



Published by Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

SPRING BIRDING IN TEXAS

Eleanor Byrne

In April 1979 the Gulf Coast of Texas had heavy rain for a week and the Beaumont area was flooded. This is rice-growing country, flat and diked. Coming in by plane, the rice fields showed brim-full, with only tops of dikes visible. The white specks of egrets in flocks flying over the water were my first Texas birds.

At dinner I met the group signed up for the Victor Emanuel "Grand Texas Tour" and the two leaders, Victor Emanuel and John Rowlett, who outlined the schedule for the morning - an early start -- the first of many.

At 5:30 a.m. we loaded luggage and ourselves into a Mercedes Benz 15-passenger van which had very large windows all around and was excellent for birding. Breakfast had been pre-ordered at a restaurant to save time, and we were soon driving south on Rte. 124 out of Beaumont headed for High Island. No stops were made, but we had our first sight of fulvous tree ducks, mottled ducks, and vultures. High Island is not an island, but a salt dome rising out of marshes, with miles of flat country with "grasshoppers" pumping oil from the periphery of the salt dome.

On arrival we went immediately into the woods. Our leaders knew, though we did not, that the weather the previous few days had held back the birds reaching the Texas coast after crossing the Gulf of Mexico. Consequently, in spite of the mud and unbelievable numbers of mosquitos, this was to prove a fabulous birding day. Boy Scout Woods and Smith Woods were literally full of birds - warblers, vireos, thrushes, tanagers - all the migrants which had made a landfall in these woods nearest the Gulf. Ten warblers were added to my life list almost at once. The hooded warbler was the most common, and the Tennessee next. We were witnessing what the experts call "a fall-out of warblers".

After lunch and a half-hour rest at our motel, we were out again at 1:30 to a nearby wooded bird sanctuary. This was a repetition of the morning - undiminished numbers of birds. After a while, we drove south a mile to Rte. 87 and turned east on the coast road toward Sabine Pass. This stretch is treeless except for a small clump of salt cedar every 2 or 3 miles. Birds crossing the Gulf on their northward migration alight exhausted in these dense clumps. We stopped at each one to see what assortment of birds it held - green heron (more than I'd seen in all my years of birding), indigo bunting, Eastern meadowlark, blue grosbeak, and

Spring Birding (con't.)

many other species. Scissor-tailed flycatchers perched on the fence along the road. At one stop where I walked on the beach, an indigo bunting was resting on the sand, too tired to make it to the trees 10 feet away!

Light was fading so we returned to the motel for dinner and to talk over an utterly fabulous day in which 120 species were counted and huge numbers of many species seen. The expert birders and even our leaders were exhilarated at the record numbers of birds sighted.

On the next day, Monday, an 8 a.m. departure was scheduled for Anahuac Wildlife Refuge, north and west of High Island. We stopped briefly to look at shore birds in rice paddies along the way, but could not linger as we had an appointment at the Refuge for the rail buggy ride. From this description in the literature, I had envisioned a miniature railroad through the marshes. Actually, our vehicle was the 'Rolligan' - a tractor with 5-foot wide tires, pulling a sort of wagon with plank seats. The object was to see rails, not ride them. We clambered up and were off on a very bumpy circular path in the marshes during which we saw 7 soras, 3 yellow rails, and 2 Virginias. Binoculars weren't needed, as the Rolligan flushed the birds which ran along an open track so we had good looks at them before they darted off into the shelter of the grass. No black rail was seen, much to the disappointment of some of the group who 'needed' this bird for their life lists.

We returned via County road 1985, again stopping to see shorebirds: Stilt and buff-breasted sandpipers, Hudsonian godwit, dowitchers, etc. A picnic lunch, followed by a short rest at our motel, and we went out again to the woods we had been in the previous afternoon. What a difference! Not a third as many birds; the majority had moved north during the night. The paths were still muddy but we had long since stopped trying to avoid mud. We searched for a Brewster's warbler reported to be in a certain area, but did not locate it. After dinner the group made a brief check of the salt cedars near the Gulf, but here again numbers of birds were much diminished.

An early start on Tuesday with orange juice and sweet buns at the door of the van to get off with, and we were on our way to the Big Thicket Natural Area, near Silsbee, north of Beaumont.

A dirt road took us into a long-leaf pine savannah to look for the red-cockaded woodpecker and Bachman's sparrow. After scouting around, the sparrow was found perched on a tree in the open where it sang for a considerable time, giving us all an opportunity to study it well.

Our leaders, Victor and John, almost never used a tape re-

Spring Birding (con't.)

corder to call in the birds, though John sometimes imitated an owl. We continued to search for the woodpecker; two nests were found. This bird nests in a hole made in a live tree, so there is always a whitish area under the hole made by the running sap. Victor finally gave up, and drove the group to Silsbee for lunch. John Rowlett remained behind with Jim Vardaman, who had joined our group for two days, to continue the search. Vardaman was trying to break the record for number of birds seen during the calendar year 1979, and had John's help during the two days. Victor told us he considered John Rowlett to be the best 'bird-finder' in the U.S.

John and Vardaman came to the restaurant while we were still eating, having found the woodpecker. The van returned us all to the first nest-hole area, where Victor scouted ahead and located the bird. Although it moved from tree to tree we all had a good look at it. We also saw a pine warbler and brown-headed nuthatch in this area.

On Wednesday we were off for the Anahuac Wildlife Refuge again for another try for the black rail. This was a departure from schedule, probably made at the instigation of those in our group who 'needed' the rail. Along the way we had time to look at shorebirds.

Roseanne Rowlett, John's sister, and an employee of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, was leading a group of Scandinavians on a special birding trip. This group was out in the "Rolligan" when we reached the Refuge so we had to wait for its return. As bumpy a ride as before, but made worthwhile when a black rail crossed the tire track and disappeared into the grass, giving us all a good look at it.

Again a picnic lunch, a rest at the motel, and in midafternoon a 40-mile ride west on the coast road to Bolivar Flats, tidal flats near Port Bolivar. The buildings of Galveston were visible across the bay. Bolivar Flats held thousands of shorebirds: white pelicans, sandpipers, plovers, avocets, black skimmers, black tern, gulls, marbled godwit, etc. A glaucous gull was a life bird for me, as was a reddish egret. We remained amid this wealth until dark, then drove to Port Bolivar for a shrimp dinner.

Another 5:30 a.m. departure, again to Bolivar Flats to look for sharp-tailed and seaside sparrows which had not been seen the evening before. Another look at the myriads of shorebirds, plus an oyster catcher, before we scoured the grassy patches back of the beach. Two sharp-tails were located but no seaside.

(to be continued in next issue)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

January 1 has come and gone. And, I've done all those things every avid birder does on that date. I've totaled my year list and resolved not to miss ruffed grouse and canvasback again. I've reflected on such rarities as great gray owl and Mississippi kite and wondered aloud, "What next?" I have reviewed my Florida trip and dreamed of one to Texas or Arizona, or California, or Alaska, or ?????? I have reflected on experiences of the past year with other people - showing a woman her first snowy owl, marshalling the troops on Century Run, leading the annual Henslow's sparrow stomp at Five Rivers.

That's "where it's at" - PEOPLE. You'll run out of rarities, you'll exhaust year list birds, and you'll not go to every far-flung place imaginable. But, you can never run out of thrills if you enjoy people. Look at a house sparrow with an 8-year-old and tell me it's an ordinary bird. This is the essence of a bird club - PEOPLE.

It was people with a common interest in birds that formed this club as the Schenectady Bird Club in 1939. It is people with this same common interest who will carry out the club's goals of promoting "a knowledge of and appreciation for birds" in the Eighties. There are now over 300 of you, and these are ~~some of the things you are going to be doing in 1980.~~

- over 30 field trips will go to local areas: Meadowdale, Tomhannock and Five Rivers, and more exotic places: Ferd's Bog, Long Island, and Mio, Michigan
- five Audubon Screen Lectures will be conducted by the Program Committee
- young people in schools, Scouts, and museums will be introduced to birds by the Youth Activities Committee
- an educational use plan for the Reist Sanctuary will be developed
- an Atlasing project to map breeding birds of New York State will begin with our help and guidance.

We need people to help. Won't you have the thrill of leading a field trip, or serving on the Sanctuary Committee, or teaching a school group?



