



# THE SPOONBILL

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BIRDING IN WESTERN MEXICO by Elaine Robinson and Barbara Kendrick

Would anyone who had seen the Rose-breasted Thrush-Tanager, Blackish Crane Hawk and the Tufted Jay not tell you about their trip to Mexico?

Very early on Friday morning in February we and our friend and guide, Ben Feltner, set off for western Mexico. After two days of hard driving and little birding the home of the Tufted Jay, The Barranca in the Sierra Madre Occidental on the border of southwestern Durango and southeastern Sinaloa was reached. The new hotel, Villa Blanca, only 45 minutes away from the Barranca was more than comfortable, however the electricity is turned off at 11 pm and does not come on again until 7 am. An early rising birder needs a good flashlight to dress.

One full day of birding the Barranca failed to produce the Jay, but Red Warblers, Green-striped Brush Finch, White-striped Woodcreeper, Slate-throated and Painted Redstarts, plus wintering US birds were seen.

The next day, some of the more interesting birds found on the western slope of the mountains on the way to San Blas were: Yellow Grosbeak, Military Macaws, Cinnamon Hummer, Golden Vireo, White-naped Swifts.

San Blas is a small town with palm jungle on one side and Pacific Ocean on the other. The first thing a birder sees as he enters the area is the thousands of Magnificent Frigatebirds circling overhead. On this occasion they were accompanied by Short-tailed Hawks, Osprey and Black Hawks. The biggest day of birding the jungle at San Blas produced 112 species. A few of the birds found were: Bright-rumped Attila, Black-throated Magpie Jay, Yellow-winged Cacique, Collared Forest Falcon, Citroline Trogon, Russet-crowned Motmot, Happy and Bar-vented Wrens, Pale-billed Woodpecker, Rusty-crowned Grown Sparrow, Blue-rumped Parrotlet and Flammulated Flycatcher.

The boat trip down the branch of the Santiago River, besides being beautiful, turned up every species we had prayed to God, Buddah, and Zeus to see: Rufous-necked Wood Rail, Bare-throated Tiger Heron, Boat-billed Heron, and Common Potoo - a lifer for Ben. We saw the Potoo in daylight and again as we went back down the river at dark, with eyes glowing as we found them with the flashlights.

Next day on the way back up the coast, the Purplish-backed Jay flew across the road. "Jay" yelled Ben. We stopped and soon found 4 of these fine Jays. Another lifer for Ben.

On we went to the little town of Novilla to see if our tape would call up the Rose-breasted Thrush Tanager. We were so taken by the shell along the beach we could hardly bird. However, friend and guide Ben called our attention to a large black hawk perched in a tree not far away. Hurray!!!! The Blackish Crane Hawk -- no, two hawks. Up the beach bordered by an extensive thorn forest we found a cow trail leading into the brush. Only a short distance down the trail we stopped and turned on the tape of the Rose-breasted Thrush Tanager. It worked! First came the beautiful male Tanager singing back at the tape, then came the equally beautiful female. They stayed for about five minutes and we all saw them well...Two more lifers for all of us.

Heading home we stopped again at Villa Blanca Hotel to give the Tufted Jay another chance to show himself. Early the next morning at the Barranca the first bird we heard as we started up the path was a Steller's Jay and with it were 6 rare Tufted Jays. To add to our list of lifers several Red-headed Tanagers came by.

A total of 233 species were seen on the trip; 40 lifers for both of us, and 8 for Ben.

TIPS FOR TRIPS

(Following is an account by Wesley and Glenn Cureton of a pleasant spot in which to take a break while on a trip. Since the time is approaching when a lot of us will be vacationing in all directions, perhaps you know of a "pleasant spot" near a highway where one could turn off a few blocks, and enjoy stretching one's legs and seeing some birds at the same time. If so, send it to me so we can share with our readers next month before summer vacations start. Any direction goes, but let's keep it to Texas and main highways. We would be delighted if some of our exchange editors would send us some spots close to through highways in their areas. --Ed.)

