



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME XV, No. 11
March, 1967

 * "I wish the Bald Eagle had not been *
 * chosen as the representative of our coun- *
 * try; he is a bird of bad moral character; *
 * like those among men who live by sharpening *
 * and robbing, he is generally poor, and very *
 * often lousy. *
 * "The Turkey is a much more respectable *
 * bird, and withal a true original native of *
 * America." *
 * -Benjamin Franklin- Letter to *
 * Sarah Bache, January 26, 1784 *

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

COMING EVENTS

- April 1,2 (Saturday and Sunday) OG field trip to the brush country, led by Clayton Gilman. Don't miss this great opportunity to see many different species of birds in the area of George West, Texas. Make your reservations at the Buenos Noches Motel on Rt. 59 in George West, or you may prefer to camp out at Lake Corpus Christi State Park. Mr. Gilman says that the Ferguson Restaurant in George West is a good place to eat. Meet Saturday morning at the Buenos Noches Motel at 8 AM. We expect to see many interesting birds, including Scailed Quail, Black-throated Sparrows, and Olive Sparrows. This is also a wonderful area and time of year for herpetologists and botanists!
- April 6 (Thursday) Regular OG meeting at the Downtown Recreation Center at 7:30 PM. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hoffman will show a film, "Birds of Africa," rented from the National Audubon Society, along with a talk on their own last trip to that continent.
- April 11 (Tuesday) Regular ONC meeting at Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive, at 8 PM. A talk on "East Texas" will be given by Russel Hilliard.
- April 15,16 (Saturday and Sunday) ONC field trip to the Big Thicket, led by Lance Rosier. See your Nature Club Notes for details.
- April 29 (Saturday) The Annual Spring Roundup (Big Day Run). You may go anywhere you wish within 75 miles of the Harris County Courthouse. Rare and unusual birds must be substantiated by complete description of observation including exact location and names of observers. Include route covered, hours spent in the field, car miles, foot miles, and names of those in party. More details in next issue.

TEXANS WILL LIKE THIS, TOO!

A Checklist of Oklahoma Birds by Dr. George M. Sutton can be obtained from the Cleveland County Bird Club. Mail your check for \$9.95 to Mrs. Harold Cooksey, Box.874, Norman, Oklahoma, 73069. The book will be autographed by Dr. Sutton, and the price includes postage. The Cleveland County Bird Club will get a profit of 40% on each book sold, so let's help them out.

S.O.S.!!!

Did you know that too much sugar in your Hummingbird feeder can be fatal to these birds? The Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine recommends a concentration no higher than five parts of water to one part of sugar in your feeder. It also reminds us that honey can kill these birds.

(Information submitted by Nancy Strickling)

PALMETTO FIELD TRIP by Wallace C. Mebane Jr.

Twenty-five members and guests of the OG Group of the ONC met at 9:30 AM on Sunday morning, February 12, 1967 at the entrance to Palmetto State Park on highway 183 between Gonzales and Luling to be led by Fred S. Webster Jr. of Austin, Texas.

Mr. Webster was on the Christmas Bird Count in this area and knew where to find all the good birds. John W. White of Austin came down with him.

Dr. David Marrack, his son, Paul, and guest, Janice Nesbitt walked through the woods about a hundred feet from the road and drove out some Purple Finches for all of us to see.

Mr. Gilman, who will soon be Director of Botany, identified the Wild Carrot that was blooming in profusion all over the park. But ask him about that Song Sparrow in the rest area.

Mrs. Jerry Baker identified a Western Meadowlark by sound. Both Eastern and Western are in the park. On the Christmas Count in that area, Mr. Webster says they listen well until they are certain they have identified the two different songs. Then, although they may not be sure of which is which, they know they have both, and record one Eastern and one Western Meadowlark on the count.

The day was beautiful. The sun was shining. The weather was cool to those from "Back East" and was downright cold to us native Texans.

Lyvonda, Wallace, and I camped out in the park Saturday night on the bank of the San Marcus River. Believe me, it was cold. The temperature dropped into the thirties. We started out sleeping in three cots with three blankets apiece. By the time morning came, that six-year-old had seven of the blankets. My wife and I were sleeping on the tent floor covered by the other two. We awoke at dawn to find ourselves surrounded by little red tailed Hermit Thrushes, White-throated Sparrows, and Tufted Titmice. The hot spring in the rest area was steaming in the cold air and smelling strongly of sulphur. Wallace calls it "egg water". Some comedian in the Park Service has erected a sign identifying it as "Drinking Water."

Dr. Pat Sullivan printed cute little name tags for us. She, Melba Drake, and Nell Ray spent Saturday night in a warm motel in Gonzales.