Sightings of Parasitic Jaeger and Brant
Highlight Troy Christmas Count

William W. Shuster

The annual Troy Christmas count, held on Saturday, December 29, 1979 resulted in the sighting of 11,271 individual birds. Some 50 species were reported by six field groups and several feeding station observers. The highlight of the count was the unprecedented sighting of a parasitic jaeger, seen by members of one of the field groups feeding on a dead fish on the mud flats of the Hudson River near Melrose. This species is rarely seen far from the ocean or large bodies of water except during migration, and this appearance is by far the latest occurrence in upstate New York. Also seen for the first time on the Troy Christmas count was a brant, observed at the Tomhannock reservoir. Both of these species represent new additions to the list of birds seen on Christmas counts in this area. Other interesting sightings included bluebirds seen near Melrose, a pintail on the Hudson River, a common loon on the Tomhannock Reservoir, several pileated windpeckers, a goshawk and two kingfishers.

Mild weather with much open water was in part responsible for the large number of water fowl seen this year. Landbird numbers were down with numbers of finches, grosbeaks, sparrows, robins and cardinals much less than in recent previous years. Owls were completely absent as were grackles. Hawk sightings were fewer than last year.

Thanks are extended to field observers and the following feeder station observers:

Irene Freemeyer

Nancy Shuster

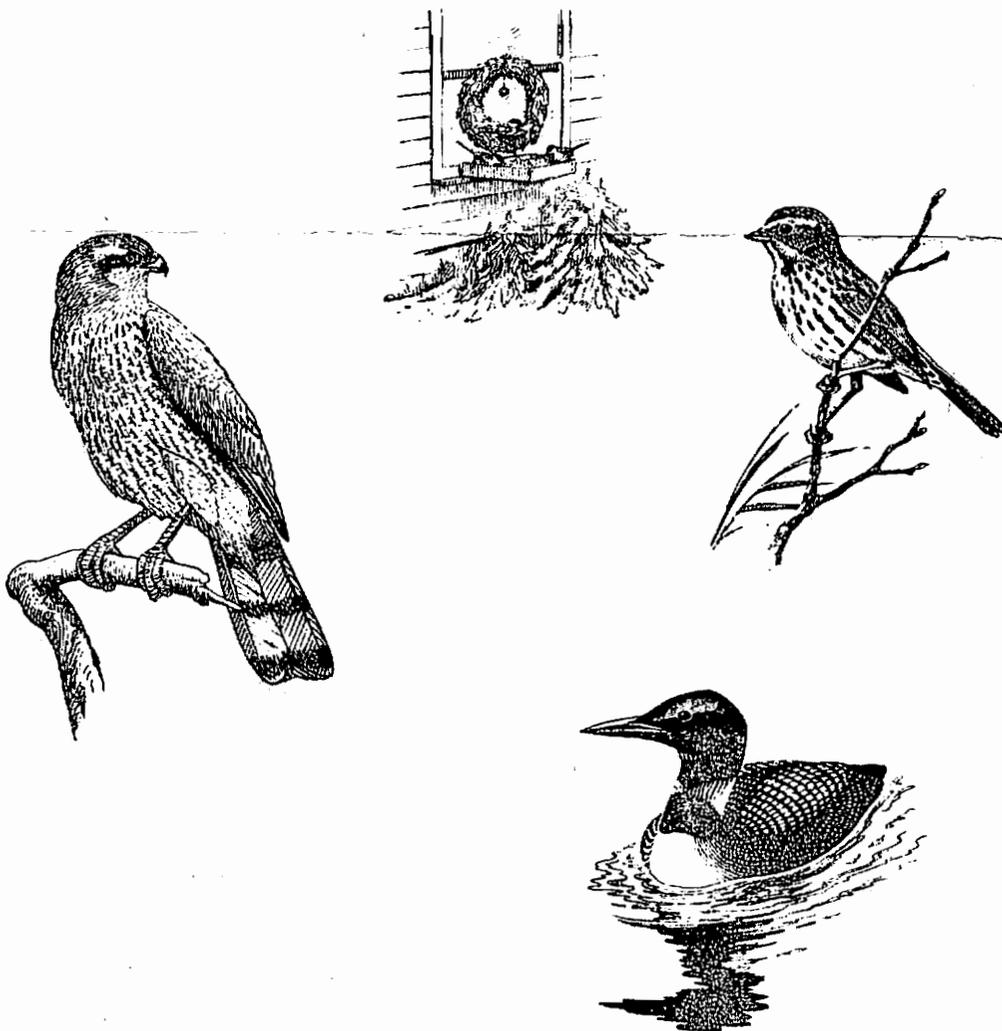
Key to Groups

- Group A: Tomhannock area. William Gorman, Monte Gruett, Connie Hasko, Michael Kuhrt. 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM. 4½ hours afoot, 5 hours by car. 4 miles apart, 39 miles by car. Brant, loon, sharp-shinned hawk.
- Group B: Melrose, Spiegletown to Schaghticoke. William Shuster, Wallace Chapman, Gretchen DeKalb, Nancy Dennis, Marion Ford, Betty Hicks, Elizabeth Washburn, Ruthanna Worrell. 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. ½ hour afoot, 7 hours by car. 2 miles apart, 64 miles by car. Bluebirds, ruffed grouse, flickers.
- Group C: East and West Sides of Hudson River. Samuel Madison, Peter Feinberg, Andrew Guthrie, Richard Guthrie, Geoffrey Neevy, Walton Sabin, Thomas Williams. 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. 5½ hours afoot, 3½ hours by car. 5 miles afoot, 60 miles by car. Parasitic jaeger, goshawk, kingfisher.

Feathers

Winter 1980

- Group D: Mohawk River, Cohoes, Green Island. Richard Phillion
7:30 AM to 3:15 PM, 4 hours afoot, 3-3/4 hours by car,
4 miles afoot, 32 miles by car. American coot, ring-
necked pheasant, Iceland gull.
- Group E: Lower Saratoga County. Robert Budliger, William Lee.
6:45 AM to 4:45 PM. 1 hour afoot, 9 hours by car.
1 mile afoot, 93 miles by car. Rough-legged hawk,
meadowlark.
- Group F: Brunswick and Eagle Mills. Marilyn and Norman Fancher,
Peter Corrigan. 6:30 A, to 2:00 PM. 2 hours afoot,
5½ hours by car. 3 miles afoot, 66 miles by car. Pileated
woodpecker, sharp-shinned hawk.
- Group X: Feeder reports: Irene Freemeyer, Nancy Shuster.
Purple finch, house finch.



Troy Christmas Bird Count - Dec. 29, 1979

<u>Species</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Common Loon	1							1
Canada Goose	2000							2000
Mallard	56		551	14	30	3		654
Black Duck	135		21	46	3			205
Pintail			1					1
Common Merganser	62			1				63
Goshawk			1					1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1					1		2
Red-tail Hawk	2	6	14	2	14	2		40
Rough-legged Hawk					1			1
Kestrel		4	3	1	2	3		13
Ruffed Grouse		1				2		3
Pheasant				1				1
American Coot				2				2
Iceland Gull				1				1
Great Blk-b Gull	1		11	4				16
Herring Gull	15	2	68	1200	110			1395
Ring-billed Gull		5	36	60	1			102
Mourning Dove	10		103	15	14	17		159
Kingfisher			2					2
Common Flicker		2	5	1	2			10
Pileated Woodpecker	1		1		1			3
Hairy Woodpecker	10	1	3		1	1	2	18
Downy	8	2	6		3	6	3	28
Blue Jay	17	6	6	5	24	12	7	77
Common Crow	70	105	20	20	140	39	3	397
Blk-c Chickadee	65	28	61	20	80	44	10	308
Tufted Titmouse		1	6		6	1		14
White-br Nuthatch	16	5	9	1	4	6	1	42
Brown Creeper	5							5
Mockingbird	1		1	1	3	3		9
Robin	2	11		1	7	4		25
Eastern Bluebird		5						5
Starling	33	996	247	1000	340	224	12	2852
House Sparrow	30	166	46	50	70	109	20	491
Eastern Meadowlark					14			14
Red-winged Blackbird			5					5
Brown-headed Cowbird			1		1			2
Cardinal	1		3	2	11	6	5	28
Evening Grosbeak	14	5		2		10	30	61
Purple Finch							3	3
House Finch		12	18	10	2	15	31	88
Goldfinch	4	14	4		22	23	14	81
Junco			5	2	22			29
Tree Sparrow	4	5	2	5	36	5	1	58
White-thr Sparrow	2	2	16					20
Song Sparrow	2	1	1	2	4			10
Rock Dove	307	232	228	50	940	161		1918
*Brant	7							7
*Parasitic Jaeger			1					1
Total Species								50
Total Count	2882	1617	1506	2519	1908	697	142	11,271

*New Listing

SOUTHERN RENSSELAER COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Again we face Christmas Count results influenced by unusual climatic conditions. To this date, the winter of 1979-1980 is the driest since 1860, with essentially no snowfall. Until the time of the Christmas count, the season had also been exceedingly warm. Though the weather has turned colder, the birding situation seems unchanged from December. Birds are spread over wide areas still abundant with food; that food readily accessible due to lack of snow. Thus, feeders and roadsides are not productive for birding this season.