Those travelling west of San Antonio on Highway 90 might enjoy a brief stop in the town of Sabinol. Turn right in the town at Highway 187 and go four or five blocks. On the left is a park, which may be recognized by the many oak trees, picnic tables, paved dance pavilion, and adjoining high school football field. This past June 1, during about forty-five minutes in the early morning, we saw vermilion and ash-throated flycatchers, Inca, white-winged, and mourning dove, cactus wren, golden-fronted woodpecker, ruby-throated hummingbird, painted bunting, lesser goldfinch, titmouse sp., chimney swift, purple martin, cardinal, mockingbird, lark sparrow, brown-headed cowbird, and great-tailed grackle. In other years we have seen ground dove, Indigo bunting, Bullock's oriole, western tanager, and yellowthroat. In dry weather birds often gather at bird baths and drippy faucets in nearby yards. Just west of the town is the Sabinol River, named for the cypress trees which line its banks. We have never checked for birds there, but it would be worth a try.

600 CLUB'S FOUNDER DIES

The requirement for membership in the 600 Club seem<sup>s</sup> an elusive dream for most of us: a life-list of 600 or more birds seen in North America, north of Mexico. Mr. Earle R. Greene was the founder and sole officer of this club since its beginning. His death last month ended many years of "watching the birds". Bessie Cornelius had a letter from Mr. Greene last fall telling her that he had just celebrated his 88th birthday and his friends had a cake with a bird on it for him. As he tells it in his book, "A Lifetime With the Birds" he was about 13 when he began his serious study of birds by joining a class. This was, he said, "the beginning of the most delightful study and life one can have." He worked for some 22 years in various civil service jobs for the government, jobs including those with the old Biological Survey and the management of several wildlife refuges. He had been retired for many years and lived on St. Simons Island, Georgia. He helped organize Louisiana Ornithological Society and served as one of its first officers. Like many other birders he has crisscrossed the continent time after time in pursuit of the "new bird". But he started that sport many and many a year ago. At age 88 he was still at it.

COMING EVENTS

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Saturday<br>May 3  | OG field trip led by Paul Nimmons to Bolivar and High Island. Meet at Kempner Park, 8 am, bring lunch and insect repellent. (Kempner Park is in Galveston, 27th and O)   |
| Tuesday<br>May 6   | Photography Group meeting, 7:30 pm, Bayou Manor Auditorium. "All member participation night": a few favorite slides from each member will make up the program.   |
| Tuesday<br>May 13  | Regular ONC meeting, 8 pm at Garden Center. John Werler will present the program: "Parrots of the Caribbean".  |
| Saturday<br>May 17 | Audubon field trip led by David Marrack to West Galveston. Meet at Kempner Park, 7 am, bring lunch and insect repellent.   |
| Saturday<br>May 17 | ONC field trip led by the McDavids to Big Creek Scenic area, formerly known as the Big Thicket Scenic area, and to Hilltop Herb Farm. Meet at 9 am in parking lot of US Forest Service in Cleveland. Turn left at intersection of Hwy 59 and FM 2025, go two blocks to parking lot. Bring lunch. |
| Saturday<br>May 24 | OG picnic (takes place of June meeting) at Terremar, west Galveston. Directions in next month's SPOONBILL.   |

FOLLOWUP ON LAST MONTH'S FOLLOWUP

As you have probably read elsewhere recently, one day per week hunting will be allowed at Sea Rim State Park to help disperse any over-concentration of ducks and geese in the park.

