



THE SPOONBILL

3

VOLUME XVIII, No. 7

November, 1967

* How falls it, oriole, thou hast come to fly *
* in tropic splendor through our Northern sky? *
* At some glad moment was it Nature's choice *
* To dower a scrap of sunset with a voice? *
* Or did some orange tulip, flaked with black, *
* in some forgotten garden, ages back, *
* Yearning toward Heaven until its wish was *
* heard, *
* Desire unspeakably to be a bird? *
* *
* Edgar Fawcett (1847-1904) *

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

COMING EVENTS (with the exception of the HOUSTON CHRISTMAS COUNT) on last page.

HOUSTON CHRISTMAS COUNT by John L. Tveten

Saturday, December 30, 1967, Leader: John L. Tveten, 512 Inwood Dr., Baytown, 77520
Ph. 583-4431

The time is rapidly approaching for the Christmas Count, and the general information and areas are summarized below. The specific area assignments were not worked out at deadline time, but should be available about the time this "hits the streets." Again it should be stressed that it is almost impossible to contact everyone who might be interested in making this count. So don't take offense if you haven't been called; just send in your reservation and we'll all be happy.

The areas will be the same as last year, as will the general arrangements. Each participant will be contacted by his area leader. It is up to each group to work out its own schedules, assignments, etc. As you know, some of our good area is being gobbled up by "progress," and a number of our faithful army will not be available. This places an added responsibility on all of us to learn the areas well and get the most out of them. The birds will be there; we hope you will be too.

Field check-lists will be provided for recording species in the field and for tabulating final results. All members are responsible for the following:

1. Make sure your name appears on your check-list.
This assures an accurate listing of participants for the Audubon Field Notes and also identifies the discoverer of any rare or unusual species (on which we are counting).
2. Return the check-list to your area leader by meeting time.
3. Record an estimate of your total mileage by car and foot, and time in the field.
4. Pay 50¢ to your area leader. This is to help defray the cost of publishing the count in the Field Notes.

Area Leaders should:

1. Obtain permission to enter all private property and keep a record of these areas for future use.

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2. Familiarize yourself with your area.
3. Introduce the members of your party to the area before the count if possible.
4. Arrange your own schedules and assignments within the area.

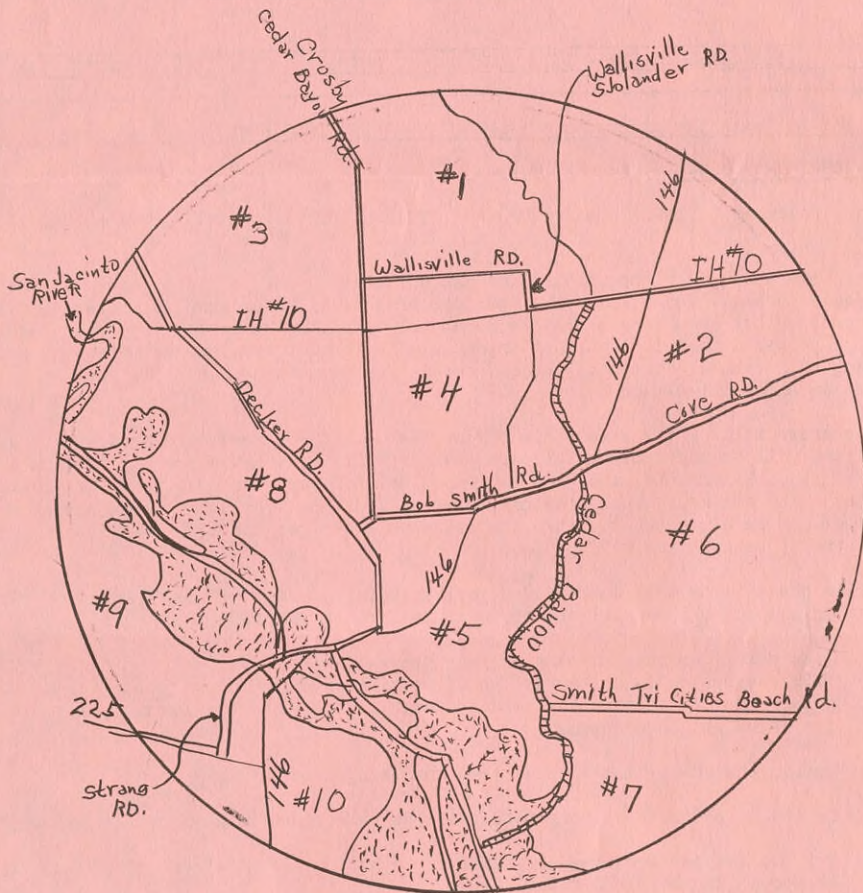
Meeting:

The meeting after the count will be held at the Tower Restaurant in Baytown. This is the same place that was used last year, and is on Decker Drive. Arrangements have been made to use one of the banquet rooms. The entrance to these rooms is on the right as you face the building. Field dress is the attire of the day, but clean shoes might be appreciated.