The Fourteenth Annual Southern Rensselaer County Christmas Bird Count was held December 22, 1979. Both the species total (53 on the count day) and the individual total (19,007, or 6,089 disregarding starlings) were below recent averages. The unusual weather and resultant open water probably contributed to two "first sightings" for the count. Bob Budliger and Alice Ross reported a common loon on Snyder's Lake, and a group led by Bob Korn and Dick Guthrie reported 2 wood ducks near Glenmont. That group also reported a winter wren. A Canada goose and 2 other winter wrens were seen during the count period but not on the count day. Record numbers of ducks were seen in areas with open water. ~~While numbers of hawks were average, a record 13 owls were heard.~~ Mockingbirds are steadily spreading into the area and a record 34 were sighted. Several groups reported sightings and record total of 168 robins were counted. This is more than three times the previous high. In general, finches were scarce or absent. Sightings of evening grosbeaks were off sharply. No pine grosbeaks, common redpolls, or pine siskins were reported. Only 38 American goldfinches, the fewest since 1966, were spotted. The perennial field sparrow in Bill Gorman's yard provided a bright note by bringing a friend on its sixth consecutive yearly visit.

Observations were made from 5:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. under morning cloudiness which gave way to afternoon sunshine. Temperatures ranged from 15 to 45° F. and the wind was from the south at 0 to 10 mph. Natural food was abundant and accessible; there was a trace of snow which melted by afternoon and only small ponds and lakes were partly to fully frozen. The count area is included by a circle 15 miles in diameter with its center in Best, at the intersection of Hwy 152 and Best-Luther Road.

Field parties included 1) Bob Budliger and Alice Ross (North Greenbush and a portion of Albany), 2) James Covert and Don Bermas (Poestenkill), 3) Paul Connor, William Lee, and Debbie Shaw (W. East Greenbush and W. Schodack), 4) William and David Gorman (NW East Greenbush and Rensselaer), 5) Monte Gruett, Walt Sabin, and Mike Kuhrt (E. East Greenbush and NE Schodack), 6) Dick and Andrew Guthrie, Bob Korn, Tom Palmer, and Bill Cook (Glenmont)

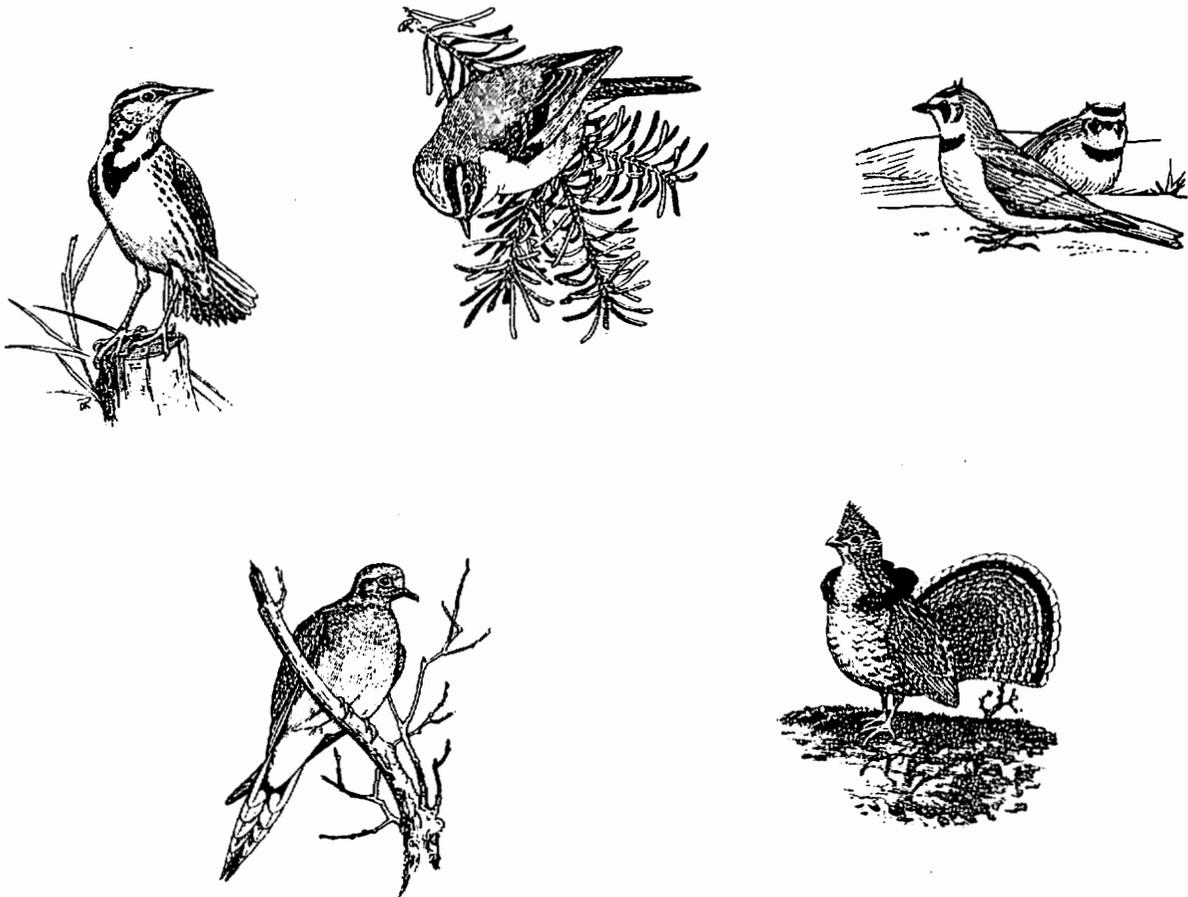
Southern Rensselaer County Christmas Bird Count (cont.)

and portions of Albany), 7) Dick Phillion and Greg Meisner (Sand Lake and N. Nassau), and 8) Ed Cummings (SE Schodack and S. Nassau).

Feeder watchers included Noel Albertson, Malcolm Bell, Ruth Bordt, Mrs. Walter Bubie, Cris Carabateas, Bob Christiansen, Je-Anne Covert, Mrs. Robert Don, Frank Dufour, Jr., Mrs. James F. Hargrave, Mrs. John W. LaPan, Dave Messer, Alice Mohl, Helmut Neumann, R.A. Pearce, Mrs. Mildred Van Buren, and Oscar Widstrand.

Thanks to all for a job well done.

Mike Kuhrt



SOUTHERN RENSSELAER COUNTY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT
December 22, 1979

Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9*	TOTAL
Common Loon	1									1
Mallard	2			12		68				82
Black Duck				2		13				15
Wood Duck						2				2
Sharp-shinned Hawk					1					1
Red-tailed Hawk	7	2	10	12	2	10	3	2		48
Rough-legged Hawk	1							1	3	5
Kestrel	3	1	5	1	1	4		1		16
Ruffed Grouse			3		3	5	1	2	6	20
R-necked Pheasant									4	4
Herring Gull	9		20	3		19				51
Ring-billed Gull			3	12		8				23
Mourning Dove	24	53	39	60	19	38	64	8	87	392
Screech Owl				3	2	1				6
Great Horned Owl			1			1	3		2	7
Kingfisher	1		1	1			2			5
Flicker	1		1	2			1			5
Pileated Wdpecker	1									1
Hairy Woodpecker		1	3	5	11	3	4	1	18	46
Downy Woodpecker	6	2	13	4	24	11	10	2	29	101
Horned Lark			120				30	20		170
Blue Jay	10	46	29	16	38	3	26	14	122	304
Crow	85	104	45	40	47	57	60	29	22	480
Chickadee	70	40	80	10	64	62	50	12	173	561
Tufted Titmouse			3	6	2	7			30	48
White-br Nuthatch	6	6	9	3	12	15	17	2	38	108
Red-br Nuthatch									1	1
Brown Creeper						4			1	5
Winter Wren						1				1
Mockingbird	4	2	4	9	8	2	2	1	2	34
Robin	10		106	1	20	23			8	168
Golden-cr Kinglet				1		1				2
Cedar Waxwing			5							5
Starling	140	240	1400	10K	484	301	100	14	239	12918
House Sparrow	80	136	210	60	119	70	70	16	162	923
Eastern Meadowlark								5		5
R-winged Blackbird			2	2		5				9
Common Grackle									2	2
Br-headed Cowbird	30	100	4	6		26			10	176
Cardinal	6	1	34	5	20	16	4	3	44	133
Evening Grosbeak		34	2			7	27		67	137
Purple Finch								3	10	13
American Goldfinch	1		2	1	14			8	12	38
Dark-eyed Junco	10	8	3	25	1	1	12	4	83	147
Tree Sparrow	23		101	12	31	51	60	13	32	323
Field Sparrow				(1)					2	2
White-Thr Sparrow			13		3	12		1	27	56
Swamp Sparrow						3				3
Song Sparrow			15	2	2	8	3	1		31
Lapland Longspur			3							3
Snow Bunting			15							15
Rock Dove	80	473	190	250	25	135	30	30		1213
House Finch	36		35	6	20	5		4	36	142