CLEARING HOUSE

(Numbers in ( ) indicate the number of that species seen, and the number immediately following is the date when seen)

- Loon, Common: (13)7, Galveston, DH, TBF; (3)24, Galveston, P&MJ.  
 Grebe, Eared: (15)7, Galveston, DH, TBF; (14)15, Bolivar, HH.  
 Anhinga: (1)9, Flag Lake, HH.  
 Heron, Green: (1)14, 18th at Seamist, (1)31, Memorial Park, W&GC.  
 Egret, Reddish: (7)7, (8)24, Galveston, TBF; (3)21, Bayou Vista, P&MJ, NO, VC.; (5)31, Galveston, NO, E&HW, MJ.  
 Nightheron, Yellow-crowned: (1)11, White Oak Bayou, W&GC.  
 Bittern, American: (1)26, Bolivar, TBF&ED; (2)01, near FM2553 at Gulf Freeway, RK, BL; (1)29, Anahuac Refuge, W&GC.  
 WOOD, STORK: (1)22, Armand's Bayou, P&MJ, JD, BD, FB. (seen while canoing)  
 Ibis, White-faced: (18)15, (20)22, High Island oil field, HH; (22)5, Anahuac R., RK, BL.  
 " , White: (21)7, Galveston, DH, TBF; (29)6, W. Galveston, RK; (30+)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Spoonbill, Roseate: (8)24, Bayou Vista, P&MJ; (36)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Goose, Canada: (75)6, W. Harris Co., DH, TBF; (9)22, Warren L., W&GC.  
 " , White-fronted: (15)6, W. Harris Co., DH, TBF.  
 " , Snow: (6,000)6, W. Harris Co., DH, TBF.  
 " , ROSS': (1)6, W. Harris Co., DH, TBF --see notes.  
 Treaduck, Fulvous: (1)8, Anahuac, DH, TBF; (3)8, (17)25, Anahuac, W&GC; (5)28, Anahuac, R&MD --see notes.  
 Teal, Cinnamon: (2)6, W. Harris Co., (1)26, Anahuac, TBF, DH, ED; (15)8, Maner Lake, RK, BL; (2)22, Warren Lake, W&GC; (1)16, W. Harris Co., C&SC.  
 Duck, Wood: (14)9, Maner L., DH, TBF.  
 Redhead: (4)29, High Island, W&GC.  
 Duck, Ring-necked: (1)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW; (1)10, Clute, P&MJ, AV  
 Canvasback, (1)22, Warren L., (1)29, High Island, W&GC; (2)10, Clute, P&MJ, AV  
 Scaup, Greater: (2)29, L. Anahuac, W&GC.  
 Bufflehead: (2)7, Galveston, DH, TBF.  
 Merganser, Red-breasted: (14)24, Galveston, TBF, ED; (52)24, Galveston Lagoon, P&MJ.  
 Kite, White-tailed: (1)9, Maner L., DH, TBF; (1)28, FM 1093-FM 359, HH; (2)10, San Bernard Refuge, P&MJ, MA et al.  
 Hawk, Sharp-shinned: (1)31, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER; (1)7, Lunar Science Institute, RK; (1)30, Bellaire, (1)30, South Blvd., P&MJ.  
 " , Red-tailed: (3)19, US 59 to Richmond, HH.  
 " , Red-shouldered: (1-3) all month, Richmond State School, HH.  
 " , Broad-winged: (2)23, Bellaire, (1)30, Bellaire, P&MJ  
 " , White-tailed: (1)30, near Ellington AFB, TBF --see notes.  
 Eagle, Bald: (5)6, W. Harris Co., DH, TBF.  
 Osprey: (1)29, High Island, W&GC.  
 Falcon, Peregrine: (1)17, Bolivar Flats, NO, HN; (1)24, Bolivar, P&MJ.  
 Prairie Chicken, Greater: (3)6, (7)20, W. Harris Co., DH, ER, TBF; (13)9, Spaceland Airport, RK, BL.  
 Sora: (1)26, Bolivar, TBF, ED; (1)8, L. Anahuac, W&GC; (1)10, Freeport, P&MJ, AB  
 Rail, Virginia: (1)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 " , Yellow: (5)10, San Bernard R., P&MJ, MA et al.  
 Gallinule, Common: (1)16, Clear Lake, Nassau Bay, (2)29, W. Galveston, RK; (2)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Oystercatcher, American: (3)8, (5)26, Bolivar, ED, DH, TBF; (3)15, (4)22, Bolivar, HH; (2)17, Bolivar, HN, NO.  
 Plover, Semipalmated: (2)8, Bolivar, DH, TBF.  
 " , Piping: (1)7, 8, (4)18, Bolivar, DH, ER, MA, TBF.  
 " , Snowy: (13)8, (4)18, Bolivar, DH, ER, MA, TBF.  
 " , Wilson's: (1)7, (2)24, Galveston, DH, ED, TBF.  
 " , American Golden: (2)6, W. Harris Co., DH, TBF; (4)8, Texas City Dike, RK, BL; (3)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Whimbrel: (5)24, Galveston, ED, TBF.  
 Sandpiper, Upland: (3)20, W. Harris Co., ER, TBF; (30)31, Richmond State School, HH; (12)30, Jack Rd., R&MD.  
 Yellowlegs, Lesser: (60)8, Anahuac, DH, TBF.  
 Sandpiper, Pectoral: (2)6, W. Harris Co., (5)7, Galveston, DH, TBF; (4+)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Dowitcher, Long-billed: (20+)22, High Island oil field, HH.  
 Avocet, American: (25)8, (150)26, Bolivar, DH, ED, TBF; (1100-1200)15, 22, Bolivar, HH; (150)8, E. Beach, Galveston, RK, BL; (800+0)17, Bolivar, HN, NO.  
 Stilt-Black-necked: (22)24, Galveston, ED, TBF; (12)15, (20+)22, High Island oil field, HH; (4)22, Anahuac R., (7)29, 8-mile Rd., RK; (2)8, (3)29, L. Anahuac, W&GC.