In order to avoid a long delay in obtaining meals, the manager will have about three main choices prepared. These have not been set at present. Of course, anything else may be ordered from the menu, but will require more time to prepare.

For the new hands, this meeting begins after birding ceases (when it is too dark to tell a pelican from a warbler). This is where you spring your "goodies," and we learn to what heights we have soared. Please inform your area leaders if you will not be able to come to the meeting so that the restaurant can have an approximate count. Map showing location of the Tower Restaurant at the end of this article.

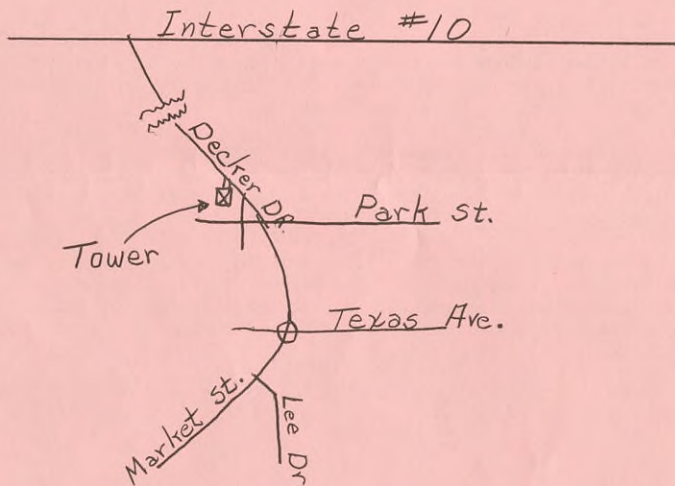
MAP OUTLINING AREA BOUNDARIES



HOUSTON CHRISTMAS COUNT AREA BOUNDARIES

- 1: From the intersection of the circle circumference and Crosby-Cedar Bayou Rd. south-east to Garth Rd., south on Garth to Wallisville Rd., then east and south on Wallisville to IH 10 and east to edge of circle. All area north and east of above.
- 2: Area in northeast part of circle south of IH 10, east of Cedar Bayou and north of Cove Rd.
- 3: Area in northwest part of circle northwest of Crosby-Cedar Bayou Road, west of Garth Rd., and north of Decker Dr. The southeast portion of this area is defined as north of Goose Creek and portion of Bob Smith Rd.
- 4: Area in north central part of circle east of Garth Rd., south of Wallisville Rd. and IH 10, west of North-south branch of Wallisville Rd. and Cedar Bayou and north of Bob Smith Rd.
- 5: Baytown proper in south central part of circle. Bordered on the east by Cedar Bayou (Dr. Fayle's Island is included), on the north by Bob Smith Rd., on the west by Goose Creek, Decker Dr., and Hwy 146 West. The southwest boundary begins at the outlet to Black Duck Bay, extends south-eastward along the west side of Hog Island, then eastward between Hog Island and Atkinson Island to a point about midway between Atkinson Island and the shoreline near Cedar Bayou. The boundary then extends southeastward parallel to and one mile east of Atkinson Island to intersect the circle circumference.
- 6: Area in eastern portion of circle, bounded on the north by Cove Rd., on the west by Cedar Bayou and on the south by the Smith-Tri-Cities Road.
- 7: Area in southeast portion of the circle, bounded on the north by the Smith-Tri-Cities Rd. and on the west by Cedar Bayou.
- 8: Area in western portion of the circle. Bordered on the east by Decker Dr. and Lee Dr., on the south by Hwy 146, and on the southwest by the Houston Ship Channel. This area covers both sides of IH 10 where it crosses the San Jacinto River.
- 9: Area in the southwest portion of circle, bordered on the northeast by the Houston Ship Channel, on the east by Strang Rd., and on the south by Hwy 225.
- 10: Area in the southern portion of the circle, bordered on the northeast as described for the southwest of Area 5. Bordered on the northwest by Hwy 225, Strang Rd., a line 3/4 of a mile northwest of and parallel to Hwy 146, to intersect the ship channel, and Hwy 146 northeast to the Black Duck Bay outlet.

MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF TOWER RESTAURANT



REGULAR OG FIELD TRIP SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1967 - by Dan Washburn

We had a grand field trip on October 22! The weather was perfect for the occasion -- bright sun, cool temperatures and cloudless skies. We met at Kempner Park under the leadership of Norma Oates, and while waiting for the group to gather, the early arrivals did a fast tour of the park and the block around the Kempner yard. (I know that this was a very productive tour, because I spent the time in discussing the likelihood of photographing the eclipse of the moon with one of the avid birders.)

