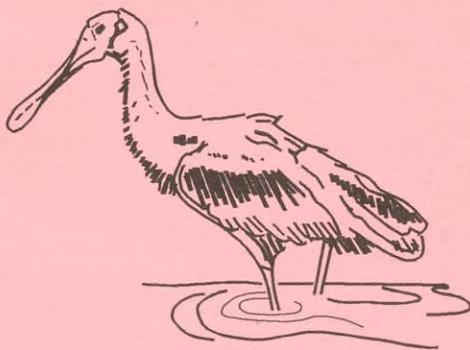


The Spoonbill



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COMING EVENTS

Monday, February 3: ORNITHOLOGY GROUP MEETING. 7:30 P.M. Harris County Bayland Community Center (on the north side of Bissonnet just west of Hillcroft). OG member, Bill Goloby, will present a program entitled, "A Passion for Purple...Martins, That Is." Scheduled just before the martins are due to return from their wintering grounds, Bill will talk about this largest member of the swallow family. Bill, owner and guide of Penfeathers Tours, has actively birded the Upper Texas coast since 1966 and has led professional tours of this area since 1984. A former editor of *The Naturalist*, Bill is current editor of *IOS Newsletter*. He leads birding trips for the Houston Museum of Natural Science and is volunteer caretaker of the City of Houston's purple martin colony at the Garden Center in Hermann Park. Here's a great opportunity to learn more about these fascinating birds. Learning Corner at 7:00 P.M. Don Richardson will present the first of a two-part program on gulls and terns.

Thursday, February 13: OMC Meeting. 7:30 P.M. Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Dorothy Mattiza, owner of the Gunsight Mountain Ranch and Nursery near Bandera and past president of the Native Plant Society of Texas, will give a program on "A Naturalist's View of the Hill Country."

Saturday, February 22: Special OG Field Trip to Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge. Refuge personnel have agreed to allow our group into areas of the refuge usually closed to the public. In mid-January there were over 15,000 ducks on Alligator Marsh. This half-day of birding begins on the refuge at 8:00 A.M. at the Refuge shop building in the area of the refuge which is open to the public the first weekend of each month. A refuge manager will lead us from 8:00 A.M.-Noon. Some may choose the look for Henslow's Sparrow or bird other well known areas after lunch. To reach the refuge shop from Houston take 288 south to Angleton and follow the 558 loop north about three miles to FM 523. Travel south on 523 for about 15 miles to the brown and white refuge sign. At the sign, turn left on County Road 227 (Hoskins Mound Rd.) and travel about one mile to the refuge entrance. Turn right into the refuge and drive about three miles to the refuge shop. Allow about one and a half hours for drive time from downtown Houston.

Monday, March 2: Ornithology Group Meeting. 7:00 P.M. Harris County Bayland Community Center. Dr. Keith Arnold, director of the Texas Breeding Bird Atlas Project, will present an update on results from the project in 1991, a year which has proven to be one of the most exciting of the project.

Saturday, March 14: OG Field Trip to Attwater Prairie Chicken MWR to view prairie chickens booming on their leks. Details to follow in the February *Spoonbill*.

NEWS BRIEFS

.....Minutes of OG January 6, 1992 meeting: Don Richardson continued his education series with a discussion on identifying mergansers and geese.

Chairman Bob Honig opened the meeting by welcoming the group to 1992! He announced that Treasurer Ed Lebeau was available to collect dues and provide membership information. Bob opened the floor for discussion of the proposed budget as introduced at last month's meeting. A motion was immediately made to approve the budget. It was approved unanimously.

Ed Lebeau's treasurer's report contained "good news and bad news." The good news is that we have "lots of money," but the bad news is we could have more. He announced that 60% of the membership still owe dues for this year. Librarian, Julie D'ablaing announced that Steven Williams' "Checklist of the Birds of the Upper Texas Coast" is now available in the library.

Bob invited discussion about bird sightings. Noted were a Blue Grosbeak at the Houston dam and a Couch's/Tropical Kingbird near the Coast Guard building at the ferry landing in Galveston. The bird responds to the taped call of the Couch's. Also mentioned was Dr. Marrack's capture of an ill Black Tern found on the Galveston Christmas count.

Program Chairperson, Gail Luckner, announced next month's speaker, Bill Goloby, who will present a program on the Purple Martin. Gail then introduced Ed Kutac, well-known as author of *Birder's Guide to Texas*. Ed took us on a slide journey across our state. The territories we travelled ranged from Rita Blanca National Grassland, to Palo Duro Canyon and the sand dunes of Monahans Sandhills State Park. Particularly fascinating in this park were the four foot high Harvard Oaks. Ed noted that these oaks are hundreds of years old and have acorns the size of silver dollars. Ed continued our tour through mountains, marshes and seashores, discovering the diverse wildlife and habitat in Texas. He also stressed an environmental message: public lands become parks and refuges because people thought they should be and worked to create them. **Christine Bourgeois, Secretary**

.....Approximately 15,000 ducks are wintering at Alligator Pond in the Hoskins Mound area of Brazoria National Refuge. Refuge manager Ron Bisbee, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will take birdwatching groups into this area not

usually open to the public, but only by appointment. You may call Ron at 1/409/849-7771 to find out about group size and to make the necessary arrangements. [See "Coming Events" for OG field trip in February to see the ducks.]

.....INFORMATION REQUESTED FOR RESEARCH PROJECT. If you have House Finches at your feeders this winter, or if you have had them in the past at any season, please contact Gail Diane Luckner at 713/328-6236.

.....OG Field Trip Report-West Harris/Maller County, January 11, 1992: Sparrows seek sunny perches on really cold mornings, and hawks ride the thermals in the sunshine. So how well could we do finding these birds on a merely cool and totally overcast day, with occasional showers? We did extremely well with David Bradford leading us to the right places. About 40 people saw lots of sparrows in the morning, including a cooperative flock of Harris' Sparrows and a lovely Le Conte's. About 20 of us who stayed all day saw a total of 12 sparrow species, even Rufous-sided Towhees.

Besides the plentiful Kestrels, Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers, we saw Red-shouldered, White-tailed and Ferruginous Hawks and even a Crested Caracara. Other notables among the trip total of 83 species were Black-bellied Plover, Ring-necked Duck and Ross' Goose.

My favorite sighting of the day, however, was at a Black-crowned Night-Heron rookery. With my scope I caught three of these dumpy, stodgy herons perched in a dead tree against the gray sky, and suddenly I saw that they were beautiful. Libby Price

NOEL'S NICHE LOOKING BACK

By Noel Pettingell
10 YEARS AGO/FROM JANUARY 1982 SPOONBILL

FREEPORT CBC TOPS 200 IN ALL-DAY RAIN, by Jim Morgan, co-compiler

On December 20, a day of almost continuous light to moderate rain, 204 species were tallied on the Freeport CBC. In addition to the rain, the count was hampered by winds that were often quite strong and gusty. In spite of the miserable birding conditions, a UTC record high number of 156 observers participated in this year's count. This is believed to be the most participants to ever participate in a CBC in Texas. It was through the efforts and perseverance of these observers that the count was able to do as well as it did under the poor weather conditions. Thanks to you all!!!