- Gull, Glaucous: (1)18, Bolivar, TBF, ER, MA; (1)17, Galveston, NO, HN --see notes.  
 " , GREAT BLACK-BACKED: (1)8, 18, Bolivar Flats, DH, ER, MA, TBF; (1)17, Bolivar Flats, NO, HN --see notes.  
 " , LESSER BLACK-BACKED: (1)26, Bolivar, ED, TBF --see notes.  
 " , Bonaparte's: (1)18, Bolivar, ER, MA, TBF.  
 Tern, Gull-billed: (3)18, Bolivar, ER, MA, TBF.  
 " , Common: (2)18, Bolivar, ER, MA, TBF.  
 " , Least: (2)18, (200)26, Bolivar, ED, ER, MA, TBF; (300+)30, E. Galveston, RK, BL.  
 " , Sandwich: (7)7, Galveston, (6)18, Bolivar, TBF et.al.  
 Dove, White-winged: (2)7, Galveston, DH, TBF.  
 " , Ground: (4)20, along drainage ditch near FM 2553 at Gulf Freeway, RK, BL.  
 " , Inca: (1)30, yard, W&GC; (1)16, Bellaire, P&MJ  
 Ani, Groove-billed: (1)15, Boy Scout woods, High Island - observed catching Anole lizard, HH; (1)31, Boy Scout woods, P&PN.  
 Owl, Barn: (1)8, (2)25, 26, High Island, TBF et.al.; (1)31, Boy Scout woods, P&PN.  
 " , Screech: (1)31, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER.  
 " , Short-eared: (1)8, Anahuac R., W&GC.  
 Swift, Chimney: (1)24, Ritterhouse Rd., W&GC.  
 Hummingbird, Ruby-throated: (1)21, Richmond State School, (2)22, High Island, Smith's woods, HH; (1)22, Armand's Bayou, MJ, JD; (1)22, High Island, RK, BL; (5)29, High Island, (3)31, Memorial Park, W&GC,  
 Woodpecker, Hairy: (1)22, Smith Woods, HH. (Details should be provided regarding unusual locations such as this --Ed.)  
 Kingbird, Eastern: (8)26, High Island, ED, TBF; (4)29, High Island, W&GC.  
 Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed: (5)22, W. Harris Co., (3)29, Boy Scout Woods, W&GC; (3)25, Warren Ranch, (1)26, Sugarland, PJ.  
 " , Great Crested: (1)24, White Oak Bayou, W&GC; (1)31, Kempner Park, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Phoebe, Eastern: (1)24, White Oak Bayou, (1)29, Smith woods, W&GC.  
 Flycatcher, Acadian: (1)25, High Island, (1)31, Compton's woods, TBF et.al.  
 Swallow, Bank: (1)31, Trinity R., P&PN.  
 Nuthatch, Red-breasted: (1)23, (1)30, Parkway Blvd., P&MJ.  
 Nuthatch, Brown-headed: (2)20, W. Harris Co., ER, TBF.  
 Creeper, Brown: (3)6, W. Harris, Co., (2)25, High Island, TBF et.al.  
 Wren, Winter: (1)22, Smith woods, HH.  
 Thrush, Wood: (1)24, Galveston, ED, TBF; (1)10, White Oak Bayou, W&GC.  