Other early birders who drove the one hundred fifty miles from Houston were our Chairman, Dick Miller, his wife, Orbie, Eva Gilman, Helen Wolfert, Ella Wolfert, Louise Rogers, Betsy and John Perry, Marion and Edward Taylor, and new members, Mary and Jack Gillette.

The group stopped at noon for a picnic lunch, a few pictures and the countdown. Then after lunch, we did some more birding. The Myrtle Warblers were flying around the river in the sunlight, flashing their yellow rumps and dipping down to the surface of the river. They appeared to be drinking like the swallows do at the lake in Hermann Park.

Of the eighty-five species seen during the day, some birds of interest include the Black-crowned Night Heron, Caracara, Inca Dove, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and Rufous-sided Towhee. It was a good trip and a lot of fun. Many thanks to our Field Trip Chairman, David Marrack, and to our leader, Fred Webster.

CLEARING HOUSE, February, 1967

Horned Grebe:
 Eared Grebe: (15)28 Cove AKM.
 Pied-billed Grebe: (1)13 (5)28 Cove AKM.
 White Pelican(5)1 (25)11 (300)28 Cove AKM.
 Cormorant (sp):
 Double-crested Cormorant: (18)25 (25)28 Cove AKM.
 Anhinga:
 Great-blue Herons
 Green Herons
 Little Blue Heron:
 Cattle Egret: (1)23 Old River FWD.
 Reddish Egret:
 Common Egret:
 Snowy Egret:
 Louisiana Herons
 Black-crowned Night Herons: (15)28 Old River FWD.
 Yellow-crowned Night Herons:
 American Bittern:
 White-faced Ibis: (3)1 (2)18,24 Cove AKM.
 White Ibis:
 Roseate Spoonbill: (2-32)17 days Cove AKM.
 Canada Goose:
 White-fronted Goose: (200)19 Cove AKM.
 Snow Goose:
 Blue Goose:

Houston Christmas Count - by Area						
5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
	2				50	52
			3	4	1059	1066
1	6	6	2	9	8	45
1		53		12	437	508
				1		1
			42		2	85
						4
11	46	52	17	39	45	223
			1	1		6
1	22	14		2		41
	1			1	6	18
		6				7
7	25	18	27	83	52	300
4	33	20	150	119	39	369
5	8	88	41	24	5	185
		1	30	42	115	188
			4	1		8
			1	1		2
15*						15*
	130		14	1		145
30	30	4	1		27	102
38	313			18		380
64	770	428	35	158	443	2942
26	191	115	23	17	140	648

Houston Christmas Count-by Area						
	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Mallard: (2-20)18 days Cove AKM; (7)28 Old River FWD.	4			8		31
Mottled Duck: (1-20)14 days Cove AKM.	26		10	14		50
Gadwall: (1-15)19 days Cove AKM.	4	12	20	31	5	104
Pintail: 24 days, (5000)14 Cove AKM.	550	45	43	260	238	1147
Green-winged Teal: 28 days Cove AKM.	3810	13	10	12	11	3857
Blue-winged Teal: (1-12)12 days Cove AKM.	4			2		13
American Widgeon: 17 days Cove AKM; (4)28 Old River FWD.	42	10		30	13	111
Shoveler: 28 days (500)9 Cove AKM.	127	15	2	260	688	1094
Wood Duck: (9)28 Old River FWD.	10			4		30
Redhead:				4*		4*
Ring-necked Duck: (19)28 Old River FWD.	4		1	12	11	28
Canvasback: (1-25)12 days Cove AKM.	102	10		2	189	384
Lesser Scaup: (1-12)4 days Cove AKM.	12	13	247	11000	1287	12583
Common Goldeneye: (1)28 Cove AKM.			1*			1*
Bufflehead:					7*	7*
Ruddy Duck:	2		73	16	3180	3275
Hooded Merganser: (1)28 Cove AKM.	2*					2*
Red-breasted Merganser: (17)28 Cove AKM.					4*	4*
Turkey Vulture:	41	18	2	3		120
Black Vultures: (1-8)8 days Cove AKM.	16	7				34
Sharp-shinned Hawk: (1)28 Cove AKM; (1)14 Old River FWD.	1*					1*
Cooper's Hawk:	3	1		1		7
Red-tailed Hawk:	13	1	2	4	4	53
Harlan's Hawk:	2*					2*
Red-shouldered Hawk: (1)2 Cove AKM; (1)2,(4)3,(3)9,(2)14,28 Old River FWD.	3	5	2	2	1	16
Marsh Hawk:	8			4	1	34
Sparrow Hawk:	31	14	7	10	5	148
Bobwhite: (25)24 Old-River FWD.	13	10	11	60	30	160
Sandhill Crane:	1					96
King Rail:		1	6	1		9
Clapper Rail:	1	4		2	4	13
Sora:			2	2		4
Common Gallinule:			10		23	33
American Coot: 12 days (1000+)14 Cove AKM.	24		65	2	10	115
Semipalmated Plover:						1*
Killdeer:	177	48	95	147	76	994
Black-bellied Plover: (1)28 Cove AKM.	36		4	1	4	46
Ruddy Turnstone:			2*			2*
American Woodcock: (1)10 Old River FWD.						1*
Common Snipe: (2-20)6 days Cove AKM.	4	4	8	9	5	33
Long-billed Curlew: (1-28)10 days Cove AKM.	9	8				24
Spotted Sandpiper:	1		8	5	5	23
Willet: (1+)28 Cove AKM.	36	24		1	1	64
Greater Yellowlegs: (1+3)7 days Cove AKM.	10		11	8	3	36
Lesser Yellowlegs: (1-3)8 days (30)25 Cove AKM.	40	4	7	10	1	94
Pectoral Sandpiper: (2)25 Cove AKM.						
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER:	1*					1*
Least Sandpiper:			257			277
Dunlin:	26		2	35		63
Dowitcher (sp): (2)28 Cove AKM.	1300		35	30		1365
Long-billed Dowitcher:				32		71
Semipalmated Sandpiper:	1610	1	250			1891
Western Sandpiper:	230		20			280
Sanderling:	1	100			6	107
American Avocet:		110		200	446	756
Herring Gull:	1	9	9	34	25	78
Ring-billed Gull:	450	205	82	56	756	1751
Laughing Gull:	6	41	126	20	172	390
Bonaparte's Gull: (1)28 Cove AKM.	3				6	9
Gull-billed Tern:	1	6			1	11
Forster's Tern:	8	5	27	14	254	336
Common Tern:	2		4			6
Royal Tern:	2	3	2	5	5	25
Caspian Tern:	1		26	2	26	70
Black Skimmer:			2		17	19
Mourning Dove: (5)28 Old River FWD.	48	45	10	36	17	324
Ground Dove: (2)24 Cove AKM; (2)25 Cinco Ranch HP.	4*					4*
Inca Dove:				3		3
Barn Owl:						4
Screech Owl: (1)18 Cove AKM.		1		1	2	4