*Feeders
10

Bird watchers top my list.
 I aimed to be one, but I missed.
 Since I'm both myopic and astigmatic,
 My aim turned out to be erratic,
 And I, bespectacled and binocular,
 Exposed myself to comment jocular.
 We don't need too much birdlore, do we,
 To tell a flamingo from a towhee;
 Yet I cannot, and never will,
 Unless the silly birds stand still.
 And there's no enlightenment in a tour
 of ornithological literature.
 Is you strange creature a common chickadee,
 Or a migrant alouette from Picardy?
 You rush to consult your Nature guide
 And inspect the gallery inside,
 But a bird in the open never looks
 Like its picture in the birdie books -
 Or if it once did, it has changed its plumage,
 And plunges you back into ignorant gloomage.
 That is why I sit heregrowing old by inches,
 Watching the clock instead of finches,
 But I sometimes visualize in my gin
 the Audubon that I audubin.



Ogden Nash

Submitted by Bob Budliger

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM

Niskayuna High School
 Thursday, April 17, 1980
 8:00 P.M.

"Around the Bay"
 George Regensburg

Delaware Bay and its tidewater marshes support a vast array of wildlife. George Regensburg discusses the intimate relationship between the denizens of the land and sea—greater snow geese, migrating shorebirds, willet and gull. Depositing eggs in the sand are the horseshoe crab and diamond-backed terrapin, while in the water we find the whelk, oyster drill, seahorse, and scavenger snail. A fascinating pictorial study of an area now endangered by ditching, pollution, and encroachment by man.

DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600 DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600

The Christmas bird count: A diary

Sandra McClellan

Ordinarily, I don't do birds. The Audubon Christmas bird count is special, however, and when I learned that one would be done in the Salem area on December 16, I decided to make an exception and tag along with the group.

The Christmas count, now in its 80th year, was the brainchild of an eminent ornithologist, Frank M. Chapman, editor of Bird Lore, a forerunner of Audubon magazine. In 1900 Mr. Chapman suggested "spending a portion of Christmas day with the birds and sending a report of the hunt to Bird Lore before retiring." He proposed the count as an alternative to then-popular "side hunt" in which gentlemen took to the fields on Christmas day to shoot everything that crossed their paths in fur and feathers. Since then, the count time has been extended to include any 24-hour period between December 15 and January 1.

The Salem area count took in a circle 15 miles in diameter, covering portions of Salem, Greenwich, Jackson, Argyle and Fort Edward. The territory was divided into eight sectors with groups assigned to each. There were about 30 participants from Salem, Cambridge, Greenwich, Buskirk and as far away as New Boston, Slingerlands, Albany, and Burnt Hills.

In my group were two veteran birders from Salem, Ruth McClellan and Mary Stewart. In addition (perhaps to counter my inexperience) we somehow managed to snag Craig Jolly, the organizer of the Salem count, a student at Salem Central School and as avid a birder and note-taker as you'd want to meet. By acclamation, we named Craig our group counter. As a measure of his determination, Craig was out at 4:30 a.m. on count day in an attempt to score some owls. The rest of us agreed 7:30 was a fine time to begin. Here are some notes I took of our expedition:

7:30 a.m. - Count day begins. It's cloudy and windy, a bad sign. Wind is not good for birding and the group is worried about having a low count. I tape a special poster to our car window that states we are on official birder business and don't plan to mess around "littering, hunting, making noise, disturbing plants or smoking" on private property, and we're off.

7:45 - I never knew you could go so long without seeing a bird. Ruth, our driver, decides to stop the car and listen. We roll the windows down and everyone pokes his head out and starts making bird noises. Still nothing, apparently the birds are out of ear-shot. Maybe they're just sleeping in today.

8:00 - Still nothing. Much cursing at the wind. Mary and

Ruth content themselves with reminiscing about warblers of the past. We spot a flock of rock doves (this is birder lingo for pigeons) and we dutifully count them, also a bunch of starlings. Rumor has it that there is a red-headed woodpecker in the area but it doesn't make an appearance.

9:00 - The kestrels aren't in their usual spots, neither are the shrikes or the kingfishers. For that matter, neither am I. Mary yearns for a pine grosbeak, to no avail.

9:30 - I'm developing a severe case of eye strain, also a pain in my neck from looking out the left side window. We look for houses with bird feeders in hopes that we'll spot something. We spot a front yard where some misguided soul has put up a nice bird feeder - then tied the family dog to it.

9:43 - Big excitement! Ruth has spotted a robin, most unusual for this time of year and are all very smug about it. We debate whether to fill out a special sheet on him. The sheet, provided by the Audubon people for special species, is very involved, requiring descriptions of the bird's upperparts, underparts, behavior, bird/sun orientation, vocalization, and much, more more. We're glad Craig is with us.

10:00 - We have 17 species so far. The kestrel still eludes us, as do the shrike and the kingfisher. "We don't even have a mallard," Ruth wails. She is disgusted. We travel the back side of Carter's pond, seeing nothing. Around the front side of the pond, however, we are rewarded with two Canada geese, sliding on the ice.

11:01 - We screech to a halt thinking we see horned larks in a nearby field. Or are they pipits? They turn out to be the former, or at least that's what the group decides. We now have 19 species.

11:30 - Interlopers! We have met another car of birders doing the count on a road we had thought to be our territory. This is not supposed to happen. Much map reading takes place in both cars. We finally have to admit we're "out of place". We press on, only slightly embarrassed, determined to keep a more vigilant eye on the map, as well as the sky. Craig spots a cardinal - there is much celebrating.

11:45 - We've started to curse the birds. Where are they? We decide it's time for lunch. In between bites, we are supposed to count birds at our own feeders.

1:11 - Lunch break over, we finally spot a kestrel. A good omen.

1:45 - We've driven 86 miles and our crow count is up to 53. In desperation, Ruth decrees: "It's time to get out and walk." We do, but still no birds.

A diary (con't.)

2:25 - We're out of the car again, still no luck. "A turkey would sure help this day out," Mary says. I spot two red-tailed hawks.

3:15 - Afoot again, we spot nothing but the innards of a skinned-out rabbit and a splendid field of British soldiers among the moss.

4:00 - It's quitting time. We've logged 104 miles and counted 20 different species. It's time to join the rest of the group and swap notes.

4:30 - We're still waiting for the Die-hards, as we nicknamed a group of birders from Greene county, to appear. And all this time I thought I was with the Die-hards.

4:45 - The Die-hards finally appear and we all troop off, a covey of birders, five cars in all, for the countdown at Craig's camp.

5:00 - At the camp, it's like a birder's version of "Can You Top This?" Going in rotation, the section leader calls out the number of each species seen by his group. The Die-hards are section eight, in the Jackson area. The count begins: Robins, anyone? "One," we say proudly. "Thirty-four," the Die-hards counter. Starlings? "Eighty-one," we say. "Five hundred," sing out the Die-hards. Any unusual species? Everyone is silent - except for the Die-hards, who report a dickcissel. And so it goes. Our group did, however, report the only screech owl.

6:15 - The count is over. We are happy for the Die-hards for they helped us to log a total of 50 species and 4,429 birds. We are happy for the Die-hards but we all decide to draw straws to see who gets their territory next year. Failing that, some of us make secret plans to ride with the Die-hards. We'll use a van, if necessary.

Editor's note: Used with permission of Sandra McClellan, Editor, The Journal Press. This article appeared in the Greenwich Journal December 20, 1979.



ARE HUMAN BEINGS PART OF NATURE?

Alan Mapes

Are human beings part of "Nature"? This question often sparks a lively discussion. It also points out a common pitfall that teachers of natural history and ecology run into.

The pitfall is the tendency to separate humans from nature as much as possible. We think of anything created or changed by man as unnatural. By teaching exclusively about pretty flowers and "cute" animals, we can give students the idea that the use of natural things by man always means destruction. Without meaning to, we lead our students to believe that cutting trees means wrecking the forest and that hunting rabbits means wiping out the species. These false impressions are created because we don't mention the effects of good forest and wildlife management. We lose sight of the important fact that we, ourselves, are part of the natural environment. In order to meet our needs for food and shelter we must use the resources around us.