 " , Hermit: (1)23, Bellaire, P&MJ; (1)9, Flag L., HH; (1)31, Kempner Park, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Kinglet, Golden-crowned: (4)6, W. Harris Co., (1)8, High Island, TBF et.al.; (4)9, Flag Lake, HH.  
 Pipit, Sprague's: (2)24, Texas City Dike, ED, TBF.  
 Vireo, White-eyed: (1)15, High Island, (1)17, 27, Richmond State School, HH; (2)12, Armand's Bayou Park, RK; (1)11, (2)12, White Oak Bayou, W&GC; (3)22, Armand's Bayou, (3)30 Parkway Blvd., P&MJ.  
 " , Red-eyed: (1)30, Parkway Blvd., P&MJ  
 " , Yellow-throated: (1)18, Galveston, (1)25, High Island, TBF et.al. (1)30, Parkway Blvd., P&MJ.  
 " , Solitary: (1)9, Flag L., (3)22, Smith woods, HH; (1)30, Parkway Blvd., P&MJ  
 Warbler, Black-and-white: (2)8, High Island, (7)18, Galveston, TBF et.al.; (2)9, Flag L., (1)20, Richmond State School: HH; (2)31, Memorial Park, W&GC.  
 " , Prothonotary: (1)31, Compton's Woods, TBF, ER.  
 " , Worm-eating: (1)16, Bellaire, P&MJ.  
 " , Blue-winged: (2)31, High Island, P&PN.  
 " , Northern Parula: (2)8, (1)18, (4)24, Galveston, High Island, TBF et.al.; (2)9, Flag L. (1)21, Richmond State School, HH; (2)12, White Oak Bayou, (1)31, Memorial Park, W&GC; (2)16, (1)30, Bellaire, (3)22, Armand's Bayou, (1)23, (2)30, Parkway Blvd., P&MJ  
 " , Black-throated Green: (1)23, yard, P&PN.  
 " , Yellow-throated: (1)8, 18, High Island, Galveston, TBF et.al.; (1)9, Flag L., (1)22, Smith Woods, HH; (1)16, Bellaire, P&MJ.  
 " , Palm: (1)8, Bolivar, DH, TBF; (1)31, W. Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Waterthrush, Northern: (1)18, Galveston, (3)25, High Island, TBF et.al.  
 " , Louisiana: (1)11, 6, White Oak Bayou, (1)31, Memorial Park, W&GC; (2)31, High Island, P&PN.  
 Yellowthroat, Common: (1)9, Flag L., HH; (1)16, FM 2553 near Gulf Freeway, RK.  
 Warbler, Hooded: (1)28, White Oak Bayou, (1)29, Boy Scout woods, (1)31, Memorial Park, W&GC; (3)18, (2)24, (5)25, (1)30, High Island, Galveston, Compton's woods, TBF et.al.  
 " , Wilson's: (1)31, Memorial Park, W&GC.  
 Redstart, American: (2)31, High Island, P&PN.  
 Oriole, Orchard: (6)29, Smith woods, W&GC; (2)31, Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.  
 Cowbird, Bronzed: (1)26, Kempner Park, TBF, ED.  
 Tanager, Summer: (1)8, 25, High Island, TBF, DH; (1)31, High Island, P&PN --see notes.  
 Grosbeak, Rose-breasted: (1)29, Smith Woods, W&GC --see notes; (1)31, Galveston, NO, MJ, E&HW.