Even though the weather did not cooperate, and in spite of the dearth of wintering birds, there were some true highlights of the 1981 count, including the record number of participants. A new species was added to the count this year--Black-bellied Whistling Duck--and it was found in numbers, a whopping total of 125 individuals! With the expansion of this species up the Texas coast I would not be surprised to find these beautiful ducks becoming regular on the Freeport count. The two birding groups which really had outstanding days were the jetty observers and the "hummingbird patrol." The poor weather helped the jetty observations, as it always seems to, and they recorded 11 Gannets (plus four sulid sp.), all three scoters in numbers, Purple Sandpiper, Franklin's Gull, two Black-legged Kittiwakes, and a jaeger species. The team of five observers who made the rounds of hummingbird feeders in the count circle saw six species of these little jewel-like birds, a truly outstanding total under the conditions. It was interesting that the hummingbird variety was as good as last year, but the total number of individuals was below an average year.

ARTICLES

FREEPORT CBC TALLIES 219 SPECIES

By Jim Morgan
Freeport CBC Co-compiler

On Sunday, December 15, 1991, 156 observers recorded 145,670 individuals of 219 bird species on the 35th annual Houston Audubon Society-sponsored Freeport Christmas Bird Count (CBC). The species total was the fifth best ever for the count and it exceeded the average of the past fifteen years by six species.

Three new species were added to Freeport's cumulative count list: Glossy Ibis, Calliope Hummingbird and Brown-crested Flycatcher. The latter two species are not normally found on any CBC north of Mexico! I was able to photograph the flycatcher and its' diagnostic call note was frequently heard by the discovering party consisting of Bob Behrstock, Gretchen Mueller, and myself.

Other good sightings on this season's count included Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Bald Eagle (2), Purple Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper (36), Black-legged Kittiwake, six additional species of hummingbirds, Hairy Woodpecker (2), Least Flycatcher, Western Kingbird (4), Northern Rough-winged Swallow (4), Wood Thrush, Black-throated Green Warbler, Prairie Warbler, American Redstart (2), Ovenbird (2), Western Tanager, Clay-colored Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow (3), and Purple Finch (5). One of the Henslow's Sparrows was relocated on December 16, and photographed extensively by Kelly Bryan, Greg Lasley and myself.

In addition to the rarer sightings, notable high numbers for the Freeport CBC included White-tailed Hawk (11), Peregrine Falcon (5), Short-billed Dowitcher (2350), Forster's Tern (5103), Ash-throated Flycatcher (7), Marsh Wren (338) and Bronzed Cowbird (10).

Notable misses this season included Cinnamon Teal, Semi-palmated Plover (first time in over 20 years), Red Knot (fourth year in a row), Groove-billed Ani and Fox Sparrow, the latter two species now missed three of the last five years.

The success of the Freeport CBC, measured by the large number of participants and high species totals, can be attributed to the many people and organizations that support our efforts every year. The count's ten area leaders, the "hummingbird patrol," the jetty parties and participants who come not only from the greater Houston area but from around the state, all contribute to Freeport's success. Numerous landowners graciously allow access to their property on count day, and without their cooperation the Freeport CBC would be severely hampered.

Once again, three organizations deserve special mention in the success of the Freeport CBC. The Houston Audubon Society sponsors the count and helps with publicity. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service organizes the marsh buggy and airboat censuses on the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge, and staff biologist and Assistant Manager, Mike Lange, participates as an area leader. The Dow Chemical Company continues to host the countdown dinner as well as allowing access to many of their properties on count day, where considerable habitat is to be found.

I join my two co-compilers, Tom Collins and Victor Emanuel, in thanking all individuals and organizations that helped make this season's Freeport CBC a fun and successful count. If you are looking forward to participating next year, the count will be held on Sunday, December 20, 1992.

HOUSTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1991

By P. D. Hulce
Houston CBC Co-compiler

The 1991 Houston Christmas Bird Count endured 15 to 20 mile per hour north winds, overcast skies and temperatures in the 50's. Sixty-five enthusiastic observers slogged into the wet fields and parks of Baytown and recorded a total of 160 species of birds, totalling 73,146 individuals. For those keeping track, this was the 52nd consecutive Houston CBC, and the 58th count in all, since its beginning in 1913.

The bird of the count was the male Barrow's Goldeneye, first seen about 10 A.M., flying out of the count circle to the filtration pond at OxyChem, by plant employees Leon Lalonde and Buddy Hollis. It was located again at 11:45 P.M., in Burnet Bay, off of the San Jacinto River, by intrepid birder David Dauphin. This was the first record of Barrow's Goldeneye for any Christmas count in Texas.

Several other uncommon birds were spotted on the count, including House Finch, Summer Tanager, White-winged and Black Scoter, Ferruginous Hawk, Tree Swallow, Sprague's Pipit, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat and six Harris' Sparrows. Brown Pelicans were also sighted, for the fourth consecutive year. Birds that were expected but missed on the count included White and White-faced Ibis, Redhead, American Avocet, Semi-palmated Plover, Palm Warbler and Brown Creeper. Only one Golden-crowned Kinglet was reported, but White-fronted and Snow Geese each totalled over 10,000 individuals.

A major change in the Houston count occurred this year with the closing of the Wyatt's Cafeteria in Baytown. The count dinner was held instead at Luna's Mexican Restaurant, and everyone seemed to be satisfied with the food and accommodations. We would certainly welcome any suggestions concerning next year's count dinner.

Special thanks to all of our great area leaders. Their knowledge of the areas and ability to get the participants out in the field are paramount to the continuing success of the count. This year we welcomed two new area leaders to the Houston count. Paula Kennedy and Jo Reddin took over areas five and ten, and turned in several count exclusives, including Marsh Wren, Yellow-breasted Chat and Wilson's Warbler. Thanks to all of the participants and we hope to see all of you again next year.

CLEARING HOUSE

CLEARING HOUSE December, 1991

Editors: Phyllis and Tony Frank

A total of 236 species were reported in December, including 14 species of warblers and 7 species of hummingbirds. But perhaps the most famous bird was the Barrow's Goldeneye. Many observers reported different races of Dark-eyed Junco such as the "White-winged" and "Pink-sided". As a quick perusal of the CH will show, many interesting sights were reported this month. The Freeport CBC is included in the CH, but other area CBCs are not and will be published at a later date. Because of the length of this column, some of the writeup birds from the CBCs will be included with the later summary of the CBCs.

Many thanks to everyone who submitted reports. As always early reports will be appreciated, but they are due by February 3. 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. Please remember to submit notes on all those

good birds. And with all the reminders completed - on to the birds.