There is no doubt that our species has caused great destruction and that we have damaged many of the natural systems that are vital to our existence. The challenge to educators is to show people that man can benefit by acting responsibly toward the environment. Show your students that harvesting trees in the right way can benefit both man and the forest. Show them that managed hunting doesn't hurt animal populations.

Avoid the pitfall of separating man and nature, and labeling all human interference as "bad." Instead, encourage your students to examine our role as part of the natural system and the effects that our actions have on the environment. Demonstrate, instead, how we can conserve our environment through wise management.

Ed. note: Mr. Mapes is Director of the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, Delmar, N.Y. This article appeared in the TRIBUTARY, Jan.-Feb. 1980 issue.

SAVE STAMPS FOR FLORIDA BALD EAGLE FUND

Please send commemorative and foreign stamps to Mrs. Connie Smith, 195 West Emerson Road, Melrose, MA 02167. Mrs. Smith will turn these over to the Florida Bald Eagle Fund, which is set up for the establishment of sanctuaries and for research on the habits of the bald eagle. This notice was in the Brookline Bird Club Bulletin.

DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600 DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600 .

SALLY LAUGHLIN SPEAKER AT DECEMBER MEETING

Sally Laughlin, Director of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, spoke at the Christmas Count Planning meeting held on December 5 at St. Michael's Church, Killean Dr., Colonie.

Her talk included details of recoveries of two birds which had been banded at Woodstock. A cedar waxwing banded in September 1974 was shot by a Guatemalan native in March 1975. When he saw the band he must have thought it was someone's pet and regretted having shot it. He carried it out to the nearest point of civilization, which was a radio station on the coast. From there the band number was sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Lab in Washington. A Bewick's wren was banded on May 24, 1975. The band of this bird was recovered in December 1975 when the bird was hit and killed by a car in Paraguay, Arkansas. From such clues comes the knowledge about the migration of birds.

The work of the Institute includes many school programs, birdbanding, monitoring bird populations, summer programs for children, and natural history films and courses. The Institute is open from 9-5, Monday to Friday. A visit there would certainly be most interesting.



Shirley Schadow, Editor
230 Lake Hill Road
Burnt Hills, N.Y. 12027



Published Quarterly by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

Membership: Life, \$150.; Sustaining, \$10.; Active, \$5; Student, \$2; with an additional charge of \$1 per additional family member.

Write or call Membership Chairman: Mrs. E. L. Thomas, 37-B Fuller Road, Albany, N.Y. 12205 - 518/489-2267

HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.: Robert Budliger, President; William Shuster, Vice-President; Alfred Schadow, Treasurer; Peter Feinberg, Secretary.

Address Correction Requested
HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.

c/o M&M Mail Processing
241 Broadway
Schenectady, N.Y. 12305

BULK RATE
NON-PROFIT

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

Permit #195
Schenectady, N.Y.

Wayne & Ann B'Rells
3 Okara Drive, Apt. 7
Sch'dy, NY 12303



Published by Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

SPRING BIRDING IN TEXAS
(Conclusion)

Eleanor Byrne

Driving west, we stopped to bird among likely live oaks and shrubs, crossed Galveston Bay on the ferry, parked in downtown Galveston to look for a peregrine falcon previously reported to be on top of a bank building. Passers-by were puzzled by our group all looking up to the roof, until finally someone told us the bird had not been seen for three weeks.

Another stop was made outside the city at a point having mud flats and ponds on each side of the road: Spoonbills, stilt sandpipers and Wilson's phalaropes on the right, and Baird's sandpipers among other goodies on the left. Both our leaders were very pleased to see the Baird's, expressed by John as "Wow, oh, wow!" Both men had hoped to find white-rumped sandpiper at each of our stops and were disappointed not to - no disappointment to those of us who could hardly assimilate the numerous species seen. Here, while looking at the sandpipers through the telescope, a Louisiana heron and a clapper rail walked by in the background!

That evening we were asked to set our watches ahead one hour, anticipating Daylight Savings Time by two days. This was applied psychology, so we would not mind our extra early rising on Friday.

We were up at 5:30 (actually 4:30) and off to a private airport near Houston to see greater prairie chickens (Atkinson's race) dance on their lek. We needed to be there at dawn or the prairie chickens might have left. Dawn did beat us to the airfield, but 15 males in full display were jumping and booming on a grassy strip between two runways. We watched them from the van for a long time, even maneuvering a telescope in the aisle for a better view of their colorful throat patches and their "ears". A dish parabola stuck out the window augmented the prairie chickens' calls, so similar to the sound made by blowing across a bottle. One hen appeared briefly but others were presumably hiding in the tall grass beyond the runway.

Breakfast at a pancake house, then the group drove to a field within Houston city limits, the only place in Texas where Henslow's sparrow can be found. Rather rough going, up an embankment and across a railroad switch yard, but the sparrow was located. Since Henslow's sparrow can be found in HMBC territory, this excursion made me realize the importance of specific birds

Spring Birding in Texas (con't.)

to people from different parts of the country. This was also true of some warblers we see here each year, never seen by westerners. After lunch we continued west of Rte. 35 to Rockport and saw white-tailed hawk and caracara, firsts for me. We arrived at Sea Gun Resort, a very attractive complex of pink buildings. A picnic supper at Goose Island State Park completed the day.

Next morning we were left to our own devices, a needed break after so many early starts. Leisurely birding on the Resort grounds gave me a very close look at an eared grebe near the boathouse, plus some scaup, coot and a lonely ruddy duck. Around noon we left for the Aransas National Wildlife Area. Alas, the cranes had all left Texas a month earlier. The usual good picnic lunch was enjoyed at a grove near the water where a breeze kept mosquitos away. Some birding for warblers at edges of the grove was done, and then we went by van to the Headquarters to see the exhibits and a slide show on the whooping cranes.

Back to Sea Gun Resort to check out, and we continued west along the Gulf. A detour was made to look for the elusive seaside sparrow which was found, to everyone's pleasure. Our route ~~took us onto Mustang Island because of a report of a reeve seen there.~~ We did not find it, but the roadside pond where it had been sighted held a riches of shorebirds, spoonbills, and avocets.

The following day we drove south on Rte. 77 through the huge King Ranch. At a roadside pond we spotted an olivaceous cormorant and ring-necked duck, and also saw many black-bellied tree ducks. We stopped at a pull-off intending to hunt for a southern parula; but as a Border Patrol car was there, with a search for illegal aliens presumably going on in the brushy woods, we continued on. A few miles south, the van turned into a dirt road through a 'push' gate into a ranch. Victor Emanuel Tours has permission to enter this area three times a year, but the owner does not want his identity known nor others to come onto his property. This is oak motte country; that is, flat fields with here and there a clump of oak trees and brush. The big attraction in one oak motte is a ferruginous owl, the rarest owl in the U.S. As usual, John and Victor scouted briefly and found the owl sitting on an oak limb where we all could see it well, even with a telescope, and could study the feather pattern and tail. Nearby was a black-headed oriole, also rare here. In addition, this motte produced a ladder-backed and a golden-fronted woodpecker. As we were leaving the motte, a Botterie's sparrow was heard from the field opposite. This area is the northernmost known for this bird to nest. Although not supposed to leave the van except to see the owl, we did get out briefly to look at this sparrow, and again further down the ranch road to see a Lincoln's sparrow. We also had a quick glimpse of wild

turkeys crossing the road far ahead of the van.

We returned north the few miles to the Sarits roadside rest --from which the Border Patrol had departed. We climbed through a fence to a treed brushy area to look for the olive-backed warbler (southern parula). Successfully tracked down, we also saw a black-crested titmouse; and, on its nest, a black-chinned hummingbird.

The Mexican crow is one of the rarities our Gung-Ho birders 'needed', so we drove to the Brownsville sanitary landfill where they had been seen earlier. They were not sighted by us. However, we did observe white-necked ravens and bronzed cowbirds. We then made a brief stop at a private home to see buff-breasted hummingbirds. Although it was quite late in the day, Victor decided to go to Laguna Atacosta Wildlife Area to look for a Bahama pintail duck which had been seen there. Otherwise we would have had to return 50 miles or more the next day to search for this rare bird 'needed' so desperately by the listers. It was dusk by the time we arrived and a tour of the reserve produced no pintail. Our leaders finally conceded defeat, to the disappointment of one man in the group for whom this bird would have been No. 600. A restaurant agreed to stay open beyond its 9:00 p.m. closing to feed us, and we reached our motel in McAllen around 10:30, dead-tired after a very long day afield.