Allowing a little extra time for those Houstonians who did not care to drive in excess of 60 m.p.h. through a pea-soup fog on the Gulf Freeway, we finally departed for Bolivar Peninsula, where we stopped just beyond the old lighthouse and watched several rails performing in very un-rail-like manner by trotting around the mud flats in plain view of some 23 watchers. Highlight of this stop was a single Avocet in winter plumage. This unlikely birder also called the attention of the group to a Marsh Wren who persisted in dropping into the grass in typical wren-like activity, just when a good focus was obtained.

From here we proceeded to the Kingston Road intersection, where we turned toward the Gulf. From this beach we spotted two large groups of White Pelicans, plus the usual terns, gulls and other shore-bird types. A few Black Skimmers were also seen. (I know this was a successful stop, because I engaged another avid birdwatcher in a lengthy conversation concerning the habits of sand crabs.) Just as we were leaving, Dr. Marrack spotted a Knot. (Or was it? I'm knot sure.)

After exhausting the possibilities of this beach, we traveled on to High Island for lunch at the roadside park, where we graciously shared lunch with the mosquitoes.

Following lunch, Brannan's Woods was the most likely spot to re-enter birdwatching activities. While traversing these woods, we roused one very healthy and lively cotton-mouth moccasin. (This was a good specimen; I know, because he went THAT-a-way, but fast!) Being somewhat pushed for time, we were unable to give the woods full opportunity to display the warblers. (I am sure of this because few warblers were slighted there.)

We hurried on to Anahuac Wildlife Refuge in pursuit of the much advertised Masked Duck, as well as other feathered creatures. (I would like at this time to commend the Anahuac Refuge for the diversity of its animal life, but I suggest they feed their ants a little better, because while watching a pair of immature grebes I managed to take aboard a large number of these starving beasties, which immediately began to satisfy their ravaging appetities. They must have been merely hungry, because when Pat Ridge stepped in the same ant bed a little later they didn't bite him!)

Success at last! Four Masked Ducks were found hiding among the grasses along the slough, and sure enough! Dirk Hagemeyer was patiently standing by, with movie camera ready, waiting for the ducks to come out. We spent some time there, hoping the birds would consider us harmless and show themselves a little more, but they were too shy. We saw one adult female and four "children;" no male was observed, unless "he" was the adult we saw, and he was in eclipse.

Growing weary of waiting, the group moved on for a tour of the Refuge and were rewarded by the sight of hordes of Snow and Blue Geese taking off, circling and landing, disturbed by a cruising planus marinus. Numerous other birds which I cannot name were seen; being in one of the rear automobiles, I saw mostly dust.

By now the group seemed to have dwindled to two or three cars, whereupon the OG Field Trip was declared officially ended -- "unless somebody sees a different bird on the way home." We were able to add two Eared Grebes in winter plumage, as we left one of the canals. One hundred and three species were observed by the group.

The following participated in the Field Trip: Pat Ridge, Ramona Ridge, Dan and Marian Washburn, Pat Sullivan, Tommy Barnes, James Barnes, Florence Barnes, Dan Hardy, Sue M. Buck, Tess Barry, Bud Anderson, Norma Oates, Josiephine Wilkins, Katrina and Bill Ladwig, Dick Miller, Wallace C. Mebane, Jr., Mary Sears, Sarah Gordon, Frank and Mary Belle Kokesh, Dr. David Marrack.

The Galveston contingent had its lumps at the end of the day: A 1-3/4 hour wait at the ferry, putting them home at 8:30 p.m.

BLIND SPOTS - by John L. Tveten

Our famous family of Masked Ducks was a wonderful way to add number 500 to my life list. However, it also illustrates a major difference between bird watching and photography - the fact that the aspiring photographer is almost never completely satisfied with the results of his work. There is always that desire to get a little closer, to have better lighting, or to improve the background or composition. Few indeed are the pictures which could not be improved upon.

In photographing "our" ducks, I spent an estimated forty hours in direct observation. Surely this should be adequate to satisfy the most ardent birder, and, in truth, I am well satisfied with the pictures. Still there is always the thought of the shot "that might have been" and the desire to try once more.

This family must certainly be one of the most observed families of birds in the world, and yet there are some very basic unanswered questions (besides where they came from and how). The first adult observed with the tiny ducklings was "obviously" a female, but then what about the second bird with similar plumage which soon joined them? Most books, including Kortright's The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America, specifically state that "there is no eclipse plumage" in the male Masked Duck. Bent, however, in his Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl cites the collecting of a "pair of males in hen plumage." Unfortunately he does not state the time of year or whether the birds appeared to be adults.