Loon, Common	1-15	2/6	BR-(5)15,FC; JE-PI(1)1,JJW
Grebe, Pied-bill	1-30	12/512	BR-2/420 CH-2/34 FB-2/40 HA-4/13 JE-2/5
Grebe, Eared	15-17	2/42	BR-(32)15,FC; BR-(10)17,X
Gannet, Northern	15-17	2/27	BR-(26)15,FC; BR-(1)17,X
Pelican, Amer Wht	1-30	11/1503	BR-2/818 CH-2/100 GA-2/165 HA-4/320 JE-1/100
Pelican, Brown	15-18	3/97	BR-2/72 GA-1/25
Corm, Dbl-crested	1-30	16/3928	BR-2/3113 CH-3/259 FB-2/105 GA-2/16 HA-4/377 JE-2/56 WA-1/2
Corm, Olivaceous	1-30	9/165	BR-1/25 CH-2/46 FB-1/2 GA-1/10 HA-3/54 JE-1/28
Anhinga	15-30	4/35	BR-2/32 CH-2/3
Bittern, American	15-18	3/6	BR-2/5 CH-1/1
Heron, Great Blue	1-29	16/484	BR-2/373 CH-2/40 CO-1/12 FB-2/9 GA-2/8 HA-5/30 JE-1/4 WA-1/8
Egret, Great	1-30	19/680	BR-2/460 CH-3/91 CO-1/3 FB-2/16 GA-3/14 HA-5/90 JE-2/5 WA-1/1
Egret, Snowy	1-30	14/502	BR-2/235 CH-3/63 FB-2/5 GA-1/102 HA-4/81 JE-2/16
Heron, Little Blu	1-30	9/63	BR-2/55 CH-2/2 GA-1/1 HA-3/4 JE-1/1
Heron, Tricolored	4-29	10/131	BR-2/116 CH-2/4 FB-1/1 GA-2/3 HA-3/7
Egret, Reddish	15-15	1/13	BR-(13)15,FC
Egret, Cattle	1-30	8/197	BR-1/79 CH-2/8 FB-1/75 GA-1/4 HA-3/31
Heron, Grn-backed	7-15	2/7	BR-(6)15,FC; FB-BB(1)7,HAFT
Nt-Heron, Blk-crn	4-29	6/345	BR-1/209 CH-1/62 HA-4/74
Nt-Heron, Yel-crn	15-15	1/24	BR-(24)15,FC
nt-heron sp.	7-7	1/1	FB-1/1
Ibis, White	7-29	4/1675	BR-2/1117 CH-1/358 FB-1/200
Ibis, Glossy	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Ibis, White-faced	7-29	7/411	BR-2/287 CH-1/77 FB-2/16 GA-1/11 JE-1/20
ibis, sp.	15-15	1/1000	BR-1/1000
Spoonbill, Roseat	4-29	6/172	BR-1/133 CH-1/31 GA-1/2 HA-3/6
Whsl-Duck, Fulvs	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Whsl-Duck, Blk-bd	7-7	1/300	FB-BB(300)7,HAFT
<u>Swan, Tundra</u>	1-30	4/3	CH-(1)1-30,GL; FB-DE(2)7,HAFT; FB-(1)22,GBL
Goose, Gr Wht-frn	1-29	9/5846	BR-1/1255 CH-2/232 CO-1/50 FB-2/629 HA-3/3680
Goose, Snow	1-30	16/53833	BR-2/23630 CH-3/12477 CO-1/400 FB-2/2230 GA-1/525 HA-5/14560 JE-2/11
Goose, Ross'	15-30	4/11	BR-(5)15,FC; CH-(2)18,JW; CH-(1)30,GL; CO-(3)18,X
Goose, Canada	7-29	6/3778	BR-1/2390 CH-1/151 CO-1/20 FB-2/1209 WA-1/8
Duck, Wood	15-29	2/80	BR-(76)15,FC; CH-(4)29,GL
Teal, Green-wing	1-22	10/1434	BR-1/519 CH-1/570 FB-2/7 GA-1/15 HA-4/322 JE-1/1
Duck, Mottled	1-29	10/73	BR-1/5 CH-2/24 GA-1/6 HA-5/32 JE-1/6
Mallard	14-22	5/85	BR-1/50 CH-1/7 CO-1/2 FB-1/17 HA-1/9
Pintail, Northern	7-22	5/1641	BR-1/1497 FB-1/30 HA-2/28 WA-1/86
Teal, Blue-winged	7-18	5/296	BR-2/250 CH-1/12 FB-1/30 HA-1/4
Shoveler, Northrn	1-30	10/1921	BR-2/886 CH-2/756 FB-1/4 GA-1/4 HA-3/21 JE-1/250
Gadwall	1-29	10/2250	BR-2/1992 CH-2/67 FB-1/83 HA-4/58 JE-1/50
Wigeon, American	1-30	8/262	BR-1/97 CH-2/53 CO-1/8 FB-2/59 HA-1/20 JE-1/25
Canvasback	1-30	4/5264	CH-1/8 FB-2/256 JE-1/5000
Redhead	4-15	2/11	BR-(9)15,FC; HA-(2)4,GL
Duck, Ring-necked	4-15	5/515	BR-1/419 FB-1/70 HA-3/26
Scaup, Greater	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Scaup, Lesser	4-30	6/632	BR-1/189 CH-1/19 HA-4/424
scaup, sp.	7-15	2/41	BR-1/40 FB-1/1