On Monday we had the choice of a 7:30 or 9:30 a.m. departure for Santa Ana Refuge. Three of us opted for 9:30, everyone else for 7:30. On our way to Santa Ana, we late-risers had a marvellous view of a white-tailed kite hovering alongside and at the level of the van. At the Refuge we walked the path to a deafening chorus of chachalacas, all continuously chanting their name. Our goal here was the hook-billed kite. A few people caught sight of a bird that might have been the kite, but the sighting was not verified. John bushwhacked parallel to our trail in an effort to put it up, but with no luck. We returned to the van for our picnic lunch, and on the way out stopped to see least grebe with four young on a pond, and a Lichenstein's oriole and nest in a clearing.

Near the Refuge another stop was made and another fence climbed to look for jacana. Everyone was disappointed not to see it.

In the late afternoon we stopped in Rio Grande City for a Mexican dinner. After a very good meal (undoubtedly cooled down for us non-Texans), we arrived early - for us - at our night's lodging. The Oso Blanco Resort is located outside of Zapata on Falcon Lake which is actually a dammed portion of the Rio Grande.

Off at 5:30 a.m. Tuesday for breakfast in Zapata, we then

Spring Birding in Texas (con't.)

retraced our route south toward Falcon Dam. We turned right on a dirt road, parked, and walked partway down to a promontory over looking a stretch of the Rio Grande and the Mexican shore. The sky was overcast, so we had no spectacular sunrise, but the air was pleasantly cool. I sat for the most part on a rock back from the edge, not being as sure-footed as some. Victor and John were very excited to see two hook-billed kites fly over the river to the U.S. side. Apparently in courtship flight, the birds might be possibly nesting on the U.S. side. Our 'listers' were also happy since they could now add this bird to their U.S. lists. A great-horned owl was located not far away, sitting on a tree limb. It was joined by one, then two, almost full-grown young. A ringed kingfisher crossed and re-crossed the river upstream of us, dived for fish, and perched on the U.S. side, making another specialty for the listers. The ringed is much larger than our belted kingfisher. I saw a kiskadee fly across from Mexico but had no near view. Cormorants flew upriver, as did a flock of about 30 cattle egrets. A Harris hawk was seen, as well as red-billed pigeons and brown jays, two more Mexican species for us. Other birds were seen, but here unusual species had all our attention. At about 11 a.m. we departed for Falcon State Park and a picnic lunch. My driver's license got ~~the whole party into the Park free!~~ At lunch we saw scaled quail, cactus wren, and ash-throated flycatcher, reminiscent of Arizona. Back north to our motel to rest or swim. We had an early dinner in a cafe near the motel and took a short tour along nearby roads to see what we could, and returned to Oso Blanco for the night.

On Wednesday we were off in the dark again, after having orange juice, coffee and buns, to return to the Falcon Dam area. John manned the spotlight, aiming it at every pole and post we passed, hoping for owls. We arrived at the Falcon Dam parking lot to hear the dawn chorus of birds. Our walk was along a dirt road for a bit and then along a dike high above the river. We saw green and brown jays, groove-billed ani, cormorants, flycatchers, and an oriole. I missed the green kingfisher, which others saw. On our walk back to the van later, we were entranced by 200 or more Mississippi kites in the sky above the dam, kettling and streaming north from Mexico. A brief glimpse of a peregrine falcon pleased our leaders.

Snacks were provided around 10:30 a.m. and then we drove back-country roads looking for clay-colored sparrows. At one spot, an Indigo snake started to cross the road some distance in front of the van. Everyone piled out and ran up to see it closer, but the 6-foot snake retreated into the weeds. There were no sparrows sighted.

After a noon dinner in Zapata, we returned to Oso Blanco

Spring Birding in Texas (con't.)

for a siesta until 4 p.m. as it was a very hot day - our hottest so far. At 4:15 we took off for Falcon State Park to pursue the sparrow. None was sighted, but there were plenty of chachalacas, scaled quail, cowbirds, bobwhite, grackles, curve-billed thrasher, pyrrhuloxia, all of which we enjoyed watching. A horned lizard took some attention from the birds.

We drove back to Falcon Dam for a picnic supper featuring a very refreshing fruit salad, and as soon as it was dark, we walked along the same road we had covered in the morning. This time we were looking for paraque. Before long, we saw its red eye reflecting light from John's flashlight, and glimpsed the bird as it flew past us. After that, we returned to our motel for the night.

A late start (7 a.m.) for breakfast in Zapata, check out, and at 8:30 we continued driving north on Rte. 83. At San Ygnacio a stop was made to look for white-collared seed eater, known to have been in this vicinity, but it eluded us. Another stop further on produced Cassin's sparrow and a chorus of lark buntings. We arrived at Neal's Resort, near Concan, in the early afternoon. The wind was rising noticeably, and the temperature rapidly cooling. By morning, it was very windy and cold - a so-called "Blue Norther" had reached Texas.

We set out for John Nance Garner State Park to hunt for golden-cheeked warbler. We tried several spots unsuccessfully, walked past tenters just getting breakfast, or trying to, in the strong wind. This warbler builds its nest near water, so a dry stream bed looked promising. Here Victor used a tape, one of the very few times he did so, and John did his owl imitation. Sure enough, a handsome male golden-cheek came to investigate and we all had a wonderful view of him. Because of the wind, very few birds were seen but a Carolina chickadee and a titmouse showed themselves.

After lunch and our usual short rest period, we were off to see clay-colored sparrows in a field nearby which also held chipping sparrows, so the two could be easily compared. A male vermilion flycatcher perched aloft for contrast. Then we all piled into the van for a tour down Rte. 217 to search for the black-crowned vireo in the shrubs and thickets. We had no luck, undoubtedly because of the continuing high wind.

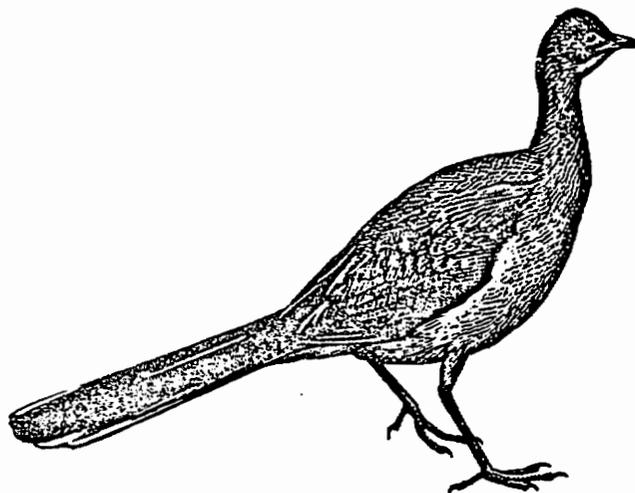
Victor had arranged for all of us to visit a bat cave that evening. The van drove into a rutty, rocky uphill track as far as it could go without piercing the undercarriage. Those who didn't want to walk up the rest of the way clambered into an old truck which bucketed up the track to the top of the ridge.

Spring Birding in Texas (concluded)

This ridge held a huge cave, said to run for miles. Cliff and cave swallows had nests in the main entrance. As dusk fell, the bats started to circle inside the cave entrance, then began to stream out of it and two smaller holes. Unbelievable numbers emerged for a long time, so that they looked like smoke in the distant sky. We were told they are the Mexican free-tailed bat.

We left as it got dark, some walking down and others riding the bouncing truck. It was full dark by the time we reached the van. Just before we left the rocky field, we saw a poor will in the track ahead of us. It was not disturbed by our searchlight, and everyone in the group could study its feather pattern. Not until John tried to pick it up, did it fly. So, that ended birding for the day and we returned to Neal's for a good night's sleep.

Breakfast was at 7 a.m. on Saturday, our last day, with departure at 9 a.m. for the run to San Antonio Airport and our various planes home. We stopped again on Rte. 217 for another try for the black-crowned vireo. The wind had died down somewhat overnight, and this time a female appeared in the heart of the shrubbery, flitting about. It was not a good view, but at least this hard-to-find bird had been located, an achievement to crown a marvellous birding experience. From April 22 to May 5, 295 species had been seen by the group - 51 of them being life birds for me. Truly, a "Grand Texas Tour" thanks to Victor Emanuel and his associates.



CHACHALACA

DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600. DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

The CBC Fee

The only aspect of a Christmas Bird Count that is worth discussing in the spring is the FEE. Well, we've been talking about the fee for some time now, and we may be destined to talk about it for some time to come. I'd like to summarize some of this talk and ask your opinion.

As you know, each of us pays \$1.50 for the privilege of getting frostbitten in area swamps, forests, and fields each Christmas season to assess bird populations. You give this to the leader of your field party before you go home that day. The leader makes up a list of participants and prepares the list of species and numbers of birds seen and sends these along to the compiler of that particular count. He also sends \$1.50 for each party member. The compiler sifts the records of 6-10 parties, makes up a master tally of species and numbers, lists all members of parties, and forwards the compilation to the National Audubon Society for publication in American Birds. The compiler also sends a check in the amount of \$1.50 x the total of participants.

