



THE SPOONBILL

VOLUME XLV, No. 9
January, 1966

* One-third of the blue heron's length is neck and beak. *

* This one-third is a model of versatility. Each vertebra *

* of the neck is precisely fitted to allow rotation upon the *

* one below. Stretched to utmost height, the neck becomes a *

* watchtower for the eyes, scanning an expanse of 360°, about *

* 330° more than the human neck. Among tall reeds with neck *

* extended, the heron appears to be one of the bunch and may *

* sway to match the rhythm of the windblown grass. The neck *

* can be neatly folded back upon itself for flight or rest. *

* It can be tucked safely under a wing for deep sleep during *

* the night; it enables the bill to smooth out all feathers. *

* Finely coordinated muscles in the neck act as a power- *

* ful spring to snap up the most alert fish or frog. Young *

* herons know the value of the sharp bill and neck as a wea- *

* pon to discourage hungry enemies. Within the neck, an exten- *

* sive windpipe has a musical range from a deafening whoop *

* of alarm to the dotting croak of a mother. On a heron honey- *

* moon, the pair pledge their troth with affectionate neck- *

* twining. For hours the interlaced couple perch unmoving, *

* nibbling occasionally at each other's plumes. For all its *

* gawky appearance, the heron's neck is a very ingenious struc- *

* ture. *

* "Rubberneck," Texas Game and Fish, (back *

* cover- Vo XXI, No. 3 March, 1963) *

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

COMING EVENTS

- January 29 (Saturday) Regular OG Field Trip to Cinco Ranch, led by Harvey Patten. We hope to see the many species of sparrows which we saw on last year's trip. Meet at 9 AM at the intersection of Beeler Road and Westheimer, just East of Barker Dam.
- February 3 (Thursday) Regular OG meeting at 7:30 PM, Downtown Recreation Center. Dr. David Marrack will speak on "Food for Birds," an excellent wintertime subject. Dr. Marrack, who "caught the bug" to study birds from his schoolmaster in 1934, chose Houston as his place of residence because of the good birding in this area. Dr. Marrack is a biochemist and is Chief of the Section of Biochemistry of Research Clinical Pathology at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute.
- February 8 (Tuesday) Regular ONG meeting, in the Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive, 8 PM. Mr. D.H. Luchtel will speak on "The Bald Eagle."
- February 16 (Wednesday) Audubon Wildlife Films "The Vanishing Sea." Houston Home Builders Assn. Auditorium, 2710 W. Alabama, 8 PM.
- February 19, 20 (Saturday and Sunday) ONG Field Trip to Aransas Wildlife Refuge, led by Jim O'Neill. This trip is in three parts: (1) Saturday- The Refuge. Meet at Refuge Headquarters at 8 AM SHARP. Bob Shields and Gordon Foltzenlogen will lead us to areas of the Refuge that are off limits to the public. Bring picnic lunch to be eaten at the picnic grounds. In the afternoon we will be free to bird elsewhere on the Refuge. (2) Sunday morning- Rockport. There will be a field trip for birds in the Rockport area. (3) Sunday afternoon- SS Whooping Crane. Meet at the Sea Gun Marina at 1:00 PM for a cruise up the Intra-Coastal Canal to the Refuge. Last February 22 the O'Neills saw 23 of the 42 Whoopers while on this boat. Tickets are \$5.00 and RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY FEBRUARY 1 with Mr. or Mrs. James O'Neill, 1815 Effie Lane, Pasadena, GR 3-7855. The Refuge and the boat operator must be notified as to how many our group will comprise, so please observe this deadline if you plan to make the trip.

April 1, 2, 3 (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) It is time now to make your plans- and reservations- to attend the TOS Spring Meetings:

Place: Galveston, Texas

Date: Fri., Sat., & Sun., April 1, 2, 3, 1966

Hq: Galvez Hotel

Highlights: Registration and reception at Galvez Hotel: Friday, April 1 at Hotel
Pelagic Bird Trips: Sat. April 2, 8 AM to 4 PM
Bay Bird Trips: Sun., April 3, 7:30 AM to 11 AM
Terrestrial Bird Trips: Sat. & Sun. AM and PM
Annual Dinner with guest speakers: Sat. evening at Hotel

Individuals should make their own reservations at the Hotel. Boat trip reservations should be mailed to: Mrs. Jerry Strickling, 5118 W. Bellfort, Houston, Texas 77035. \$1.00 should accompany each reservation for each individual. A refund will be made only if the trip is cancelled because of weather. First come, first served- All previous trips have been over-subscribed. Cost of Pelagic trip is \$5 per person, and the Bay Trip is \$3 per person.