Scoter, Black	15-15	1/80	BR-(80)15,FC
Scoter, Surf	15-15	1/2	BR-(2)15,FC
Scoter, Wht-winged	15-15	1/15	BR-(15)15,FC
Goldeneye, Common	10-30	5/16	BR-2/8 CH-1/1 HA-2/7
Goldeneye, Barrow	4-15	4/1	HA-(1)GL,MA,X,JW
Bufflehead	1-30	5/188	BR-1/121 CH-2/55 FB-1/2 JE-1/10
Merganser, Hooded	4-18	5/116	BR-1/36 CO-1/8 HA-3/72
Merganser, Red-br	14-29	4/141	BR-1/94 CH-1/6 GA-1/40 HA-1/1
Duck, Ruddy	1-30	8/492	BR-1/290 CH-1/93 FB-2/25 HA-3/34 JE-1/50
duck, sp.	15-15	1/5	BR-1/5
Vulture, Black	1-30	8/735	BR-1/694 CH-2/29 CO-1/2 HA-3/8 WA-1/2
Vulture, Turkey	4-30	10/736	BR-1/597 CH-3/67 CO-1/4 FB-2/45 HA-2/9 WA-1/14
Osprey	4-29	7/38	BR-1/26 CH-1/3 HA-4/8 JE-1/1
Kite, Blk-shouldr	1-18	5/67	BR-2/60 CH-1/1 GA-1/4 JE-1/2
Eagle, Bald	15-22	3/5	BR-(2)15,FC; CO-(2)18,X; FB-(1)22,GBL
Harrier, Northern	1-30	15/254	BR-2/186 CH-3/10 CO-1/6 FB-2/21 GA-2/3 HA-3/17 JE-1/5 WA-1/6
Hawk, Sharp-shin	9-30	6/19	BR-1/14 CH-3/3 HA-2/2
Hawk, Cooper's	6-22	8/23	BR-1/15 CO-1/2 FB-2/2 HA-4/4
accipiter, sp.	15-15	1/1	BR-1/1
Hawk, Red-shouldr	7-30	5/159	BR-2/152 CH-1/2 CO-1/3 FB-1/2
Hawk, White-tailed	15-22	3/14	BR-1/11 FB-1/1 WA-1/2
Hawk, Red-tailed	1-30	16/391	BR-2/230 CH-3/47 CO-1/5 FB-2/18 GA-1/6 HA-5/61 JE-1/2 WA-1/22
(Hawk, Harlan's)	1-15	3/3	BR-(1)15,FC; HA-WHC(1)1,BBT; HA-WHC(1)9,BBT
Hawk, Ferruginous	18-22	3/4	CH-(1)22,W; CO-(2)18,X; FB-(1)22,GBL
Caracara, Crested	9-22	4/8	BR-1/4 CO-1/2 FB-1/1 HA-1/1
Kestrel, American	1-30	21/510	BR-2/345 CH-3/29 CO-1/15 FB-2/38 GA-3/13 HA-7/49 JE-2/9 WA-1/12
Merlin	4-29	3/9	BR-(7)15,FC; CH-(1)29,GL; HA-(1)4,GL
Falcon, Peregrine	4-29	5/10	BR-(5)15,FC; CH-(1)29,GL; HA-(1)4,GL; HA-SJ(1)6,X; HA-(2)14,X
Bobwhite, Northern	18-22	3/75	CO-1/35 HA-1/22 WA-1/18
Rail, Clapper	14-17	3/53	BR-2/51 HA-1/2
Rail, King	15-15	1/3	BR-(3)15,FC
Rail, Virginia	15-15	1/5	BR-(5)15,FC
Sora	15-30	2/7	BR-(3)15,FC; CH-(4)30,GL
Moorhen, Common	7-30	5/914	BR-2/678 CH-2/216 FB-1/20
Coot, American	1-22	8/4212	BR-2/4092 CH-1/50 FB-1/25 HA-3/35 JE-1/10
Crane, Sandhill	7-22	5/992	BR-2/932 FB-2/24 WA-1/36
Plover, Blk-belli	4-29	7/299	BR-2/261 CH-1/28 GA-1/5 HA-3/5
Plover, Snowy	15-17	2/13	BR-(11)15,FC; BR-(2)17,X
Plover, Semipalm	6-29	3/139	CH-1/125 GA-1/4 HA-1/10
Plover, Piping	15-18	3/34	BR-2/31 GA-1/3
Killdeer	1-30	18/1012	BR-2/439 CH-3/12 CO-1/150 FB-2/181 GA-2/10 HA-6/107 JE-1/10 WA-1/103
Oystercatcher, Am	15-15	1/3	BR-(3)15,FC
Stilt, Black-neck	1-18	5/93	BR-1/22 GA-1/65 HA-1/2 JE-2/4
Avocet, American	15-17	2/496	BR-(246)15,FC; BR-(250)17,X
Yellowlegs, Great	14-29	8/245	BR-2/154 CH-2/7 CO-1/1 FB-1/30 GA-1/50 HA-1/3
Yellowlegs, Less	4-22	6/266	BR-2/258 CO-1/1 FB-1/2 HA-2/5
Sandpdr, Solitary	25-25	1/1	FB-(1)25,LW
Willet	1-29	7/260	BR-2/190 CH-1/16 GA-1/50 HA-2/3 JE-1/1
Sandpdr, Spotted	1-29	5/23	BR-1/15 CH-1/2 HA-2/4 JE-1/2
Curlew, Long-bill	15-29	7/389	BR-2/336 CH-2/21 FB-1/30 GA-1/1 WA-1/1
Godwit, Marbled	15-18	2/9	BR-(5)15,FC; GA-(4)18,JW
Turnstone, Ruddy	15-17	2/141	BR-(135)15,FC; BR-(6)17,X
Sanderling	14-18	4/637	BR-2/327 GA-1/300 HA-1/10
Sandpdr, Western	4-29	6/1652	BR-2/856 CH-1/267 GA-1/500 HA-2/29
Sandpdr, Least	4-15	3/169	BR-1/159 HA-2/10
Sandpdr, Pectoral	1-1	1/1	JE-PI(1)1,JJW
Sandpdr, Purple	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Dunlin	15-29	4/518	BR-2/416 CH-1/2 GA-1/100
peep, sp.	15-15	1/401	BR-1/401
Sandpdr, Stilt	15-15	1/36	BR-(36)15,FC
Dowitcher, S-bill	15-18	2/2850	BR-(2350)15,FC; GA-(500)18,JW
Dowitcher, L-bill	14-18	3/167	BR-1/51 CH-1/100 HA-1/16
dowitcher, sp.	15-29	2/482	BR-1/307 CH-1/175
Snipe, Common	4-29	5/88	BR-2/67 CH-1/6 HA-1/1 WA-1/14
Woodcock, Amer	15-15	1/9	BR-(9)15,FC
Jaeger, Parasitic	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Gull, Laughing	1-29	9/18165	BR-2/16695 CH-1/75 GA-2/150 HA-3/1235 JE-1/10
Gull, Bonaparte's	15-29	2/496	BR-(480)15,FC; CH-(16)29,GL
Gull, Ring-billed	1-30	11/3458	BR-2/2939 CH-3/117 GA-1/25 HA-3/356 JE-2/21
Gull, Herring	14-30	6/160	BR-2/134 CH-2/4 GA-1/10 HA-1/12
Kitiwake, Blk-leg	15-22	2/2	BR-(1)15,FC; GA-(1)22,AA
Tern, Gull-billed	15-18	3/24	BR-2/21 GA-1/3
Tern, Caspian	1-29	9/93	BR-2/55 CH-1/4 FB-1/8 GA-1/2 HA-3/19 JE-1/5
Tern, Royal	1-29	6/33	BR-1/10 CH-1/2 GA-1/10 HA-2/10 JE-1/1
Tern, Sandwich	15-15	1/5	BR-(5)15,FC
Tern, Common	15-17	2/18	BR-(17)15,FC; BR-(1)17,X
Tern, Forster's	1-29	8/5333	BR-2/5143 CH-1/44 GA-1/50 HA-3/86 JE-1/10
Skimmer, Black	15-18	3/129	BR-2/29 GA-1/100
Dove, Rock	1-27	11/610	BR-2/533 CO-1/10 FB-1/1 GA-1/20 HA-4/42 JE-2/4
Dove, White-winged	18-30	2/3	CH-(1)30,GL; CO-(2)18,X
Dove, Mourning	1-30	19/1398	BR-2/973 CH-3/6 CO-1/65 FB-2/157 GA-1/2 HA-8/117 JE-1/10 WA-1/68
Dove, Inca	15-22	3/36	BR-2/34 FB-1/2
Ground-Dove, Comm	15-18	2/37	BR-(12)15,FC; CO-(25)18,X
Owl, Barn	14-22	3/7	BR-1/5 FB-1/1 HA-1/1
Screech-Owl, East	15-15	1/2	BR-(2)15,FC
Owl, Great Horned	6-15	3/13	BR-1/11 FB-1/1 HA-1/1
Owl, Barred	7-30	4/36	BR-1/28 CH-1/1 CO-1/1 FB-1/6
Owl, Short-eared	15-15	1/3	BR-(3)15,FC
caprimulgus sp.	22-22	1/1	CH-1/1
Hummer, Buf-belly	15-15	1/2	BR-(2)15,FC
Hummer, Ruby-thrt	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Hummer, Blk-chind	6-31	2/2	BR-(1)15,FC; HA-(1)6-31,X
Hummer, Anna's	1-31	2/2	BR-(1)15,FC; HA-(1)1-31,MBM
Hummer, Caliope	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Hummer, Brd-tailed	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Hummer, Rufous	15-15	1/2	BR-(2)15,FC
Kingfisher, Beltd	1-30	13/142	BR-2/116 CH-3/12 CO-1/1 FB-1/1 GA-1/2 HA-3/5 JE-2/5
Wdpeckr, Red-head	15-15	1/3	BR-(3)15,FC
Wdpeckr, Red-bell	1-30	10/268	BR-1/241 CH-2/12 CO-1/2 FB-2/7 HA-3/4 WA-1/2
Sapsuck, Yel-bell	1-30	10/221	BR-1/204 CH-2/5 CO-1/1 FB-2/3 HA-4/8
Wdpeckr, Lddr-bck	22-22	1/2	WA-(2)22,BBT
Wdpeckr, Downy	1-29	7/95	BR-2/85 CH-1/3 CO-1/1 FB-1/4 HA-2/2
Wdpeckr, Hairy	15-15	1/2	BR-(2)15,FC
Flicker, Northern	4-30	10/148	BR-1/118 CH-2/5 CO-1/8 FB-1/1 GA-1/2 HA-4/14
Wdpeckr, Pileated	15-30	6/57	BR-2/51 CH-2/3 CO-1/2 FB-1/1
Flycatchr, Least	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
empidonax, sp.	15-15	1/4	BR-1/4
Phoebe, Eastern	1-30	16/689	BR-2/597 CH-3/20 CO-1/15 FB-2/10 GA-1/8 HA-6/30 WA-1/9
Flycatchr, Vermiln	15-15	1/4	BR-(4)15,FC
Flycatchr, Ash-thr	15-15	1/7	BR-(7)15,FC
Flycatchr, Brn-crs	15-15	1/1	BR-(1)15,FC
Kingbird, Couch's	30-30	1/1	CH-(1)30,GL
Kingbird, Western	15-15	1/4	BR-(4)15,FC
Flycatchr, Ss-tail	18-18	1/1	CO-(1)18,X
Lark, Horned	15-17	2/32	BR-(26)15,FC; BR-(6)17,X
Swallow, Tree	15-30	3/18	BR-1/6 CH-2/12
Swallow, N R-wing	15-15	1/4	BR-(4)15,FC
Jay, Blue	1-30	14/149	BR-1/84 CH-2/5 CO-1/7 FB-1/2 GA-2/5 HA-6/37 WA-1/9