Simple, yes. No!

The worst problem with the fee is that it applies to feeder watchers as well as those of us who've been afield all day. It is very difficult to collect this from someone who is merely looking out a window for you during the day. There are additional problems collecting the fee from field birders but it isn't as difficult to justify.

The fee is necessary. It pays for publishing the Christmas Count. National Audubon has tried to keep the fee to a minimum, and has explored other alternatives. Among them are not listing the names of participants, thereby cutting space and cost but also probably cutting participation; subsidizing costs through grants. There is no practical solution. The reality is that there is a fee, and that there always will be.

National Audubon enforces the fee. No fee and your count is not published. If the compiler lists 100 participants there must be \$1.50 for each or your count comes back. If an individual does not pay, his name cannot be included and his birds are supposed to be deleted.

A count compiler has a tough job figuring out the species count, the party-miles, the party-hours, and the names and addresses of all the participants. And, he is invariably short on the fee. How do you get the fee from each feeder watcher who

President's Page (con't.)

phones his report in? Or extract the fee from the junior high kid on his first venture in birding's "big time?" Or remember that Charlie only had a \$20 bill when you were splitting up at the end of the day?

We've kicked this around a few times and discussed a few ways the HMBC could handle the fee problem. Study these options and give us your opinion.

A - Leave it the way it is; the compiler has the responsibility for collecting the fee; if he can't collect it, he can remove the non-paying participant from the list (losing his gyrfalcon with it) or he can pay the fee himself (a gyr is worth it). The problem remains the feeder watcher and the compiler can ask (Did the watcher know about the fee?) or can "donate" the fee himself.

B - Collect the fee from as many participants as possible; HMBC will pick up the fees of those who do not pay and for feeder watchers.

C - The entire fee for CBCs would be paid by HMBC; no participant would need to pay a fee. This would relieve the compiler of a real headache but would cost HMBC a considerable sum.

The HMBC currently assumes responsibility for three CBCs: Schenectady, Southern Rensselaer County, and Troy and total participation is on the order of 100-120 people.

The fee is problematic, and I'd like to hear your thoughts on it; give me a call. (Please don't argue the need for the fee-we've long ago lost that one.)

-Robert Budliger



FEDERATION TO PRODUCE BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

In 1980 the Federation of N.Y. State Bird Clubs is initiating the compilation of an atlas of the distribution of the breeding birds of New York State.

The concept of developing an atlas to delineate the distribution of plants or animals for a given geographic area, originated in Britain. The technique uses a grid system, superimposed on a map. In 1968 the amateur and professional ornithologists of Britain and Ireland began work which resulted in the publication in 1976 of "The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland."

As a consequence of the British success, similar mappings are completed, or underway, for France, Denmark, West Germany, and 16 other European countries as well as New Zealand and Australia. In the U.S., Montgomery and Howard Counties, Maryland began the first atlas project in 1971. Four additional Maryland counties now have projects underway. Massachusetts began a state-wide project in 1973 and field work has been completed. Other Atlas projects are in progress in Marin County, California; Kalamazoo County, Michigan; and in Vermont, Maine, Wyoming, and Colorado.

The suggestion that the Federation undertake a breeding bird survey of New York was made by Robert Arbib to the Federation's Executive Committee. The concept and general plan was presented to the Council of Delegates and to the attendees at the 1979 annual meeting in Binghamton last September. It was enthusiastically approved as a desirable Federation undertaking.

The project will be a co-operative venture of the Federation, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation with the strong endorsement and support of the National Audubon Society. When completed and published, it will be an important addition to the Federation's already significant list of publications: viz. the Kingbird; New York Birder's, Bull's "Birds of New York State" which the Federation initiated and for which it supplied a major share of the data; and the "Where To Bird in New York State" Baedeker which is well advanced toward publication.

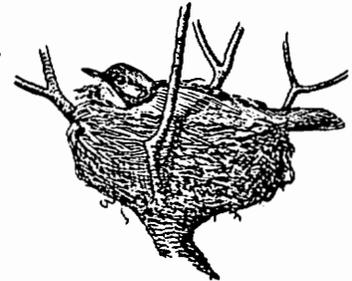
1980 will be an Initiating Year for getting manpower lined up and organized, for a trial of procedures, and general tuning up for the years to follow. The expectation is that the project should be completed in 5 or 6 years -- other such projects have been completed on a similar time table.

The survey will not be an abundance or numerical count but will simply establish whether or not a species breeds in the sur-

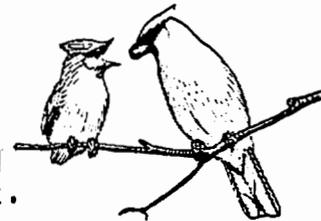
Federation-Bird Atlas (con't.)

veyed block. It is not intended to determine how many of a species breed there. Three categories of breeding evidence will be recorded, namely, possible, probable, and confirmed. For example, the presence of a species in an area during breeding season indicates possible breeding; evidence of territoriality shows probable breeding; and finding of a nest or parents feeding young gives proof of confirmed breeding. There will be other criteria in each category of breeding status. Actual finding of nests will be a relatively minor aspect of the field work; few birders are proficient in this skill and it increases the chances of disturbing the birds.

Surveying will be based on a grid system of blocks. For areas that are remote or without locally available survey manpower it may be necessary to enlist "crash teams" to survey them on an expeditionary basis.



What will be gained from such a survey and atlas? In the first place, our knowledge of the distribution of breeding birds in New York is spotty, incomplete and not based on any thorough, carefully designed study. This project should correct this lack. It is quite possible that, as has happened in other states, there will be surprises -- species will be found breeding where previously unsuspected. But aside from the correction of this deficiency there will be the fun and satisfaction of birding beyond listing, and of making a much-needed contribution to ornithology. The knowledge thus gained will provide a base of judging the ecologic effects of environmental changes and for developing environmental impact statements. It can pinpoint those areas and breeding species which are in need of specialized preservation efforts. A less tangible but equally important benefit of such a massive, coordinated, cooperative endeavor will be to provide a common effort in which all birders can join with resultant new friendships and birding pleasure -- a cohesive force bringing the state's birders closer together. An it will enhance the Federation's stature as an ornithological organization.



Many observers, much enthusiasm, interest and hard work will be needed to accomplish this task. Birders throughout the state, whether Federation members or not will have an opportunity to participate. A steering committee of 15 under the chairmanship of Gordon M. Meade is developing detailed plans. There will be a project coordinator in each of the state's Kingbird reporting regions. They will be made familiar with the project through Co-ordinator workshops and in turn will work with project repre-

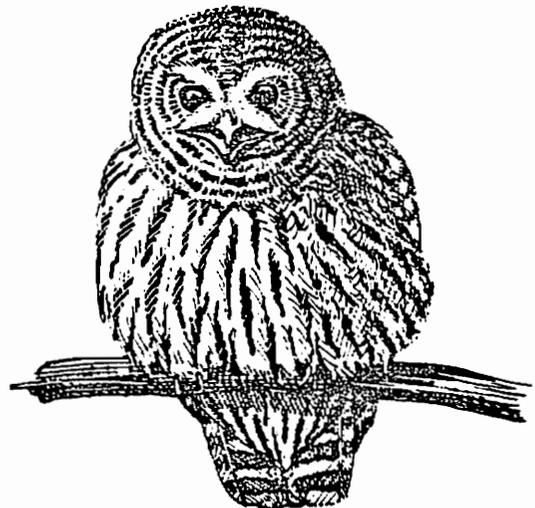
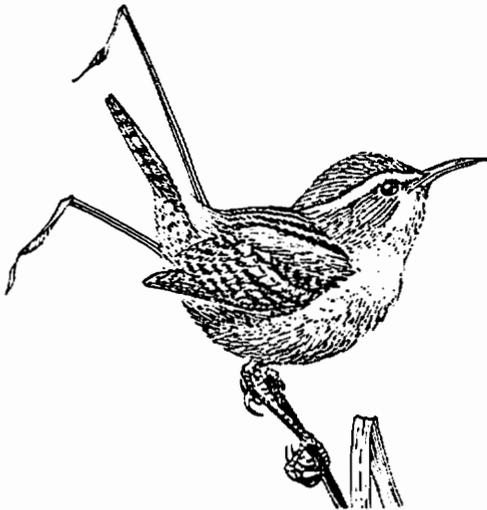
Federation-Bird Atlas (concluded)

sentatives from the clubs to develop cadres of surveyors.

Before long, details will be available and everyone will have the opportunity to enlist in this exciting project.