	Houston Christmas Count- by Area					Total
	6	7	8	9	10	
Great Horned Owl:	1	1		3		6
Barred Owl: (1)7,14,16,18,19,21,23 Old River FWD.	1			1		13
Rufous Hummingbird: (1)23 Galveston JWR.						
Belted Kingfisher: (1-2)9 days Cove AKM.	2	3	3	9	1	29
Yellow-shafted Flicker: (1-6)16 days Cove AKM; (1-3)most days Old River FWD.	47	23	13	48	35	285
Pileated Woodpecker: (2)10,14 Old River FWD.	1		1			12
Red-bellied Woodpecker: (1)2 Cove AKM; (1)1,2 Old River FWD.	19	8	10	10	9	77
Red-headed Woodpecker: (only 1)12 days Cove AKM; (2)25 Cinco Ranch HP.		7	1			25
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (1-2)5 days Cove AKM.	18	39	31	24	3	153
Hairy Woodpecker:	2	6				8
Downy Woodpecker: (1)7,28 Old River FWD.	2			3	1	11
EASTERN KINGBIRD:	1					2
Eastern Phoebe: (1-2)5 days Cove AKM; (1)daily Old River FWD.	23	17	7	14	2	97
Vermilion Flycatcher: (1)19 Cove AKM.	1					3
Horned Lark:				4		5
Tree Swallow: (1)9 (3)24 (1)25 (5)28 Cove AKM.						
Purple Martin: (20)25 Cove AKM; (1)14 (2)15 (3)17 (4)21 (5)24 (35)25 Old River FWD; (2 pr)14 (4)21 (2 pr)22, Pecan Park, SE Houston by Robert L. Mills, NP, (cf. <u>The Spoonbill</u> , March, 1966, p 7 and March, 1964, p 5.).	209	198	62	23	108	915
Blue Jay:	3	3	5	19	14	152
Common Crows:	92	29	11	30	10	317
Carolina Chickadee: (2)daily Old River FWD.	4	33	15	15	6	118
Tufted Titmouse: (2)28 Cove AKM; (1)28 Old River FWD.				1		2
Red-breasted Nuthatch:						2*
Brown Creeper:	11	4	4	2	15	56
House Wren: (1)7 days (4)25 Cove AKM; (1)28 Old River FWD.	4*					4*
Winter Wren:	1*					1*
Bewick's Wren:	12	10	3	14	19	113
Carolina Wren:	1			4		6
Long-billed Marsh Wren:	1					7
Short-billed Marsh Wren:	133	88	24	57	32	584
Mockingbird:	1		1	3		7
Catbirds: (3)daily Old River FWD.	180	589	105	39	122	1445
Brown Thrasher:	1366	300	188	900	152	4037
Robin: 28 days Cove AKM.	15	12		6	6	74
Hermit Thrush: (4)2,10 (1)24, 25,28 Cove AKM; (1)daily Old River FWD.						1*
VERY:	19	2	7	5		81
Eastern Bluebird: (9)5 (2-3)9,16,25 Cove AKM;(4)daily Old River FWD.	74	13	9	29	18	233
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: (1)15 Cove AKM.	1			1		13
Golden-crowned Kinglet:	90	42	18	43	42	394
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:	27	24	70	9	161	419
Water Pipit: 5 days (100)28 Cove AKM.	3			2		5
Sprague's Pipit:		55	6	40	60	225
Cedar Waxwing:	63	32	19	19	19	387
Loggerhead Shrike:	2200	35	145	200	475	3623
Starlings:	2			1		3
WHITE-EYED VIREO: (1)1-9 Old River FWD.	1	2		1		6
Solitary Vireo:					1*	1*
Black-and-white Warbler: (1)24 Cove AKM.	3	4	3	12	27	73
Orange-crowned Warbler: (1)2 (2)28 Cove AKM.	1	1				2
NASHVILLE WARBLER:	118	38	15	46	49	374
Myrtle Warbler: 11 days (20)14 Cove AKM.	6		3	2	1	27
Pine Warbler: (1)8,9 Old River FWD.			1	1		2
Palm Warbler:	1			3	1	7
Yellowthroat:	1*					1*
CANADA WARBLER:	21	40	2	4	29	650
House Sparrow:	187	114	49	48	176	1106
Eastern Meadowlark:	500000	145	728	375	210506	32570
Red-winged Blackbird:	4		1	14		19
Rusty Blackbird:	48			105	14	211
Brewer's Blackbird:	111		11	50	1050	2695
Boat-tailed Grackle:	11000	508	1950	49	100	18788
Common Grackle:	300000	25	15	215	1527	302031
Brown-headed Cowbird:						
SUMMER Tanager: (1)8 at Ola William's,Cove,AKM (Same as reported last month, 1/19/67).	180	40	11	45	34	668
Cardinal:	2			2		5
Purple Finch: (2)2,3,4 (3)6,7,8 (5)10,13,15,16, (7)18,19 (9)20,22 Old River FWD.						
American Goldfinch: 7 days (250)2 Cove AKM; (10-20)1-24 Old River FWD.	149	101	216	475	78	1455
Rufous-sided Towhee: (1)28 Cove AKM.	20	26	73	11		160
Savannah Sparrow:	27	28	15	18	107	294
LeConte's Sparrow: (1)15 Cove AKM.	14				3	18