Crow, American 1-30 14/1566 BR-2/1146 CH-2/16
CO-1/18 FB-2/338 HA-6/30 WA-1/18

Chickadee, Carol 1-30 8/1006 BR-2/963 CH-2/28 CO-1/4
FB-1/5 HA-2/6

Titmouse, Tufted 1-30 6/452 BR-1/428 CH-2/3 CO-1/8
FB-1/10 HA-1/3

Creep, Brown 15-15 1/11 BR-(11)15,FC
Wren, Carolina 1-30 8/247 BR-2/228 CH-2/9 CO-1/3
FB-1/5 HA-2/2

Wren, House 7-30 9/166 BR-2/155 CH-2/3 CO-1/1
FB-1/3 HA-3/4

Wren, Winter 15-30 2/13 BR-(10)15,FC; CH-(3)30,GL
Wren, Sedge 9-30 5/482 BR-2/477 CH-1/3 HA-2/2
Wren, Marsh 15-17 2/340 BR-2/340

Kinglet, Gold-crn 15-18 2/16 BR-(13)15,FC; GA-HI(3)18,JW
Kinglet, Ruby-crn 1-30 13/1334 BR-2/1225 CH-2/23 CO-1/20
FB-1/12 GA-1/16 HA-5/34 WA-1/4

Gnatcatch, Blu-gra 7-30 8/503 BR-2/460 CH-2/20 FB-1/15
GA-1/6 HA-2/2

Bluebird, Eastern 1-30 7/468 BR-2/372 CH-2/26 CO-1/65
HA-1/2 WA-1/3

Thrush, Hermit 7-30 7/279 BR-2/266 CH-2/2 CO-1/4
FB-1/1 HA-1/6

Thrush, Wood 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Robin, American 1-30 12/7896 BR-2/3537 CH-2/19
CO-1/4000 FB-1/50 HA-5/288 WA-1/2

Catbird, Gray 15-15 1/32 BR-(32)15,FC
Mockingbird, N 1-30 18/685 BR-2/550 CH-3/9 CO-1/35
FB-1/7 GA-2/3 HA-7/62 JE-1/2 WA-1/17

Thrasher, Brown 4-30 8/168 BR-2/156 CH-1/3 CO-1/2
GA-1/3 HA-3/4

Pipit, American 7-30 7/206 BR-2/170 CH-2/11 FB-2/8
WA-1/17

Pipit, Sprague's 15-22 2/19 BR-(18)15,FC; FB-(1)22,GBL
Waxwing, Cedar 15-29 3/418 BR-1/200 CH-1/18 CO-1/200
Shrike, Loggerhed 1-30 20/521 BR-2/338 CH-3/29 CO-1/6
FB-2/40 GA-3/8 HA-6/63 JE-2/11 WA-1/26

Starling, Euro 1-27 14/4996 BR-2/2442 CO-1/150 FB-2/1550
GA-1/200 HA-6/626 JE-1/25 WA-1/3

Vireo, White-eyed 15-15 1/15 BR-(15)15,FC
Vireo, Solitary 7-29 6/177 BR-1/161 CH-1/11 CO-1/2
FB-1/1 GA-1/1 HA-1/1

Vireo, Yell-thrtd 22-22 1/1 CH-(1)22,W
Warb, Orange-crn 6-30 10/592 BR-2/556 CH-2/15 CO-1/5
FB-1/6 GA-1/1 HA-3/9

Warb, Nashville 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Warb, Yellow-rump 1-30 15/3104 BR-2/2514 CH-2/158 CO-1/100
FB-2/61 GA-1/100 HA-6/84 WA-1/87

Warb, Blk-thr Grn 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Warb, Yel-throat 29-29 1/11 CH-(11)29,GL
Warb, Pine 15-30 4/70 BR-1/43 CH-2/26 WA-1/1

Warb, Prairie 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Warb, Palm 15-29 2/4 BR-(2)15,FC; CH-(2)29,GL
Warb, Blk-and-wht 15-18 2/15 BR-(14)15,FC; GA-HI(1)18,JW
Redstart, Amer 15-18 2/3 BR-(2)15,FC; GA-HI(1)18,JW
Ovenbird 15-15 1/2 BR-(2)15,FC
Waterthrush, N 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Yellowthroat, Com 7-29 5/165 BR-2/154 CH-1/1 FB-1/8 HA-1/2
Warb, Wilson's 15-15 1/38 BR-(38)15,FC
Tanager, Western 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Cardinal, Northrn 1-30 16/1048 BR-2/892 CH-2/12 CO-1/75
FB-2/23 GA-1/6 HA-7/31 WA-1/9

Grosbeak, Ros-brs 1-2 1/1 HA-(1)1-2,GL
Bunting, Indigo 15-15 1/5 BR-(5)15,FC
Towhee, Rfus-side 15-15 1/16 BR-(16)15,FC
Sparrow, Chipping 15-30 4/395 BR-1/59 CH-1/14 CO-1/300
WA-1/22

Sparrow, Clay-col 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
Sparrow, Field 4-30 4/21 CH-1/1 CO-1/12 HA-1/2 WA-1/6
Sparrow, Vesper 1-22 6/212 CO-1/150 FB-1/2 HA-3/37
WA-1/23

Sparrow, Savannah 1-30 15/2201 BR-2/1552 CH-3/82 CO-1/100
FB-2/47 HA-5/349 JE-1/5 WA-1/66