Dickcissel: (1)22,23,yard,SE Houston,Noel Pettingell --see notes.

Towhee,Rufous-sided: (1)29,Kempner Park,RK; (1)6,18,25,26,30,W.Harris,Co.,Galveston, High Island,TBF et.al.

Sparrow, Sharp-tailed: (1)8,Bolivar,DH,TBF.

Junco, Dark-eyed: (1)17,(15)18,(6+)19,(6-10)20,Richmond State School,HH.

Sparrow, Field: (1)20,W.Harris Co.,ER,TBF.

" , Swamp: (2)26,Bolivar,TBF,ED.

#### CLEARING HOUSE CONTRIBUTORS

MA - Margaret Anderson; AB - Avis Brister; C&SC - Chuck & Suzi Campbell; W&GC - Wesley & Glenn Cureton; VC - Virginia Courtney; R&MD - Richard & Maxine Davis; JD - Jane Dodge; ED - Earl Dore; BD - Bobbie Duryea; TBF - T. Ben Feltner; DH - Dick Heller, Jr. HH - Holly Hobart; RK - Randy Korotev; BL - Betty Lobos; HN - Hazel Nichols; P&PN - Paul & Phyllis Nimmons; NO - Norma Oates; ER - Elaine Robinson; E&HW - Ella & Helen Wolfer.

#### CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

The following species were seen in normal numbers and areas and were not included in the Clearing House: King Rail, Clapper Rail, Black-bellied Plover, Forster's Tern, Royal Tern, Caspian Tern, Horned Lark, Tree Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Gray Catbird, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Goldfinch.

ROSS' GOOSE: Clay Road in a flock of about 150 Snow Geese. Excellent light: full sun, studied at leisure through 30X Baiscope; distances down to 70 yards. Direct comparison with Snow Geese was made. Individual was adult; all white plumage; with black wing tips; details noted: very small: 3/4 size of Snow Goose; short necked; tiny thimble-like bill with no grin patch discernable; very cuddly appearance.--T. Ben Feltner.

Fulvous Treeduck: Shoveler Pond, Anahuac Refuge with about 200 assorted puddle ducks. Late evening sun directly on subject; 30X Baiscope; about 55 yards. Details noted: appeared uniformly fulvous in color except for wing primaries and tail which were black; white rump and flank stripe clearly discernable; very long neck and goose-like stance. --T. Ben Feltner

Fulvous Treeduck: Lit in marsh near Shoveler Pond; brown in color; broad wings, darker than body; flight gooselike; white crescent on rump; near dusk; 25 yards; 7x50; North Carolina man saw one earlier in same place. --Wesley Cureton

White-tailed Hawk: Two miles south of Ellington AFB exit on Hwy 45; 30 yards in overcast but good light using 8x40 binoculars. Bird was soaring low over the road. Following details noted: Red-tail size; more compact outline; underparts clean cut and well defined; snowy white breast, abdomen and wing-linings; mantle light gray, shoulders reddish; tail white with black subterminal band. --T. Ben Feltner

Glaucous Gull: Bolivar Flats; standing side by side with Great Black-backed Gull; appeared approximately same size and proportions; both bigger than surrounding Herring Gulls; bill as long as a Herring Gull but slightly deeper; about 2/3 basally pink with 1/2 black tip; plumage uniform white; some very faint mottling discernable on back; observed through 30X Baiscope for 10 minutes at distance down to 60 yards; excellent, subdued light. --T. Ben Feltner