FREEPORT CHRISTMAS COUNT by Jerry Strickling

Thirty-three dedicated birders formed themselves into sixteen parties and dug out 193 species of birds from the Freeport Texas Christmas Count circle. Hard work, perseverance, devoted attention to duty- and luck- always gets lots of birds. The tuff thirty-three were:

Area 1. Dave Marrack, Mable Deshayes, Boots and Jerry Evans

" 2. Nancy and Jerry Strickling, Mary Belle and Frank Kokesh, John O'Neill, Doug Stine, and Chris Jordon.

" 3. Pat and Jim Ellis, Mary Anne and Bob Moore, Bill Wright, and Wallace Mebane.

" 4. Jean and Bill Pettit, Marie and Ben Feltner, Dudley Deaver, John Tveten, Tom Tveten, T.D. Tveten.

" 5. Vic Emanuel, Rose Anne Rowlett, Dan Scurlock.

" 6. Steve Williams, Noel Pettingell, Dennis Saepler, and Bill Golaby.

The Freeport Christmas Count is considered to be a group effort. No individuals nor teams can be credited for exclusives because all persons were dedicated to the group. However, Area 4 must be given credit for the European Teal. Ben Feltner, the man who found the Eskimo Curlew in 1959, found the Teal first at Stubblefield Lake. Then Tom Tveten found another(?) about 4 miles away at the hurricane levee near Highway 332. Ben Feltner has proved again that he is one of the most perceptive field birders in North America. And Dennis Saepler spent several hours wading a swamp to find a Black Rail that had been spotted two weeks before.

All 32 were great and brought credit to the Gulf Coast of Texas. As Pro-tem organizer, I express my personal appreciation to each of you for an outstanding job.

The 1966 Freeport Christmas Count will be held Monday, Dec. 26, 1966. Applications are being taken now from hard-core birders.

(For birds seen on the 1965 Freeport Count, see Clearing House.)

TRAITORS SCOUR COCOA SWAMPS AND COASTS by Bill Wright

Around 4:45 AM last Dec 28, I approached a busy-looking Scot, bedecked with a red jacket and matching tam. "Are you Allan Cruickshank?" Thus began our day of birding with the pros.

Our party included two college professors in zoology and ornithology. One from the University of Tennessee and one from Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan. We were not assigned to one of the richest areas, as the "oldtimers over the years had priority." Even so, we managed to count 113 species in our area, and Betty and I tallied up 86.

In the morning we covered a fresh-water marsh, old orange groves, deciduous forest, bayfront, and open pinewoods. The latter was a fruitless attempt at finding Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman's Sparrow. In the afternoon, we crossed over to the Port Canaveral area and birded some tidal flats, jetties, beaches, and nearby ocean and salt-water marshes.

The manpower at Mr. Cruickshank's disposal is so prolific that to the better areas such as the Port Canaveral tidal flats, he sends several parties at different times. The first group counts individuals and species, and the later groups count only individuals of new species. In this way the white pelican was observed in the morning only and the long-billed curlew in the afternoon only.

In most cases the birds seen did not differ greatly from what we may expect to see on the Houston area bird counts, except for the relative number of individuals. All crows were assumed to be fish crows unless you heard them caw with a drawn-out southern drawl. In our area the red-shouldered hawk appeared more often than the red-tailed. A tufted titmouse was an exclusive and a chickadee was unheard of. Palm warblers were everywhere.

One of our party saw two chunky birds fly up, and he was reminded of Bob-white; however, I saw rufous wings and square black tail that we would call a ground dove in Texas. A look in Peterson showed that this common South Texas and rare Houston bird was indeed to be expected in Florida! That evening we learned that the ground dove has been seen on all 15 of the Cocoa Christmas Counts.

Port Canaveral produced the Florida Scrub Jay in good numbers and the Great Black-backed Gull in all plumages. Marbled Godwit and an Oystercatcher were lifers for Betty and I. It was also good to see the Brown Pelican again.