Sparrow, Grasshop 14-15 2/7 BR-(6)15,FC; HA-(1)14,X
Sparrow, Henslows 15-15 1/3 BR-(3)15,FC
Sparrow, Le Conte 9-15 2/153 BR-(150)15,FC; HA-WHC(3)9,BBT

Sparrow, Shp-tail 15-15 1/11 BR-(11)15,FC
Sparrow, Seaside 15-17 2/184 BR-(183)15,FC; BR-(1)17,X
Sparrow, Fox 18-18 1/6 CO-(6)18,X
Sparrow, Song 1-30 7/99 BR-1/80 CH-1/2 CO-1/2
FB-1/4 HA-3/11

Sparrow, Lincolns 1-30 8/225 BR-2/210 CH-1/1 CO-1/4
FB-1/1 HA-3/9

Sparrow, Swamp 1-30 9/534 BR-2/509 CH-2/11 CO-1/3
FB-1/2 HA-2/8 JE-1/1

Sparrow, Wht-thrt 1-30 11/745 BR-2/548 CH-2/17 CO-1/65
GA-1/4 HA-4/49 WA-1/62

Sparrow, Wht-crn 9-22 5/145 BR-1/16 CO-1/50 FB-1/16
HA-1/21 WA-1/42

Sparrow, Harris' 14-22 4/62 BR-1/2 CO-1/50 HA-1/3 WA-1/7
Junco, Dark-eyed 1-18 5/79 BR-1/56 CO-1/4 HA-3/19
Longspur, Lapland 22-22 1/46 WA-(46)22,BBT
Blackbird, Red-wg 1-30 13/19816 BR-2/4658 CH-2/428 CO-1/500
FB-1/3000 HA-5/10785 JE-1/25 WA-1/420

Meadowlark, East 1-29 12/1403 BR-2/638 CH-2/10
CO-1/200 FB-2/83 HA-4/128 WA-1/344

Meadowlark, West 22-22 1/1 FB-(1)22,GBL
meadowlark, sp. 15-15 1/310 BR-1/310
Blackbird, Brewer 9-15 2/321 BR-1/313 HA-1/8
Grackle, Gr-tail 1-29 13/3479 BR-2/2766 CH-1/130 FB-2/370
GA-2/50 HA-3/56 JE-2/101 WA-1/6

Grackle, Bt-tail 15-17 2/340 BR-(220)15,FC; BR-(120)17,X
Grackle, Common 1-30 12/22945 BR-2/19453 CH-1/17
CO-1/200 FB-2/2030 HA-6/1245

Cowbird, Bronzed 15-15 1/10 BR-(10)15,FC
Cowbird, Brn-head 1-30 8/6430 BR-1/4990 CH-2/36
CO-1/150 FB-1/700 HA-3/554

blackbird, sp. 7-15 2/103690 BR-1/3690 FB-1/100000
Oriole, Northern 15-15 1/1 BR-(1)15,FC
(Oriole, Bullock) 15-15 1/2 BR-(2)15,FC
Finch, Purple 15-15 1/5 BR-(5)15,FC
Finch, House 21-30 2/17 CH-(2)30,GL; HA-(15)21-30,GL
Goldfinch, Amer 1-30 8/1157 BR-2/985 CH-2/90 CO-1/50
FB-1/10 HA-2/22

Sparrow, House 1-27 8/350 BR-2/233 CO-1/17 GA-1/6
HA-4/94

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS: 335491

LIST OF OBSERVER CODES: Mike Austin, Steve Gast, Robert Perez(AA); Bill & Bryan Tarbox(BBT); Freeport CBC(FC); Gail & Bob Luckner(GBL); Gail Luckner(GL); Houston Arboretum FT/Julia Ricketts, Bob Honig(HAFT); John & Jana Whittle(JJW); Julia Ricketts, Carole Huelbig(JRH); John Whittle(JW); Jan & Will Risser(JWR); Lettlow, Chris, & Garth Wittington(LW); Mike Austin(MA); Mary Ann & Bob Moore(MBM); ML & Ellen Owens(MO); John Whittle, Keith Hansen, Bob Madrulli(W); P. D. Hulce and others(X)

LIST OF LOCATION CODES: Anahauc NWR(AW); Brazos Bend St. Park(BB); Davis Estates Rd.(DE); Galveston Island St. Park(GI); Houston Arboretum(HA); High Island(HI); Pleasure Island(PI); San Jacinto Monument St. Park(SJ); West Harris Co.(WHC)

LIST OF COUNTY CODES: Brazoria(BR); Chambers(CH); Colorado(CO); Fort Bend(FB); Galveston(GA); Harris(HA); Jefferson(JE); Waller(WA); Upper Texas Coast (UTC)

Glossy Ibis - P.D. Hulce December 15, 1991

Metallic green and maroon body. Brown head with fine streaks. Brown eye, concolor with the head. Gray-blue facial skin had a thin gray-blue line at the top and bottom that did not extend over, under, or around the eye. Top line was slightly thicker in center and curved slightly down. Bottom line also varied slightly in thickness. These lines were not feathers, but bare facial skin. Observed from 50 feet with 10X40 binoculars in fair to good light.

Tundra Swan - Julia Ricketts December 7, 1991

Two birds at Davis Estates Rd. Seen for about 10 minutes by everybody in group at around 1:30 PM. The birds

were large with white bodies and a long neck with a grayish wash. The necks were held straight up (not curved as in Mute Swan) and the bill was dark.

Gail Luckner also reported this bird on December 22, 1991. A large, heavy-bodied, long-necked water bird, nearly twice the size of Greater White-fronted Goose. Patchy white and light grayish-brown overall with darker gray-brown head and neck. Rounded head; dull pink bill, slightly concave; base of upper mandible black. At rest, the bird held its neck straight with no kink or curve. Legs and feet were not seen. Head and bill shape eliminate Trumpeter Swan; pink bill and posture eliminate Mute Swan. Gail also reported the Tundra Swan at the location described in the November Clearing House (Chambers county).

Barrow's Goldeneye - Mike Austin December 4, 1991

One breeding plumaged male located in the settling pond at south west corner of OxyChem plant at Battleground and Park RD 1836 (Harris county). Cloudless crisp winter day. Duck was sidelit and fully lit on water, circled directly overhead in full light three times. Bird was observed for about 20 minutes from 20 to 30 yards with 10X40 binoculars and 50X Questar scope. Bird was a heavy, strikingly patterned black-and-white diving duck. The head was rounded with very steep, almost vertical forehead. Yellow eye. Purple gloss to head at certain light angles. Crescentic white spot at base of bill. Bill smallish for a duck and all dark. Culmen sloped, gonys straight. The back was black with row of white spots on scapulars. Retrices were black. Tail was rounded but individual feathers were sharply pointed, visible as duck dove. Wings when folded were black. In flight: Above black with large white speculum clearly divided by wide horizontal dark bar. Below: Dusky, contrasting with white underparts. Secondaries white. The underparts were immaculate white except dark spur just below bend in folded wing and thin horizontal dark bar across vent in flight. Feet bright orange. Head shape, gloss, crescentic spot on face, distinctly spotted scapulars and speculum shape would all eliminate Common Goldeneye. Extensive experience with species in British Columbia.