Henslow's Sparrow:
 Sharp-tailed Sparrow:
 Seaside Sparrow:
 Vesper Sparrow: 11 days (1-12) Cove AKM.
 Slate-colored Junco: (10)10 (2)22 Cove AKM.
 Chipping Sparrow:
 Field Sparrow: (2)25 Cove AKM
 Harris Sparrow: (2)25 Cinco Ranch HP.
 White-crowned Sparrow:
 White-throated Sparrow:
 Fox Sparrow:
 Lincoln's Sparrow: (2)1 (1)6,13,25,28 Cove AKM.
 Swamp Sparrow: (5)6, (1)28 Cove AKM.
 Song Sparrow: (1)28 Old River FWD.

No. of species
 No. of birds

Houston Christmas Count-by Area					
6	7	8	9	10	Total
2					3
	1*				1*
4	1	1			11
5	1		1		9
30	2	12	36		84
2					3
1	27	5	2	2	50
			2*		2*
2	9	3	17	1	39
357	300	110	315	304	1681
1	1		1		4
14	6	2	17	31	96
7		22	7	24	134
2	1		2	10	22
135	95	99	121	97	170
827392	700381	375	16339	57559	997360

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

Houston Christmas Count: * means area exclusives. For Areas 1-4 and remaining birds in Area 5, see last month's Clearing House.

Did very little birding. Many ducks in front of my house. Spoonbills, too. Saw 104 species in February--76 species in the first half, compared with 128 in 1964, and 102 in the second half, compared with 138 in 1964. Arlie. K. McKay.

- CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS:

AKM Arlie K. McKay
 FWD Mrs. John M. (Frankie) Daves
 NP Noel Pettingell

JWR Jane Robinson
 HP Harvey Patten

WELCOME!

Our newest member is Mrs. Irene Clark, 2515 Shakespeare, Apt. 5, Houston, Texas 77025.

OFFICERS:

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March
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Outdoor Nature Club
(Ornithology Group)
1746 Wroxton Court
Houston, Texas 77005
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