At 8 PM we all met at Allan Cruickshank's house and Betty and I were introduced as "spies." We learned that rough seas that had kept the shrimp boats in port also kept the oceanic birds out of port since they usually followed the shrimpers home in the afternoon. A whole party also had failed to show up, so that the Cocoa Beach portion of the circle failed to yield its probable scoters.

The count-down then began with everyone in doubt about staying on top again this year. However, when it was all finished and the final count given, it came to 197; however, there were still a couple of parties in the field looking for owls and goatsuckers.

CLEARING HOUSE, DECEMBER, 1965

Freeport Christmas Count
by area

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Tot
Common Loon: (4)4, (6)23 Cove AKM.						2	2
Eared Grebe: (1)23, (3)27 Cove AKM.		15		44	150	108	317
Least Grebe:				2			2
Pied-billed Grebe: (1-9)8 days, (30)7 Cove AKM.	13	25	5	23	10	70	126
White-Pelican: (1-5)6 days, (100)20, (35)27 Cove AKM.	19	200	50	1829	10	80	2288
Cormorant (sp):				4			4
Cormorant, Double-crested: (1-11)9 days Cove AKM.	36	190		2	1	3	232
Olivaceous Cormorant:					1		1
Anhinga:	3						3
Great Blue Heron:	11	12	7	105	15	42	192
Green Heron: (1)5,26 Anahuac Ref. LS.		1					1
Little Blue Heron:	2	1		1	30	1	35
Cattle Egret: (60)20, (54)22, (74)23, (1-25)5 days, Cove AKM.		18		1			19
Reddish Egret:				1		1	2
Common Egret:	20	15	8	27	15	139	244
Snowy Egret:	1	10		1	25	125	162
Louisiana Heron:		1		31	20	19	61
Black-crowned Night Heron:						4	4
Yellow-crowned Night Heron:				1			1
American Bittern:						1	1
Wood Ibis:		1					1
White-faced Ibis: (300)17, (200)22,29, (15+)31 Cove AKM.	370	30	60	245		14	719
White Ibis: (50)6, (20)14, (2)22 Cove AKM.	2						2
Roseate Spoonbill: (40)6, (120)8, (12)12, (2)22, (1)23 Cove AKM.				4	10	61	75
Canada Goose:	60	19	20				99
White-fronted Goose: (flock heard)14, (42)20, (100)27 Cove AKM.	30	25		16			71
Snow Geese:	5000	300	326	166	250	192	6134
Blue Goose:	4000	75	256	76	75	30	5512
Mallard: 14 days, (25)5, (30)27 Cove AKM.	12	8		5	3		28
Black Duck:	5			6		2	13
Mottled Duck: 14 days (20)1,8 Cove AKM.	10	6	7	57		15	95
Gadwall: 9 days (200)1 Cove AKM.		150		11	50	78	289
Pintail: 12 days (100)7,23,24 Cove AKM.	57	20		119	200	24	420
<u>EUROPEAN TEAL:</u>				2			2
Green-winged Teal: 9 days, (800)8, (250)21 Cove AKM.		15		62	15	20	112
Blue-winged Teal:	5	20	2	18	2	3	50
American Widgeon: 9 days, (1500)8 Cove AKM.		80		36	80	150	346
Shoveller: 8 days, (18)17 Cove AKM.		15		72		4	91
Wood Duck:		20	6				26
Redhead: (3)1 Cove AKM.		2					2
Ring-necked Duck: (20)1,7, (2)8,10 Cove AKM.		30		54			84
Canvasback: 10 days, (100)7, (84)11, (112)22, (83)29 Cove AKM.		40		5050	40	73	5203
Greater Scaup:				5		1	6
Lesser Scaup: 8 days, (75)23, (500)27 Cove AKM.	65	150		9300	200	84	9799
American Goldeneye: (3)1, (14)4, (15-30)12 Cove AKM.					1		1
Bufflehead: (1)1, (4)8, (40-52)12,23,27 Cove AKM.					25	185	455
Scoter (sp):	40	10		195			16
Ruddy Duck: (1-30) Cove AKM.	14	2			25		25
Hooded Merganser:						1	1
Red-breasted Merganser: (30-150)1,4,14 Cove AKM.	20	25	28	57	3	1	144
Turkey Vulture:	4	15	7	2			29
Black Vulture: (1)7, (2)28 Cove AKM.	2		2				4
White-tailed Kite:							2
Sharp-shinned Hawk: (1)14 Cedar Bayou AKM.		2					2
Cooper's Hawk: (1)20,22,30 Cove AKM.		1		1		1	3
Red-tailed Hawk: Less than usual. One black in area for 6 yr. Cove AKM.	34	9	22	42	4	9	120