All of this appears to leave the sex of the birds somewhat in question. In my less-than-knowledgeable mind I tend to rationalize the second bird as the male. This would mean that either there is an eclipse plumage resembling the female, or young males attain breeding maturity before losing their immature feathering. Admittedly both of these suppositions contradict the preponderance of the scanty literature. An alternative, of course, is that this bird is from another brood, and the male has not as yet been seen. If the latter, it is interesting that the bird in question takes a very active part in protecting the young.

Whatever the sex, it is a fact that the two birds are recognizably different. The first bird (the female?) with the young has the area below the lower face stripe a rather dirty gray color, whereas the second bird (male?) has the same area a brighter tawny shade. This distinction can readily be seen from the color photographs as well as in the field. In addition, it is my opinion that the second bird has slightly larger white wing patches. The additional single duck which was observed some distance away from the family also has the brighter face color.

The single adult was observed closely for several hours with an increasing respect for his aquatic skill. At times the bird rode buoyantly in the water and at times sank slowly until only the head and neck remained in sight. His foraging excursions, however, were usually the result of a more duck-like dive. The time spent under water was normally about 30 seconds. Despite this considerable time lapse, the bird invariably came up almost exactly where he went down - seldom moving out of the field of the camera. Surfacing through a heavy cover of water plants, he occasionally presented a droll appearance with weeds hanging from his bill and head, and his back completely covered. Although the spiky tail was much in evidence, it was never seen erected in the characteristic pose.

The most striking thing about the family of ducks was certainly their ultimate tameness. Although wary and secretive at first, they rapidly accepted the inevitable birders and finally learned to ignore cars and talking people without a second glance.

Normally the group would first be detected in the grass at the water's edge, blending almost perfectly with the autumn browns. After carefully surveying the area the "female" would lead the way into open water, followed by the four downy ducklings and with the "male" bringing up the rear. This order was invariably adhered to. Once in deep water all of the ducks began to feed, the young amazing in their ability to dive and remain under water for extended periods of time. The adults, however, did not usually remain submerged for as long as previously described for the single individual, possibly because of a protective feeling for the young.

After a short period of feeding, and without detectable warning, the "female" would suddenly lead the group to the bank and settle down in the grass. Following a period of vigorous preening and much flapping of stubby wings, the young proceeded to nap. During this time one or both adults remained quietly alert. Upon waking, and after more preening, the restless ducklings were again escorted into the water for lunch. As these young developed with amazing rapidity the length of the feeding periods was extended at the

BLIND SPOTS - by John L. Tveten (continued)

expense of the naps. At all times both adults were protective - belligerently nipping at Gallinules, Coots and Teal that swam within range. None of the birds were heard to make any sound; although, others reported a "peeping" call.

In this day of rapidly dwindling wildlife it is especially encouraging to see birds extending their ranges. Let's hope that this welcome family is a harbinger of things to come.

SUMMARY OF MASKED DUCK OBSERVATIONS ON ANAHUAC REFUGE OCTOBER 2 THROUGH NOVEMBER 1, 1967
- by Russel Clapper, WITH ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS - by Linda Snyder (in parentheses)

1st identification: October 2. Female and 4 small downy ducklings just east of foot board in Shoveler Pond (southwest corner near pump) just at crack of dawn on a foggy morning. Without binoculars at 50 feet. Waited until dawn to clinch identification when adult showed white speculum. Returned within 30 minutes with Fred Abshier and crew. The family was hidden in grass and not observed. Continued around to west side of S. pond and discovered the single "female."

(Oct. 2-5 - Russel Clapper called me about 10:30 A. M. to tell me of his discovery. I reached the Refuge about 12:30 and searched for the ducks until 5 P. M. with no luck. I repeated the search the afternoon of Oct. 4 unsuccessfully. I must not have had the exact spots pinpointed nor did the ducks seem to appear except in the early mornings at that time. So on Oct. 5 I got up at 5 A. M. and met Russ on the Refuge at dawn. Only then did I have my first study of the Masked Ducks - the single female or immature and the family of female and 4 little ducklings. The little ducklings I gauged to be about 4 inches in baby size. Aside from a typical general description of the adults (very small ducks with sprig tails, two strong stripes in cheeks and white speculum in wings) I noted that the bills were darkish blue with light blue or turquoise at the base and that one-half to two-thirds of the eye extended above the eye-stripe contrary to most field book pictures. All the ducks were very grebe-like in actions, diving constantly and disappearing completely underwater. "Mother" duck was very protective even to making several strong sallies at a Pied-billed Grebe which ventured too close to the brood. Saw ducks as late as 11:30 A. M.)