Glaucous Gull: This gull was on the beach in Galveston just east of the 61st Street fishing pier. It was with several Herring gulls and was slightly larger than the Herrings and in fighting over food on the beach it was sometimes able to take food from the Herrings, but they were also able to snatch it back. It had a very heavy flesh colored bill with black on the tip. Legs were flesh colored. It was all white with some dusky mottling underneath. In flight the wings were all white. 9x35 binoculars at about 50 ft. --Hazel Nichols and Norma Oates

GREAT-BLACK BACKED GULL: Undoubtedly same individual that has been seen at Bolivar Flats on and off for over a year. Plumage is now that of bird between 2nd and 3rd year. All dark mantle has been acquired but is not uniform in color; rest of bird white. --T. Ben Feltner

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: We observed this gull on the sand at the water's edge on Bolivar flats with hundreds of Herring and Ring-billed gulls. Had 20-power scope at about 100 ft. Larger than Herring and the black wings and back much darker than gray mantle of Herring gulls. Bill was heavy, flesh colored with black on tip. Head was white with some pale mottling on back of neck. Legs flesh colored. --Hazel Nichols and Norma Oates

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: Two miles west of Caplan on Bolivar Peninsula, resting in a ploughed field with Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Overcast but excellent light; about 70 yards with 30X Balxcope; slightly smaller than attending Herring Gulls; yellow legs and mandible; the latter with very large red blotch about 2/3 from base. Winter-flecking on back of head, sides and hindneck; mantle slaty-black, slightly darker than Laughing Gulls; remainder of plumage snowy-white; observed 3-5 minutes.-- Earl Dore & T. Ben Feltner. This bird is in my opinion the same bird that was reported from the Texas City Dike originally in 1968. It has been subsequently reported by various people over the years, the last by the Stricklings in January at the south Jetties. It is in perfect adult plumage and could remain in the area for years as gulls are capable of great longevity...30-40 years in some cases. --T. Ben Feltner

Summer Tanager: Smith Woods, High Island. Alone in top of fig-tree; 20' up and 35' away, poor light, 45 seconds observation; female or immature male, no red plumage; about the size of a Red-winged Blackbird; uniform yellowish-green above; dirty yellow below with decidedly orange-yellow undertail coverts and upperbreast; beak horn-colored and stout. --T. Ben Feltner

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Black and white finch, bright rose breast, heavy white beak; cloudy, misty, north wind; 15-50 feet. 7x50. Also seen by two others. --Wesley Cureton.

Dickcissel: Adult male studied at leisure on feeder both days from 8 yards; 7x35 binoculars; all diagnostic marks noted, including black bib, yellowish breast and eye-line. --Noel Pettingell

#### MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING, ORNITHOLOGY GROUP, APRIL 3, 1975

The meeting was called to order by Harry Brister, Chairman, at 7:35 P.M. Members and guests numbered 39.

There being no additions or corrections to the Minutes of the February Meeting, as published in the April issue of THE SPOONBILL, motion was properly made, seconded and carried to dispense with the reading of those Minutes.

The Treasurer's Report for the period February 1, 1975 to March 31, 1975 was accepted as read. Receipts were \$159.14, disbursements were \$176.52, leaving a balance on hand of \$205.23. The Checklist Savings Account showed a balance on hand of \$92.66.

Margaret Jones passed around a good photograph taken at Anahuac of what appears to be a hybrid of the Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbird.

It was announced that OG's June meeting, will be a May picnic as usual - this time on West Galveston Beach - on the 24th.

TOS drew 165 birders to Rockport for their March meeting. Whistling Swans and Brown Pelicans were among the 197 species seen. Jim Beaty reported that the Ramada Inn also now has a boat which takes folks up to see the Whooping Cranes. He mentioned he had taken a number of copies of THE SPOONBILL and the checklist along with him to the meeting, which were grabbed up in no time - good publicity for our Group.