Freeport Christmas Count by Area

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Tot
Krider's Red-tailed Hawks: (1)20 Cove AKM.							1
Harlan's Hawk: (1)29,30 Cove AKM.	1						1
Red-shouldered Hawk: (1-2)11 days Cove AKM.	14	10	6	6			36
White-tailed Hawk:				1			1
Rough-legged Hawk:				1			1
Bald Eagle:		1					1
Marsh Hawk: Fewest ever, Cove AKM.	14	2	52	36	15	15	124
Osprey:		1		1	1		3
Peregrine Falcons:	1	1		2	2		6
Sparrow Hawks:	17	6	22	16	9	2	72
Bobwhite:	17	4	85	28	1		135
King Rail:				2		1	3
Clapper Rail: (2)23, (1)27 Cove AKM.				7		30	37
Virginia Rail:						2	2
Soras:				2		3	5
Black Rail:						1	1
Common Gallinules:		1			10	12	23
American Coots: 8 days (2500)7 Cove AKM.	425	500		203	50	491	1322
Semipalmated Plover: (1)12,27 Cove AKM.				12	10	9	31
Piping Plover:				2	2		4
Black-bellied Plover: (1)1,4,8,21,23,29,31 (10)24 Cove AKM.			10	35	30	6	81
Killdeer:	90	30	65	120	40	15	360
Ruddy Turnstone: (2)4, (3)23 Cove AKM.					15		15
American Woodcocks: (2)27 Cove AKM.			2				2
Common Snipe: (23)24 (2)30 Cove AKM.	10	6	10	1			27
Long-billed Curlew: 9 days (80)23,31 (200)24 Cove AKM.	138		49	21	2	3	213
Spotted Sandpiper: (1)12, (2 or 3)29 Cove AKM.		3		4			7
Willet: (1-8)7 days Cove AKM.		2	35		30	9	76
Greater Yellowlegs: (1)4,7,12,23,24 (5)20 Cove AKM.	11	4	41	37	2		95
Lesser Yellowlegs: (3)6 (1)7 (4)20 (25)29 Cove AKM.	2		30	10	6	16	64
Knots:					1		1
Least Sandpiper:				7	140	1	148
Dunlin:				30	40	3	73
Short-billed Dowitcher:					1		1
Long-billed Dowitcher:						15	15
Dowitcher (sp): 6 days Cove AKM.				308	8		316
Stilt Sandpiper: (1)11 Freeport NS, JS, WH.							
Semipalmated Sandpipers:				5	100		105
Western Sandpiper:				15	100		115
Marbled Godwit:				3		3	6
Sanderling: (4)23,27 Cove AKM.				3	150		153
American Avocet: (12)12, (120+)23, (51)27 Cove AKM.				15		75	90
Herring Gull: (1-10)9 days Cove AKM.	10			50	15	11	86
Ring-billed Gull:	65	55	170	21	80	120	511
Laughing Gull:	62	50		30	200	100	442
Bonaparte's Gull: (4)1, (1)4,29,31 (2)24 Cove AKM.		4			3	1	8
Gull-billed Tern:				7		2	9
Forster's Tern:	1	5		30	25	4	71
Common Tern: (2)4 (7+)23 Cove AKM.				5	1	2	8
Royal Tern:	1	2	1	3	20	1	28
Caspian Tern:		4	1	51	30	18	104
Mourning Dove:	39	30	88	92	25	18	292
Ground Dove: (2)29 Cove AKM.	1		1	2			4
Groove-billed Ani: (2)29, (3)31 Cove AKM.			5				5
Barn Owl:			1				1
Screech Owl: (1-2)12 Cove AKM.			2	1	1		4
Great-horned Owl: (1)14,24 Cove AKM.	3	1	1				5
Barred Owl: (1)5,11,12,16,24,30,21 Cove AKM.	3	6	7	5			16
Short-eared Owl:	2		4		10	2	18
Rufous Hummingbird: (1 male)11 Freeport NS JS WH.							
Ruby-throated Hummingbird:		1					1
Belted Kingfisher: (1)10 days, (2)16,18,21 (3)22 Cove AKM.	7	4	1	8	3	4	27
Yellow-shafted Flicker: (1-7)20 days Cove AKM.	15	20	15	10			60
Pileated Woodpecker:	2	5	9				16
Red-bellied Woodpecker:	15	15	19	7			56
Red-headed Woodpecker:		1	1				2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: (1-3)12 days Cove AKM.	6	10	15	19			50
Hairy Woodpecker:			1				1
Downy Woodpecker:	1	4	12	1			18
WIED'S CRESTED FLYCATCHER: (1)30,31 Cove AKM.							
Eastern Phoebe: (1-7)14 days Cove AKM.	24	30	16	11		4	85