The family of 5 and the single bird observed daily through week. (approximately same places). The downy ducklings were diving and feeding actively the first morning ~~not~~ observed.

October 9. Female and 4 ducklings joined by another adult also in female plumage with slightly buffier face. The single female was still present on the west side. This was checked carefully by RWC and FA and later verified. Also noted on same day by Linda Snyder.

(Oct. 9 - 10:30-2:30 - Watched single duck move from open ditch to a grassy island where it "cuddled up" to a coot and started preening itself. Found the second adult with family immediately after leaving single duck. The new adult with the family had a buffier face, darker head, and seemed to sit more erect. Though this bird had the typical twin stripes of a female I got the impression of a drake - either immature or eclipsed.)

The 2 adults and 4 young were observed daily October 9 through October 21 and single bird on west side observed with decreasing frequency. (only 2 or 3 times during week of Oct. 15-21.) I do not have a definite last date for the single bird.

(Oct. 14 - 7:30-12 A. M. - Last observation of single duck. On this day it cocked tail more rather than allowing the tail to lie in the water as a long point (like Oldsquaw). It also flew about 200 yards from its spot north of the walk to one south of the walk - very "skittish." Also observed the family of two adults and four ducklings actively swimming and diving or sitting quietly and well-camouflaged in the brown grass at edge of ditch. Got to show them to David Marrack, Mary Sears and Armand Yramategui (photographs). Ducklings had grown about an inch.)

(Oct. 17 - 10-12 A. M. - Couldn't find the single duck. Observed the family of two adults and four ducklings.)

(Oct. 21 - 4-5 P. M. - In company of Dr. A. W. O'Neil from Falfurrias, Tex., observed the family of ducks, two adults and four ducklings. The ducklings had grown and were almost as large as the adults. The family was "skittish" staying in grass all the time.

SUMMARY OF MASKED DUCK OBSERVATIONS ON ANAHUAC REFUGE, etc. (continued)

We watched them more (about 50 feet westward), humping thru the grassy bank and only crossing water where the bank provided a little inlet.)

October 22. Dirk Hagemeyer observed birds most of day (the family) and reported the 2nd adult was not present.

October 23. At sunup the 2nd adult was not with family but was present at 10:15 a.m.

October 24. Only 1 adult observed with young. 1 + 4.

October 25. Only 1 adult observed with young on the movies taken for me by Mr. F. H. Wright about 9 a.m. We also observed the 1 + 4 about 8:00 a.m.

(Oct. 25 - 11 AM - 12:30 PM - Had difficulty finding the family of ducks. While sitting waiting for their appearance I heard the voice for the first time. This was a series of single, little whistled "peeps" - somewhat like the Green-winged Teal's. Soon four ducks (still "peeping") appeared in an open space in the marsh, swam around a grassy point and disappeared again. All ducks seemed to be same size with shorter wings than adult visible on at least two. Probably all young.)

The family spent a lot of time resting in grass coming out to feed about 4:00 p.m.

October 26. About 8:00 a.m. I could barely make out the faces of 2 young in grass for just a moment. Ducks did not appear in open all day ... at least until after 3:00 p.m. but there was no observer present in late evening.

October 27. I could not locate the family or any of the adults. As far as I know the birds remained hidden all day. A marsh hawk was feeding on a catfish in the exact spot the young frequent when they travel from open water to grassy pool. Absence of mother duck may somehow be related to the behavior of the young yesterday and today. (Oct. 26 and 27).

October 28. 4 young only - D. Hagemeyer and FA.

October 29. 4 young only observed on water and edge of bank south side of open water a little after sunup. Very windy and warm. Birds under observation by DH. Accompanied by Jeannie and Doug (wife and son) with Dirk's help we were able to pick out one, two and once 3 young hidden in their favorite ? resting place in the tall thin grass of pool north of open water area. Birds were not to be found readily at sundown although I did not spend long looking for them.

October 30. 4 young resting again on bank next to road. At 4:30 all 4 young were actively diving just west of foot walk.

(Oct. 30-31 - Observed four ducks only in grass at edge of ditch and later swimming and diving in ditch. Heard voice again.)

Nov. 1. At 7:15 a.m. 4 young observed feeding in grass on north edge of open water area just west of foot bridge. They were also stretching wings and preening "scale" from new primaries. Primaries appear to be about 2/3 developed. White speculum developed. Some foot stretching too.

Notes on coloration of young Masked Ducks observed November 1, 1967.

Lower mandible pinkish.

Upper mandible a dark deep slate with a slightly olive drab cast especially on lower portion near face. Easier to visualize than to describe. Shiny and in some lights may appear a deep lead or dull lead blue. Has never appeared brown.