CH Editors note. This bird was also documented by P. and T. Frank, G. D. Luckner on 12/04/91, P.D. Hulce on 12/06/91, J. Whittle on 12/10/91. Because of the length of this month's CH, these reports will not be published in their entirety. However, these reports also document the head shape with the steep forehead, the purple gloss on the head, white spotted scapulars, and the crescent shaped white spot near the base of the bill. Even though these reports are not published in their entirety, the submitters are thanked for adding to the documentation of this rarity. If accepted by the TBRC, this record will be the second Texas record of this species.

Solitary Sandpiper - Lettalou Wittington, et. at December 25, 1991. Observed at 1:45 pm for 5 to 7 minutes from about 35 feet using 10X40 binoculars. Bird was in grass on the bank of a pond on the Greatwood golf course (Fort Bend county). The bird was smaller than Lesser Yellowlegs with somewhat shorter legs which were khaki green. Back and wings were very dark brown with faint lighter flecks. The wings were longer than the tail with almost black line under or on primaries. White bars on tail. Crown was dark shading to lighter streaking on the neck and upper breast but white under chin. Breast pure white. Bill thin and straight. Prominent white eye ring. Dark line from eye to bill. It was walking, eating and bobbing tail. Did not see fly.

Pectoral Sandpiper - J. and J. Whittle December 1, 1991

Observed at 11:15 for approximately 1 minute at impounded lake near Pleasure Island (Jefferson county). Observed from 15 yards with 10X50 binoculars. Bird was on flat, muddy area of shore inside the levee and was noticed as it flew ahead of us to the rocky shoreline. Bird briefly explored the rocky area, then flew to a mud island. Bird departed to southwest, low over the water, with a zig-zag

flight. Bird was a typical *Calidris* sandpiper, one of the larger of the genus, perhaps a little larger than a typical Dunlin or Sanderling and somewhat slimmer in stature than the latter. However, no other birds were nearby for direct comparison. The wingtips came exactly to the tip of the tail. The upperparts were grayish brown, more gray than brown, with lighter almost white, feather edgings on the back (especially the scapulars). The face and neck were finely streaked brownish-gray, extending down from the throat and covering most of the breast, with a sharp demarcation with the all white belly. When flying, there was only the slightest hint of a light wing stripe on the uniformly dark upper wing. When flying, the upper tail was seen to have a bold, sharply defined black streak extending through the rump and tail, contrasting sharply with the white margins of the rump and lighter margins of the tail. The bill appeared uniformly dark--not jet black--along its length, and was approximately as long as the distance from the nape to the base of the bill. The legs appeared brownish, but gave indications of a dull orange at some times. Given the habitat the legs may have been muddy. The black stripe down the rump and tail eliminates all but certain members of the *Calidris* family. The overall size eliminates the smaller peeps. The lack of wings extending beyond the tail eliminates Baird's Sandpiper. Bill length and shape eliminate Dunlin. The streaked side of the face eliminates Purple Sandpiper. Most references show this bird to have a yellowish basal portion to the bill and yellowish legs. Hayman, Marchant and Prater, say these parts may have brownish tones.

Black-legged Kittiwake - Michael Austin December 22, 1991

One first winter bird observed 0.5 to 1.5 miles SSE (offshore) from Rollover Pass (Galveston county) for about 1 hour. Light conditions were excellent. Observed from 2 to 25 yards with 10X40 binoculars. Small gull with striking blackish nape and strong "M" pattern on upper wing in flight. Bill black. Upper mandible straight for 2/3 of its length, then gently decurved. Gonydeal angle not pronounced about 3/4 of the way to tip. Crown round and white. Eye dark with rim of dark feathering forming narrow spectacle. Post-ocular smudge on ear coverts longer and more irregular in outline than Bonaparte's. Face white. Nape with broad brownish-black bar with irregular margins. Gape yellow. Mantle was pale gray. Folded wing: Scapulars gray, concolor with back. Coverts with wide horizontal brownish black bar with irregular margins. Primaries grayish black. Long, pointed, extending well beyond tail. Each narrowly edged with gray. Tertiaries: gray centers with wide even white edges. In flight: Striking "M" pattern on upper wing formed by black outermost primaries extending inward narrowly to carpal joint, then medially, bisecting gray secondary coverts with dark, wide stripe with irregular borders. Wide white triangle on inner wing formed by inner primaries, primary coverts and secondaries. Particularly striking when bird plunged head into water to snare bait shrimp we were tossing to it while hovering with extended, backlit wings. Underparts were white and unstreaked. Feet gray with flesh tones. Tail was white with neat, broad, black terminal band. Nuchal collar, lack of white in outer primaries, white inner primaries and secondaries, leg color rule out Bonaparte's Gull. Extensive experience with species.

Anna's Hummingbird - Mary Ann and Bob Moore December 1-31,

1991. One sub-adult female seen daily at our feeder throughout the month. Observed many times with 9X36 binoculars at 15 feet. Also photographed many times. Back was metallic bronzy-green; wings were dark; no rufous was in tail; throat and underparts were gray with numerous dark spots. Spots along the side show metallic green. Spots on throat somewhat clustered in center. No red flecks apparent either visually or in photos. Forehead was dull grayish brown. Tail green with three outer retrices tipped with white although the white is barely visible on the third retrix. Outer three retrices sub-terminally black, fourth

retrix terminally black. Feeds with tail generally parallel to body with little tail flicking.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker - Bill Tarbox December 22, 1991

Male and female observed in Waller county for over an hour from as close as 25 to 30 feet. The male had red crown reaching to back of neck with black and white spotting at front with brown feathers at base of bill. Black and white uniform barring across back with black tail trimmed in white. Face white with 2 black lines through eye and along cheek forming "G" figure. White throat, breast and belly with faint hint of tan on side and spotting along sides. Female same as male except red crown replaced by solid black from cere area across crown and down back of neck.

Couch's/Tropical Kingbird - Gail Diane Luckner December 30, 1991. A large Tyrannus flycatcher was sighted at 10:20 am in Chambers county. The bird was observed intermittently over about a two-hour period in very good light with 10X42 binoculars and 30X scope from 50-350 feet. The bird was seen perched, in flight, and feeding (flycatching), both alone and in the company of Jon Dunn, et al. Medium gray head and nape; dark gray auriculars and lores; black eye. Occasionally raised a slight crest. Large, thick, black bill, slightly shorter than length of head. The bill appeared broad at the base when viewed both from below and from the side and had a rounded tip with a very small hook. White throat; deep yellow breast, belly, and undertail coverts. Breast very lightly washed with olive. Back deep, bright olive. The rump was not seen clearly. Dark gray-brown upper tail coverts; tail dark gray-brown both above and below and slightly notched. Wings dark gray-brown. Legs and feet brownish black. Call tapes were played twice of both Tropical and Couch's Kingbird. Although the bird did not vocalize, it showed great interest in the Couch's call. The bird showed little interest in the Tropical call. Bright olive back, bill size and shape and response to tapes indicate Couch's Kingbird. Since the bird did not vocalize, must call Couch's/Tropical Kingbird.

Yellow-throated Vireo - John Whittle December 22, 1991

Observed in Chambers county in good light with 7X35 and 10X50 binoculars. Typical vireo shape, with prominent thick bill. Wings brownish with two very prominent wing bars. Crown, neck and upper back grayish or grayish-brown; bold yellow spectacles around eye, continuing on either side of dark eye-line from eye to bill. Eye clearly seen to be all dark. Throat, breast and sides uniformly a clear strong yellow, giving way to white aft belly, flanks and undertail coverts. No streaks or traces of streaks on the side, throat or belly.