Freeport Christmas Count by Area

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Tot
Empidonax Flycatchers:						1	1
Vermilion Flycatcher: (1-4)9 days Cove AKM.	7	3	3	3			16
Horned Lark:	10		50	25	210	60	355
Tree Swallow:		2					2
Blue Jay:	1	10	16				27
Common Crow:	171	30	70	9			279
Carolina Chickadee:	26	50	132	54			262
Tufted Titmouse: (1)22,23 Cove AKM; (2)29 Cove AKM.	15	50	51	35			146
Brown Creeper:	2	1		1			4
House Wren: (2)1,20,27 (1)4,22 Cove AKM.	6	6	2	3	2	1	20
Winter Wren: (1)21 Cove AKM.	1	3		1			5
Bewick's Wren: (1)14 Cove AKM.		1					1
Carolina Wren:	8	25	38	19		1	91
Long-billed Marsh Wren: (2)12, (1)23,29, (3)27 Cove AKM.				1		15	16
Short-billed Marsh Wren: (1)23 Cove AKM.		3		2			6
Mockingbird:	31	20	43	21	6	4	125
Catbird: (1)20,29 Cove AKM.	1	8	3				12
Brown Thrasher:	5	75	350	21	2	1	454
Robin: (1-30)5 days (150)27 (120)31 Cove AKM.	14	80	4	26	2	1	121
Wood Thrush:				1			1
Hermit Thrush: (1)20,30 (2)27,31 (5)29 Cove AKM.	3	25	8	3			39
Swainson's Thrush:				1			1
Eastern Bluebird: (3)21, (2)23, (4)31 Cove AKM.	14	14	6	8			42
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:	11	45	14	275	5	50	400
Golden-crowned Kinglet: (2)21,29 (1)23,27 Cove AKM.	1	40	3	35			79
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:	7	60	52	213	6	5	343
Water Pipit: (1-25)9 days, (40)29 Cove AKM.	5	300	6	5004	25	10	6350
Sprague's Pipit: (6)1,22,29 Cove AKM.		2					2
Cedar Waxwing: (175)27 Cove AKM.	14	20	70				105
Loggerhead Shrike:	32	20	25	24	10	6	117
Starling:	4	15	16	120	10	7	172
White-eyed Vireo:	1	2	2				5
Solitary Vireo: (1)27, (2)29 Cove AKM.		10	2				12
Black-and-White Warbler:		2					2
Orange-crowned Warbler: 11 days, (7)27, (9)29, (8)31 Cove AKM.	1	30	2	14		1	48
Nashville Warbler:		1					1
Myrtle Warbler: 7 days (15-35)22,27,29,31 Cove AKM.	11	15	8	7		18	59
Yellow-throated Warbler:	1	2					3
Pine Warbler: (7)21,29,31 Cove AKM.	8	10	2	5			25
Prairie Warbler:						1	1
Palm Warbler:	1		1	12			14
Ovenbird:				1			1
Northern Waterthrush:		1					1
Yellowthroat: (1)20 Cove AKM.		25	2	3	1	18	49
Yellow-breasted Chat:		1					1
Wilson's Warbler:		10					10
American Redstart:		1					1
Chee-chee:	32	50	15	21	10	23	151
Eastern Meadowlark:	550	80	295	471	65	47	1510
Western Meadowlark:		1				1	2
Red-winged Blackbird:	500	8000					5000
Rusty Blackbird:		1					1
Brewer's Blackbird:	14	150	13	63			240
Boat-tailed Grackle:	600	7000	1024	1040	130	115	9909
Common Grackle:	150	2000		47		10	2207
Brown-headed Cowbird:	650	200	125	4			979
Cardinal:	54	115	234	106	11	39	554
PYRRHULOXIA: (1)13 Cinco Ranch LS MA.							
Purple Finch: (1)20 Cove AKM.							
Pine Siskin:	4						4
American Goldfinch: 12 days, (30)1,21,22,27 (150)20 Cove AKM.	84	300	727	498		5	1610
Rufous-sided Towhee: (1)24 Cove AKM.	1	10					11
Savannah Sparrows:	190	25	43	79	43	62	422
Grasshopper Sparrow:		2					2
LeConte's Sparrow: (4)23, (1)25,29 (3)31 Cove AKM.	2	1	2				5
Sharp-tailed Sparrow:						1	1
Seaside Sparrow: (1-4)1,4,29 (10)23, (20)27 Cove AKM.				4		35	39
Vesper Sparrow: (2)24,31 (1)29 Cove AKM.	2	4		4			10
Lark Sparrow:	12						12
Slate-colored Junco: (2)21 Cove AKM.	1	2					3
Chipping Sparrow:	2	3	1				6

