kite: On 7th one bird was seen at intersection of FM 2004 and Oyster Creek. It was very high and revealed a pointed-wing falcon shape, black rectangular tail, and dark underparts. When it banked the light patches on the inner parts of the upper surface of the wings could be seen. On the 22nd several birds were found on a residential street in Lake Jackson, including one bird that was perched in a tree and allowed photographs to be taken. The light blue-gray plumage of the kites was noted on this occasion, along with the typical kite silhouette--sharp wing-tips, slender body, squarish, black tail, and gliding, graceful flight. The Collins told me that Mississippi Kites have nested in the Lake Jackson area for several years. --Dan Hardy

Swainson's Hawk: Buteo size and shape; hovering at about 60 feet high; maroon upper chest, white throat, black primaries, white belly, and underforewing, banded tail, and brown above. Mont Belvieu is about 1/4 mile north of IH 10 and 100 feet east of Hwy 146. Binoculars: 8x40, and 7x35. Good Light at about 150 feet. Habitat: fields. Observed for about 5 minutes; 4 or more years experience and all observers were familiar with bird. --Paul and Phyllis Nimmons

Swainson's Hawk: SW Freeway at W. Bellfort; observed 3-4 minutes; 10x50 binoculars; 20-150 yards distant, carrying small longtailed mammal (mouse?); circled overhead; moved off to west; marks seen: reddish upper breastband, dark head, white throat, dark flight feathers, whitish underwing coverts, finely barred tail (top of tail not seen). --Holly Hobart

Swainson's Hawk: We saw bird No. 1 two evenings in a row circling a section of road and fields about 5:30 pm. This bird appeared darker overall than other Swainson's hawks I've seen, but the contrast between the lighter leading edge of the wing and dark trailing edge and between the darker upper breast and lighter belly was quite apparent. We watched it against a cloudy sky for about 5 minutes with 7x50 binoculars the first night. Bird No 2 was seen quite high against a blue sky about 1:00pm. It was clutching a rat-sized mammal in its talons the 3 minutes or so I watched it circle the road. The field marks observed were the same as for bird No. 1. --Randy Korotev

Lesser Yellowlegs: High Island Oil field just north of Hwy 187 and west of 124; wet, coastal prairie; one minute at 40 feet; size of Lesser Yellowlegs, 2 yellow legs, bill shorter than greater Yellowlegs and not upturned; tail and rump white; no call heard; very familiar with bird; good light. --Paul & Phyllis Nimmons

Semipalmated Sandpiper: High Island oil field north of 187 and west of 124; 8x40, 8x30, and 7x35; wet coastal prairie with drier gravel roads. Observed for 2 minutes; Peep size--smaller than adjacent Ruddy Turnstones; brown back--not rusty; bill medium length and thickness, not downturned; legs dark; white belly and streaked chest; tail and rump had dark stripe and tail was brownish; good light; all observers familiar with bird and other peeps. --Paul & Phyllis Nimmons

Cliff Swallow: Brownish swallow with light belly; dark area on throat; on 28th seen to be orangish throat, whitish area on rump of bird. Nesting underneath bridge US 59 at Oyster creek; 8 plus nests (low count). Globular or gourd shaped nests made of mud balls. At least 2 small "colonies"--5 nests in one, 3 nests in another. Birds observed at one's leisure at distances as close as 20 feet. Swallows have been active at this site for at least a month but ID was not made until 23rd. --Holly Hobart

Cliff Swallow: Brown swallow, light belly, orange-reddish throat, light reddish rump. Observed from bank and canoe. Saw five "apartments"; some still being worked on, others apparently complete. Openings are just large enough to admit bird, and are above our line of sight. (Novices that we are, we're still not going to stand up in a canoe!) Having heard of Holly's first sighting, saw the birds on 26th, then returned with canoe July 1. There is no way to get under the bridge except with some sort of small boat, and nests cannot be observed except directly below bridge (Holly used surfboard!). Oyster Creek crosses Hwy 59 just south of Sugarland exit, before exit to Hwy 6.

(This is the first confirmed nesting of this bird in the UTC area.--C-H ed.)

Brown Thrasher: By naked eye; 15 feet; moderately good light; on ground and flying; about 10 inches long; Mockingbird shape; tail 3/4 length of body; brown-backed; streaked breast; gray cheek; brown, wedge-shaped tail. --David Deifik

Bachman's Sparrow: Anahuac area east of Hwy 562 and north of Hwy 1985; 8x40, 8x30, 7x35 binoculars at 15 feet in good light. Observed 10 min., heard call, watched sing. Brownish rufous; streaked, purplish back; dark crown, dark tail, dingy breast, yellow at bend of wing. This was 3rd sighting of Bachman's sparrow for P&PN--2nd time at this location since July 1972. All observers were extremely familiar with the call because we had been playing it on a tape recorder for an hour. --Paul & Phyllis Nimmons.