American Redstart - John Whittle December 18, 1991

Observed in Smith Woods at High Island at 11:30 AM for about 2 minutes. The light conditions were fair and the bird was observed at a distance of 10 to 25 feet with 7X35 binoculars. Typical warbler size and shape, approximately the same size as the smaller of the Yellow-rumped Warblers also present; larger than a nearby Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, larger than nearby Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets. Gray head and back with thin white eye ring and thin white eyeline, somewhat browner wings with prominent yellow patches, forming a band across the base of the primaries and outer secondaries. Tail same color as wings, with yellow patches on basal half of outer three or four tail feathers on each side. Underside appeared white, except for a yellowish-orange patch on the side from the shoulder to where the base of the primaries were when the bird was perched. The color of this patch was distinctly more orange than the wing and tail patches. The bill was short, thin, sharp and dark in color. The legs appeared dark. The wing and tail patches and the tail fanning eliminate all other North American warblers.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Gail Luckner December 1-2, 1991

An immature male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen at

a ground feeder among Inca Doves, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, and Northern Cardinals. Observed intermittently over a two-day period in good light with 10X42 binoculars and TSN-2 scope at 30X wide angle from 50 feet. Recognized immediately as a grosbeak because of very large size and large conical bill. Boldly patterned, dark brown head and tan nape streaked with grayish brown. Thin, whitish crown stripe streaked with dark brown; wide, white supercilium. Black eye; thin, short, black eyeline; brown lores. Grayish brown upper mandible; pinkish-brown lower mandible. Wide, white malar streak beginning under the eye, extending to the base of the bill, then extending to, but not across, back of the nape. Whitish throat and breast, both lightly and finely streaked with brown. Center of the breast washed with light pink. White belly; tan flanks, lightly streaked with brown. White undertail coverts. Underside of tail appeared brown and unmarked. Tail spots were not observed. Dark brown back heavily streaked with buff. Whitish rump, finely barred with brown. Uppertail coverts and upper side of tail dark brown and appeared unmarked. Dark brown scapulars; brown lesser wing coverts; brown median wing coverts with white bar; black greater wing coverts with white bar. Brown primaries with white wing patch located just below brown primary coverts; unmarked brown secondaries; black tertials tipped with white. While the bird fed on a weed stalk, briefly flashed its wings. The undersides were seen as gray-brown with rosy pink linings; rosy pink auxiliaries were occasionally visible as spots at the sides of the breast when the bird was at rest. The bird did not vocalize.

House Finch - Gail Diane Luckner December 21-31, 1991

In east Harris county, between one and fifteen male and female House Finches were seen feeding at sunflower seed feeders with American Goldfinches and Dark-eyed Juncos. Observed daily under varying light conditions at distance of 15-20 feet with 10X42 binoculars. Slender, medium-sized finch, noticeably larger than nearby American Goldfinches. Male generally grayish-brown with deep, dusky red forehead and brow; unmarked gray-brown cap, lores and auriculars. Black eye; dull brown conical bill. Throat and breast deep, dusky red. Buffy brown belly and flank and whitish undertail coverts, all streaked with dark gray-brown. Uniformly dark gray-brown wings with narrow buffy wingbars; flight feathers and upper wing coverts very narrowly edged with buff. Streaked gray-brown back lightly washed with dusky red. Deep, dusky red rump. Tail unmarked dark gray-brown above and below. Dull brown legs and feet. Most of the birds had squarish tails, but several showed a slight notch. Slight build, brown cap and heavily streaked underparts eliminate male Purple Finch (see November CH for female).

Gail Luckner also submitted a report for two House Finches in Chambers county on December 30, 1991. Description of male is similar to above and will not be included in entirety because of space.

CONTACTS

- 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

[I wanted to summarize two Christmas Bird Counts. Unfortunately time has not permitted me to complete articles on both, so this month will be for a local event; next month, something more exotic.]

21 DECEMBER 1991 -- I had hoped to get a good night's sleep the night before the Buffalo Bayou Christmas Bird Count (CBC), planning to owl at the end of the day. So I really didn't want to be in the middle of Barker Reservoir at 4:30am. With deteriorating weather, however, pre-dawn was the best chance we'd have for owls. Sure enough, Barker produced the expected Barred Owls (after a 30-minute rain delay), and the Houston Arboretum its Screech Owls for Co-compiler Doug Williams, but by 6am a steady hard rain ushered in a day of horrendous conditions for birdwatching. Thus, for the third consecutive year, the Buffalo Bayou CBC wins the award for worst CBC weather on the upper Texas coast (I vividly remember 6 degrees F at dawn two years ago, and ice storms throughout the morning last year)! Conditions were so bad for the party in Barker Reservoir -- historically the most productive area of the count, but also the most exposed to the elements -- that they called it a day at 9am, their optics rendered useless by the driving rain. The Addicks Reservoir groups opted for an extended breakfast at McDonald's, and subsequently lost half of their area when Bear Creek Park was closed due to flooding. The two parties in the Arboretum had tallied only 14 species by lunch.

Worse yet it was still pouring, yet slowly but surely the species added up, among them: White Ibis (new to count) in Barker Reservoir; Monk Parakeets at the Alief HL&P Substation; a soaked Merlin (new species) and a Red-

shafted Flicker (new race) at Bear Creek Park; Anhinga (new), Nashville Warbler, and a very wet, thus hard to identify, Grasshopper Sparrow (new) just north of the park; the Harlan's Hawk, an annual visitor since 1986, back again along Alief-Clodine Road; a Rufous-sided Towhee at Keegan's Bayou; and Coots (yes, we even get excited about Coots, often missed on this count) at the Sharpstown Country Club.

Miraculously, at 3pm we were granted a respite. In the two hours before the skies opened up again, the birding was glorious. Barker Reservoir, now birded by two parties that had worked elsewhere in the morning, came alive: Juncos and other songbirds flitting about the hedgerows; Sedge Wrens and LeConte's Sparrows setting the grasslands abuzz; numerous Harriers lounging on the ground; the count's first Black-shouldered Kite since 1988; and a pair of Great Horned Owls preparing for the evening. In the Arboretum another Great Horned Owl looked on as a Woodcock displayed at dusk.

Ninety-four species were tallied in the field, but feeder watchers came through this year more so than ever, adding Wood Duck, White-winged Dove, Ringed Turtle-Dove, Rufous and Anna's Hummingbirds, Pileated and Red-headed Woodpeckers, Wood Thrush, Brown Creeper, Northern (Bullock's) Oriole (new), and House Finch (new). The 105 species are only two shy of the December 1986 count record, quite an achievement considering the weather.

Peggy Bailey, Carole Basile, Virginia Barry, Judy Boyce, Daniel Coleman, Fred Collins, Alan Cully, Pamela Cully, Julie d'Ablaing, Sterling Essenmacher, Joerg Freiberg, Peter Gottschling, Frank Gregg, Mike Gremillion, Sandra Grimes, Lamar Jackson, John LaGroue, Miner Long, Barbara Massey, Tom Olson, Frank Peace, Julia Ricketts, Trevor Ricketts, Don Ryan, Amy Schmidt, Dan Schmidt, and David Veselka deserve a lot of credit for braving the weather to make this a very successful CBC. Doug and I greatly appreciate their efforts. Bob Honig, 665-6963

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