Approximately 200 SPOONBILLS are now being mailed out, and it was announced we are about ready to take advantage of the reduced rate discussed at the last meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was turned over to the Program Chairman. Sarah Gordon explained that, in turn, the following would brief us on four good birding trips. Norma Oates gave us the background of the Dry Tortugas and read her notes made during the trip to that locale in June of 1973. Of special interest to those of us who will be making the same trip shortly was her having sighted the Brown and Black Noddy Terns there. Margaret and T. Paul Jones teamed up (Margaret doing the narration and T. Paul the slides) of their trip to Rancho Cielito on the Rio Sabinas in Mexico. This is a private facility located in a tropical valley and open only from November through May. Margaret remarked that the best thing about their trip was that they could sit right by the house and see the birds. Margaret Anderson, reporting on her trip with the Dallas Audubon Society to the West Coast, including Victoria, recommended a pelagic trip off California (she took the one to the Farralon Islands), the nesting fields of the Skylark in Victoria, Clover Point for Auklets, the Grey-crowned Rosy Finch at Crater Lake, and the nesting White-headed Woodpecker at Yosemite. Phyllis and Paul Nimmons passed around some literature, postcards, etc. from a trip they made to Maine and Cape Cod. The latter, they said, offered few new birds for a Texas birder, but was of interest historically. Brant Geese were the only lifers for them at the Cape. Early August is the best for pelagic birds, June for birds in spring plumage, mating and nesting. They highly recommended the Mt.

Desert Island-Nova Scotia trip for Shearwaters, Phalaropes, Petrels and Scoters; Calais for the Boreal Chickadee; Machias for Puffins; and the Razor-billed Auk at Seal Island. A number of questions concerning these trips were answered at the meeting. All of the speakers invited those interested in these locales to get in touch with them, if more information was desired.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Louise Rogers

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING:

New members:

Miss Margaret Anderson, 5600 Chimney Rock #31, Houston, Texas 77036  
Miss Alice A. Leskinen, 7400 Plum Creek, #2605, Houston, Texas 77012 - 643-6161  
Dr. David A. Snell, 3810 Westerman, Houston, Texas 77005

New subscribers:

Miss Mary Ann Chapman, PO Box 12682, Austin, Texas 78711  
Mr. W.M. Meriwether, 3002 W. Terrace, Austin, Texas 78731 - AC214 453-4075

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

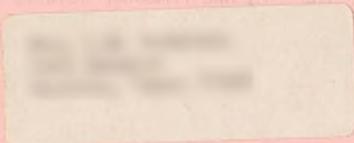
Please notify Maxine Davis of any change of address as soon as possible. THE SPOON-BILL is not forwarded by the Post Office, but is returned to us at a cost of 10¢. So it will save us money if you will call her - 723-8559, or write - 10502 Cedarhurst, Houston, Texas 77035, if you are moving.

SPRING MIGRATION IS HERE, HURRAY, HURRAY!!!

Now is the time to start checking the trees everywhere you go, for there is no telling what is moving through. Watch the back-yard more closely, walk daily around your neighborhood, get out all you can for the next month or so. Send a record of your sightings to Dan Hardy for the C-H, and remember details on very rare birds, also notes on any sighting that you think unusual or interesting. It might be well to remind ourselves that Smith Woods, the place we all love, is very much private property, and our deepest appreciation must go to Mr. and Mrs. Brannon for allowing birders to visit the woods.

So.....good birding!

OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB  
(ORNITHOLOGY GROUP)  
10602 Cedarhurst  
Houston, Texas 77035  
(Return postage guaranteed)



NAMES FOR REFERENCE:

Chairman:	Mr. Harry Brister, 2314 Saxon, Houston, Texas 77018	681-6456
Treasurer:	Mrs. J.M. Gillette, 5027 Longmont, Houston, Texas 77027	626-1755
Spoonbill:	Mrs. T. Paul Jones, 4902 Fern, Bellaire, Texas 77401	665-4197
Clearing House:	Mr. Dan Hardy, 10215 Chatterton, Houston, Texas 77043	468-2748
Rare Bird Alert:	Mrs. L.W. Anderson, 2913 Amherst, Houston, Texas 77005	668-6405
Change of address:	Mrs. Richard Davis, 10602 Cedarhurst, Houston, Texas 77035	723-8559