NO DETAILS were submitted with the following sightings:

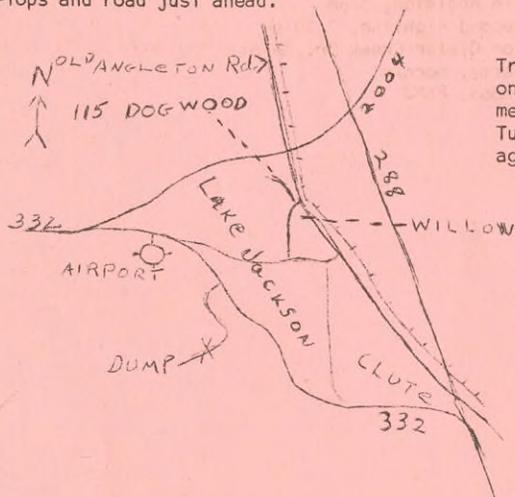
Surf Scoter: (1) May 11, Freeport Jetty, T&SC  
Mississippi Kite: (2) 15, (1) 19, 23, 30, Richmond, HH.

(See top of back page for summary of Swallow-tailed Kite sightings in Lake Jackson area furnished by Tom and Sherry Collins).

## WHERE TO LOOK FOR-----

Swallow-tail Kite: We have a new subscriber, Mr. T.I. Collins, 115 Dogwood, Lake Jackson, to whom we are greatly indebted for a record of sightings of Swallow-tail Kite(s) during the past month and a half in the Lake Jackson area. Mr. Collins has placed in his curb-side mailbox a list of sites, with dates and times of day seen, and a map of the area, with sites marked. You may use the map, but please replace for the next birder, and add to the list of sightings, with time, location and direction of flight, if you are so lucky as to see the elusive creature. On the sketch below, we have added one site, the area where P&M were two of the lucky ones.

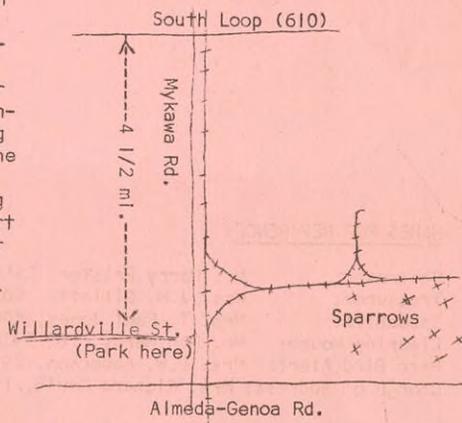
Oyster Creek winds through Lake Jackson (and all the streets wind, too!), and most of these sightings were made from yards as the bird flew over. There doesn't seem to be anyway one can go to a reported site and expect, with any certainty, to find this bird, all one can do is cruise the area and hope. P&M had given up that hope, and were stopped, checking out some crows for possible Fish Crows (had to reluctantly decide they were juvenile Common Crows on the basis of the drawn-out call, though the possibility of Fish Crows in the dump area is good), when THAT BIRD flew over the tree-tops and road just ahead.



Traveling south on 288, turn right on 2004. Cross railroad, turn immediately left on Old Angleton Rd. Turn right on Willow, then right again on Dogwood.

Henslow Sparrows: They are still singing in this field, so if you feel like a hot, weedy walk, try this map. There are often trains parked on the sidings, paralleling Mykawa Rd., and one must watch for switching there and on the spurs. One usually must walk quite a ways east along the spur before striking out into the field, listening all the while for the distinctive song of the Henslow. Peterson says: "One of the poorest vocal efforts of any bird; throwing back its head, it ejects a hiccupping *tsi-lick*." Pough says: "The song is a short explosive, double noted buzz--*flee-sic*. It lasts about 2/5 of a second and probably holds the record for shortness. It is delivered from the top of a tall weed or fence post and carries well".

The weeds are very high, so wear sturdy pants (stickery vines and shrubs), sturdy shoes or boots. When you think you hear the song, before galloping off in pursuit, stand and check the small woody shrubs around you. This bird is quite a ventriloquist, and usually he is some fifteen or twenty feet from you, when you believe him to be just a few feet away. Dickcissels are also present, but their song is "Dick-cis-cis-cis". Morning seems best time.



(Most birding recently has been confined to the area south of the spur because of clearing for new spurs north of the main spur; however, the Henslow has been found in the past in most areas of the field).

Summary of Swallow-tailed Kite sighting:

First observed by Tom Collins May 24 at Lake Jackson city dump. Seen by Sherry Collins on June 5 over 127 Dogwood. Newspaper article asking for sightings resulted in these:

May 18 6910 Hwy 36, Jones Creek  
24 4 pm at dump; 6 pm at Catholic Church  
26 Hwy 288 at Arcola  
31 Hwy 2004 in Lake Jackson (possible)  
June 1 500 block Sycamore, Lake Jackson, 6 pm  
1 7231 Hwy 36, Jones Creek, 4-5 pm  
1 122 Blossom, TWO at once, 2-4 pm  
5 127 Dogwood, 11 am  
5 417 Southern Oak Dr., afternoon  
7 Over Acacia, 5 pm  
110 Begonia, possibly 2 birds, afternoon  
Oyster Creek Dr. and Buttercup in Kingswood addition, afternoon  
500 block of Sycamore, 6:30 pm  
8 109 Pine, afternoon  
Episcopal Church on Oyster Creek Dr., 3 pm  
514 Oak Dr., noon  
Holiday Lakes in Angleton, 3 pm  
11 110 Begonia, second sighting, 7:30 am  
16 Over Jr. High on Oyster Creek Dr., 6 pm  
17 Lake Jackson Farms, morning  
30 Road to dump, noon, P&MJ

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