Toes, webbing and foot are a brownish or tannish brown. This is based on several almost "photographic" looks when young birds stretched their feet.

Notes of feeding of Masked Ducks:

Adult and young observed diving many times sometimes remaining submerged for several seconds. On Oct. 2 one duckling remained under 10 seconds or more to the point where I thought it had become entangled in vegetation. Surface skimming has been observed in both adults and young.

On November 1 the early morning feeding along the shore in shallow water was upon ~~channel~~

SUMMARY OF MASKED DUCK OBSERVATIONS ON ANAHUAC REFUGE, etc. (continued).

emergent grass stripping seeds from Seashore Paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*) and dabbling around at the base stems on the surface of the shallow water. A rather cold westerly wind was blowing 5-10 mph.

BOOK REVIEW - Julia Bradley

BIRDS IN OUR LIVES - produced by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

All whose lives have been touched by birds will find interest and value in this book. Birdwatchers, artists, photographers, poets, naturalists, sportsmen, falconry enthusiasts, farmers, gardeners, aviculturists, scientists, students, teachers, stamp and coin collectors, and many others will want to read it and to keep it as a reference. This book was written to give readers, in all walks of life, an opportunity to achieve a greater appreciation and a deeper insight into the impact of birds on our civilization. It brings into focus the economic, esthetic, scientific, and recreational values of the 850-odd species that comprise the bird resources of North America and Hawaii. It is a book that tells a wide-ranging story - it is a useful, interesting, comprehensive account of the many-sided world of birds and their importance to our country. The perspective is broad and the view is many-sided. The authors--61 in all--have a wide range of backgrounds. Many are internationally known. All write with authority, clarity, and simplicity. BIRDS IN OUR LIVES is a factual story about birds and people. It tells of the positive values of birds--of the enjoyment and inspiration that birds give to millions of people.

The book's 54 chapters are in 9 sections:

In Perspective (3 chapters) gives a panoramic view of birds, how people use them, the dimensions of the world of birds, and the value of birds in biological research.

Literature and Arts (10 chapters) reviews the influence of birds on literature, painting, commercial arts, music, folklore, our language, geographic names, and design. There is a chapter on birds and stamps and one on birds and coins. There is also a chapter on our national symbol, the Bald Eagle, and one on our State birds.

Sports and Recreation (8 chapters) surveys the ways in which birds provide healthy outdoor recreation to millions of people: Game bird hunting, birdwatching, bird photography, attracting birds, the annual, nationwide Christmas bird count, zoo aviaries, the sport of falconry, the raising of game and ornamental fowl for recreation and profit, and the cage-bird industry are all covered in detail.

In Nature's Scheme (4 chapters) reviews the often misunderstood place in Nature of hawks and owls, fish-eating birds, carrion feeders, and insect eaters.

Science and Husbandry (6 chapters) has stories of: The centuries-old quest of man to "fly like a bird;" the intensive search of scientists for answers as to how birds migrate with great precision over long distances; the significance of birds to earlier cultures; birds and our health; the development of a 5-billion-dollar poultry industry from the domestication of a few species of wild birds; and the many values and uses of pigeons and doves.

The Hand of Man (6 chapters) surveys the critical and controversial problem of birds and pesticides; analyzes hunting as a factor in bird management and conservation; details the story of bird introductions into the United States and discusses the harm and good that have come to us from them; gives information on the impact of water pollution on birds and the prospects for corrective action; considers problems caused by intrusion of TV towers into the ancestral flyways of birds; and reviews the effect on birds of man's use of land and water resources.

For Better or Worse (5 chapters) considers bird problems at airports; the damage birds cause to power and communication systems; the favorable and unfavorable effects of birds on farming and forestry; and the pleasures and problems that birds bring to our cities and suburbs.

Answers to Conflicts (6 chapters) brings into focus the nature of the damage and the scope of the problems that a few species of overabundant birds cause. Some hopeful solutions to conflicts between birds and people are explored.

For Their Survival (6 chapters) tells of: Laws and treaties now in force to protect

BOOK REVIEW, BIRDS IN OUR LIVES - Julia Bradley (continued)

birdlife in North America; organizations that are working to assure the preservation of birdlife; birds that are now on the brink of extinction and what is being done for them; the reservation of lands for bird refuges and sanctuaries; and the prospects for birds to the turn of the century. A final chapter recounts some examples of what people and their governments have been doing to help make the future of birds more secure for the lasting benefit of all citizens.

A frontispiece--in color--features the Bald Eagle, symbol of our Nation. The book has 576 pages and is attractively illustrated--there are 80 wash drawings and 372 story-telling photographs, the trim size 8 3/8" x 11", bound in cloth and stamped in gold. It has a 2-color dust jacket.