Field Sparrow: (1-4)1,23,31 (20)27, (12)29 Cove AKM
 Harris's Sparrow: (3)27 (2)29 Cove AKM.
 White-crowned Sparrow: (2)27,29 Cove AKM.
 White-throated Sparrows
 Lincoln's Sparrow: (1)22,27 (2)29 Cove AKM.
 Swamp Sparrow: 8 days (12-20)8,21,22 Cove AKM.
 Song Sparrow: (1)1,8,22,31 (5)29 Cove AKM.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Tot
			16				16
	34	150	151	182		1	544
	1	15	3	4		5	28
	1	25	4	78	4	15	127
	1	1		3			5

ADDENDA TO CLEARING HOUSE

Cinnamon Teal: (1)5,26 Anahuac Ref. IS.

CONTRIBUTORS TO CLEARING HOUSE:

AKM	Archie K. McKay	IS	Linda Snyder
NS	Nancy Strickling	MA	Margaret Anderson
JS	Jerry Strickling	WH	Wes Hetrick

Freeport Christmas Count: December 26, 1965.

CLEARING HOUSE NOTES

I recorded 220 species the last quarter of 1965; 137 in 1959; a sixteen year average of 208. In December, 136 species; 239 in 31 years. 104 in first half, 134 in 1959, 202 in 31 years, with 2 added this year: Reddish Egret and Harlan's Hawk; 130 in last half, 147 in 1952, 222 in 31 years, with one added this year: Wied's Flycatcher.

Archie K. McKay

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors:

You as well as others are no doubt somewhat skeptical of some discoveries on the big count. We should be very slow to suspect the persons whose records are suspect. It is natural that there will be misidentifications, but which are such? Had I gone to my pasture Wednesday morning December 29, and some birders of unquestioned judgment and veracity had parked by my truck and after looking about 30 minutes had told me they had seen a Black-headed Grosbeak, a White-winged Dove, a Harlan's Hawk, and a Wied's Flycatcher, I would still have not doubted their judgment, but -- well that evening I saw my fourth Harlan's Hawk, the next day a lifer, Wied's Flycatcher, a Black-headed Grosbeak the day after, and on the 6th my fifth White-winged Dove plus the other three in thirty minutes. Had wishful thinking led me to have imagined such I would have thought my day dreaming had run riot. We may not expect the unexpected but it does happen.

Archie K. McKay

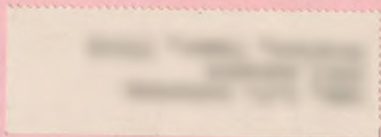
Dear Wrights:

Some mention should be made in the Spoonbill of the Black-headed Oriole that I saw and heard in my yard for nearly two weeks beginning June 4, last summer. Charlotte Johnson called my attention much later to the fact that it does not appear in the 3rd edition of the Field Checklist (McKay et al) and Peterson (The Birds of Texas) lists it as casual to San Antonio and the central coast. Such a striking bird was easily identified, of course, and the song was particularly clear and beautiful.

Joyce Wildenthal

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