BIRDS IN OUR LIVES can be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. The price per copy is \$9.00.

CLEARING HOUSE, October, 1967

White Pelican: (400) 8, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Least Bittern: (1) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN and NS.
American Bittern: (20) 7, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Wood Stork: (300) 7, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Canada Goose: (200) 14, Anahuac Refuge JT.
White-fronted Goose: (50) 14, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Fulvous Tree Duck: (75) 8, Anahuac Refuge JT; (10) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN & NS.
CINNAMON TEAL: (3) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN & NS.
Redheaded Duck: (3) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN & NS.
CANVASBACK: (5) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN & NS.
Ruddy Duck: (12) 14, Anahuac Refuge JT
MASKED DUCK: (3 adult 4 young) throughout October, Anahuac Refuge JT. (Articles this Issue).
Sharp-shinned Hawk: (1) 14, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Cooper's Hawk: (1) 8, Anahuac Refuge JT; (1) 24 Pecan Park, SE Houston, NP.
Osprey: (1) 22, Galveston HN & NS.
Purple Gallinule: (1) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN & NS.
American Coot: (several downy young) throughout October, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Franklin's Gull: (3) 22, Galveston HN & NS.
Common Nighthawk: (2) 9, (1) 11, (3) 16, (4) 18, (1) 23, 26, 28, 29 and 30, downtown Houston NP.
Chimney Swift: (8) 8, (24) 12, 7146 Ilex, SE Houston; (9) 14, (5) 15, main Post Office, downtown Houston, NP.
Western Kingbird: (1) 22, Galveston HN & NS.
VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW: (3) 21, Anahuac Refuge HN & NS. (See Clearing House Notes)
SAGE THRASHER: (1) 15, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Robin: (3) 11, 7146 Ilex, SE Houston NP.
Nashville Warbler: (1) 22, Galveston HN & NS.
Yellowthroat: (10) 14, Anahuac Refuge JT.
Dickcissel: (3) 22, Galveston HN & NS.
White-crowned Sparrow: (8) 22, Galveston HN & NS.

Clearing House Notes:

Yellow-shafted Flicker: (3 males & 3 females) 30 Mason Park SE Houston. (Date omitted from report appearing in October SPOONBILL) NP.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW: "Hazel and I got good looks at the birds - she concentrated on the face pattern while I studied the tail. The white was so noticeably extensive it seemed to encircle the whole tail. With no Field Guide along Hazel drew a picture of the bird and we researched it at home." NS.

Clearing House Contributors:

HN & NS Hazel Nichols and Nancy Strickling.
JT John Tveten.
NP Noel Pettingell

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR ORNITHOLOGY GROUP MEETING, OCTOBER 5, 1967.

The October 5 meeting of the Ornithology Group was called to order by Chairman, Dick Miller, at the Downtown Recreation Center at 7:30. Visitors Anne Weeks, Don Schaefer and Eloise Thompson were introduced. The minutes of the last meeting were not read. Sarah Gordon read the Treasurer's report; the September 30 balance was \$406.72. She also

announced that the ornithology class at Lamar Tech had ordered Steve Williams' Check List for each member of the class. John Tveten, Christmas Count leader, said that the areas this year would be the same as last year. He urged all those wishing to take part to send him a card. Let's save him from making 200+ 'phone calls this year! The meeting afterwards will be at the Tower Restaurant in Baytown. The only thing different from last year will be 25 more birds!!!

Ewell Bradley announced that he had received a letter from Russel Clapper saying that they had found Masked Ducks at Anahuac.

The Washburns were heartily thanked for their wonderful job on the group Roster.

The Outdoor Nature Club field trip for October will be to the Little Thicket on October 28 and 29. They would like to have exhibits from each group. Dick Miller said that we were sort of at a disadvantage. Other groups collect specimens but we have frowned on things like that. Pat Sullivan volunteered an exhibit of Good Birding Trips. Dirk Hagemeyer said that the Photography Group had an exhibit of pictures which were mostly of birds and that we ought to merge. Katrina Ladwig suggested that the Ornithology Group should work up a check-list for the sanctuary. It would be too late for this year but should be considered as a future project.

While Julia Bradley is in Germany, the Wrights have kindly taken over the Spoonbill for the month.

Don Schaefer, a new member of the group as of this evening, presented a program of beautiful slides of the exotic birds at the Houston Zoological Garden Tropical Bird House.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Katrina Ladwig.

VISITING HOURS AT THE ANAHUAC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - By Russel Clapper, Refuge Manager.

Visiting hours at the Refuge are from 7:30 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. Since the combination lock has been removed from the gate, the normal procedure will be to keep the gate locked between 4:00 P. M. and 7:30 A. M.

Arrangements can be made, however, by contacting the Refuge Office (address: Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, P. O. Box 278, Anahuac, Texas 77514), in advance requesting special written permission for early or late visitations, and a key will be provided for that particular visit. It is not the intention to make it difficult for visitors to enter or leave the Refuge, but to protect the wildlife that they enjoy observing. The visiting hours on the Bird List of the Refuge (7:30 to 4:30) are in error and will be corrected.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

Mr. and Mrs. G. Stanley Rushbrooke, 1207 Parc V, 3600 Montrose Blvd., Houston, Texas 77006.
Miss Ruth Ray, 919 Cable, Conroe, Texas 77301.

Correction in the telephone number of Mrs. J. A. Snyder listed in the OG Roster: the correct number is GR 1-1651.

COMING EVENTS:

December 7 (Thursday) Regular OG Meeting, Downtown Recreational Center, 7:30 P. M.
Program: A talk by Victor Emanuel on the topic "THE ROLE OF BIRDERS IN THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT", followed by a general discussion regarding this subject. - - Victor Emanuel, a former Editor of the Spoonbill in 1959-1960, and formerly a very active member of the OG Group, has been away for several years, studying and teaching Political Science at Harvard University. He has returned to Texas to do his dissertation on an aspect of Texas politics. He was one of the participants in the re-discovery of the Eskimo Curlew. He wrote an article on this subject which appeared in AUDUBON MAGAZINE, entitled "Texans Re-Discover the Nearly Extinct Eskimo Curlew."

COMING EVENTS (continued)

After the discussion, Dirk Hagemeyer, who has spent many, many hours studying and photographing the famous MASKED DUCKS at the Anahuac Refuge, will show pictures of the ducks. We all know the superb quality of Dirk's pictures and we shall be looking forward to his presentation in this DOUBLE FEATURE !! program.

- December 11 (Monday) AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM "Land That I Love" by John E. Taft, a young man who is devoting what time he can afford to protecting two things in the world that are most dear to him -- the wild land and the wild creatures that exist on this continent today. Members of the Audubon audiences who may be older in years than this young man in his twenties will enjoy growing younger with the personality of John Earl Taft. - Houston Homebuilders Auditorium, 2710 W. Alabama. 8:00 P. M.
- December 12 (Tuesday) Regular ONC Meeting, in the Garden Center, 1500 Hermann Drive, at 8:00 P. M. The program: "Collecting and Hatching Wild Bird Eggs" by Howard Brookshire.
- December 30 (Saturday) Christmas Bird Count. Leader: John L. Tveten. (See article this issue.)
- December 31 (Sunday) Freeport Christmas Count. Leader: Victor Emanuel. A PLEA FOR HELP!! "Texas can have the number one all prime highest Christmas count in the United States! Freeport, Texas, has been among the top five counts in the United States for several years. Two years ago it was second in the nation, with 193 species. Cocoa, Florida had only four species more. Last year despite rain almost all day, 50 observers found 190 species. Every year at Freeport ten to fifteen species present in the area are missed due to insufficient coverage. Our cumulative total for the past five Freeport counts is over 240 species. Texas now holds the number one spot in the nation as far as number of counts is concerned. We can also have the number one count! I urge all "old Freeporters" to join in this year's count, and especially welcome newcomers from Houston, other parts of Texas and surrounding states. We have scheduled the count on the 31st of December to give out-of-town participants a day to drive down and a day to drive back after the count. I shall be happy to try to arrange accommodations for any out-of-town visitors who can come. I can be contacted by writing me at 2607 Tangleway, Houston, Texas 77005, or by telephoning me at MO 7 0612." Victor Emanuel.

OFFICERS:

Chairman:	Mr. Richard Miller, 10023 Sugar Hill, Houston, Texas 77042
Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Wallace C. Mebane, Jr., 7106 Mobud, Houston, Texas 77036
Secretary:	Mrs. Bill (Katrina) Ladwig, 4200 Mt. Vernon, Houston, Texas 77006
Treasurer:	Miss Sarah Gordon, 1746 Wroxton Court, Houston, Texas 77005
Field Trip Chairman:	Dr. David Marrack, 420 Mulberry Lane, Bellaire, Texas 77401
Program Chairman:	Mrs. Daniel T. (Marian) Washburn, 2101 59th St., Galveston, Texas
Co-Editors of	Mr. and Mrs. Ewell C. (Julia) Bradley, #3 Briarway, Houston,
The Spoonbill:	Texas 77027

Nov 67

Outdoor Nature Club
(Ornithology Group)
1746 Wroxtton Court
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