Until your regional coordinator and club project representative are determined, if you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please send them to me.

Gordon M. Meade, M.D.
Chairman, Atlas Project
Steering Committee



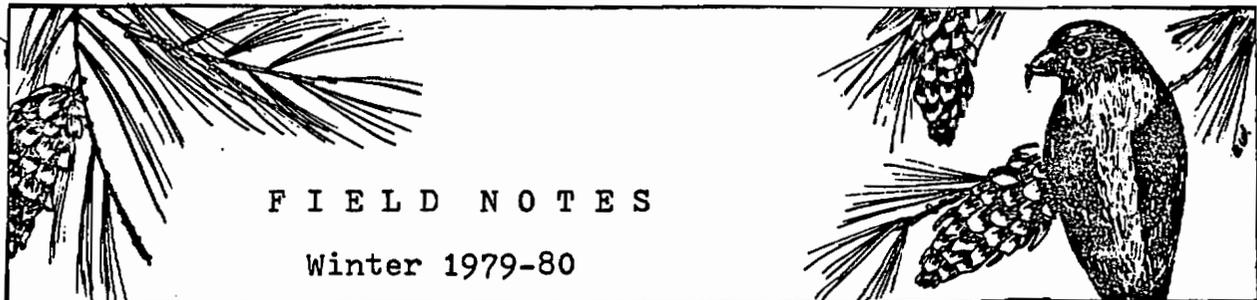
. . . UPDATE. . . . UPDATE. . . . UPDATE. . . . UPDATE.

The area co-ordinator for the Atlas Project is Kate Dunham, Old Albany Turnpike, Old Chatham, NY 12136. (794-8297)

Information regarding HMBC's part in this Project is available from Walt Sabin, Box 44, Slingerlands, NY 12159. (437-7344)

This work is important. Will you discover a species not heretofore known to breed in our area? Maybe a worthwhile new birding area will be located. Your help is needed.

-Editor



This has been the sort of winter that must have had some bird seed salesmen wishing that they had stayed with shoes. Mild temperatures, bare ground, open water, and plentiful wild food left little incentive for birds to take the human handouts. Some did, of course, such as the field sparrow that returned to the Gorman feeder in East Greenbush for the fifth consecutive year (assuming it's the same bird), and this time he brought a companion! This year's list of "half-hardies" - that is, otherwise migratory species that occasionally remain into the winter - is exceptional. Ordinarily we have a few species each winter such as a common yellowthroat or brown creeper now and then. But this was a banner year! We seemed to have all of them. In addition, the open waters of the larger lakes and the Hudson, Mohawk and Hoosic Rivers have resulted in unusually high numbers of waterfowl, including some species not expected here in the winter.

An extremely dry trend dominated the weather scene through the region this winter. Less than one inch of precipitation fell over much of the area each month. The temperatures averaged above normal with a few plunges to near zero and few reports of below zero.

Because of the rather unusual nature of this winter, one is cautioned against drawing any conclusions about apparent trends in the species reported here. We can note, however, the continued increase in wild turkey population numbers and distribution. The Carolina wren seems to be rebounding from its latest crash, while the winter wren remains hard to find. With the possible exception of the accipiters, the hawk numbers were noticeably down, while the reports of owls are increased.

One hundred eight species were reported through the period. Obviously, because of limited space, we cannot offer detailed accounts of each species, much as we'd like to. The following is a sort of tracking of species of special interest or those indicating subtle or obvious trends, and of course the unusual numbers or dates along with rarities for the region.

Highlights for the period were the following: green heron,

Field Notes (con't.)

brant, bald eagle, pomarine jaeger, great-gray owl, gray jay, dickcissel, and chipping sparrow.

Abbreviations used here are HR-Hudson River, MR-Mohawk River, TomRes-Tomhannock Reservoir, Chat-Chatham, NB-New Baltimore, Cox-Coxsackie, ColCo-Columbia County and CC-Christmas Count. Christmas Counts held were Schenectady-Dec. 15th, Chatham-Dec. 15th, Salem-Dec. 16th, So. Rensselaer-Dec. 22nd, Fort Plain-Dec. 23rd, Catskill-Coxsackie-Dec. 27th, and Troy-Dec. 29th.

Contributors: B. & V. Able, D. Adadon, Doug Ayres, Arlene & Tom Brown, Bob Budliger, Jim Bush, Paul Connor, Bill Cook, Juanita Cook, Nancy Dennis, Rena Dodd, Kate Dunham, Delores Derrer, Peter Feinberg, Barbara & Hugo Gardina, M. & A. Giddings, Elisabeth Grace, Andrew Guthrie, Richard P. Guthrie, Philip Ingalls, Irene Irwin, Chris Ketcham, Mike Kuhrt, Ron & Carolyn Laforce, Arthur Long, Betty Laros, Carrie Martin, Elsie Powell, Ed Reilly, Alice Ross, Walt Sabin, Debbie Shaw, Larry Trinault, M. & W. Ulmer, Tom Williams, and Bob Yunick.

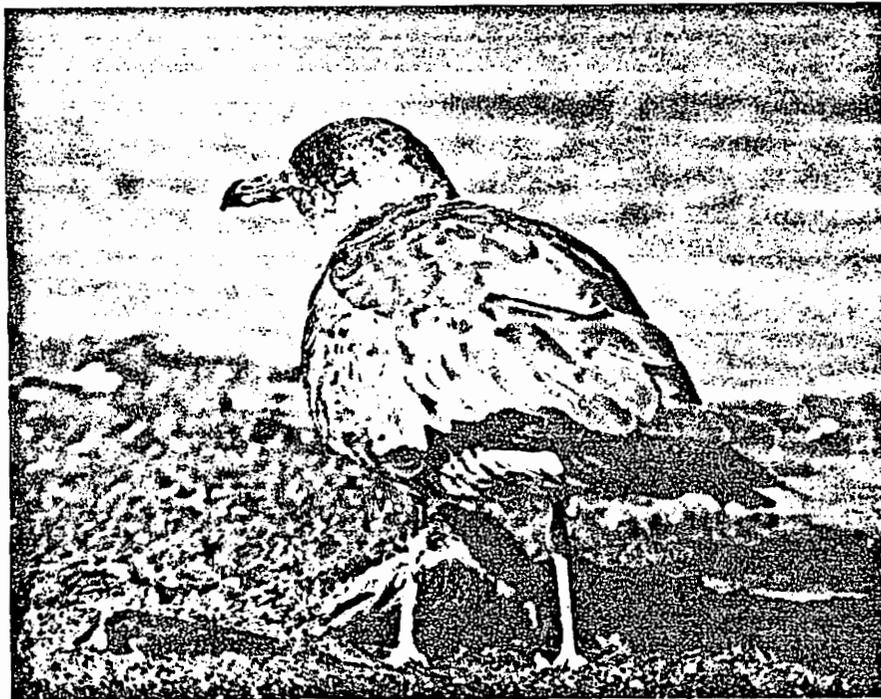
LOONS-DUCKS: Common loon: SoRens (1st occurrence) & Troy CC. Horned grebe: Dec 15 MR Colonie. Pied-bill grebe: Dec 16 ColCo. Green heron: 1 Chat area Jan 21 (ER). Canada Goose: 2,000 Troy CC; thru Feb 14 Tom Res; 1800 Chat CC. Brant: 7 Troy CC; 35 HR at Castleton in flock of Canada Geese Jan. 9 (JC). Snow goose: Dec. 10 thru Feb 21. Mallard: 654 Troy CC; 317 Chat CC. Black duck: 205 Troy CC; 57 Chat CC. Pintail: 1 Troy CC thru Jan 6; Jan 18 Hudson. Wood Duck: 2 HR at Port of Albany on the SoRens CC. Bufflehead: 1 Jan 6 HR at Ft. Miller. Hooded merganser: 1 Salen CC. Common Merganser: 63 Troy CC; 14 E. Greenbush Jan 9.

HAWKS-ALCIDS: Turkey vulture: Dec 21 Hudson (A&TB). Goshawk: five reports Dec 29 thru period. Sharp-shinned hawk: the reports excluding some possible duplications. Cooper's hawk: four reports thru period. Red-tail hawk: 131 total three CCs. Red-shouldered hawk: 1 Chat CC. Rough-legged hawk: numbers way down. Bald eagle: 1 adult Feb 23 HR at Four-mile Point. No. Harrier: thru-max 9 Cox Flats Feb. 23. Bobwhite: 16 Chat CC. Turkey: 43 Chat CC; lesser numbers, widely reported thru period. Virginia Rail: 1 Ghent Jan 6 (B&HG). American coot: 1 Salem CC; 1 Troy CC and 1 at NB Jan 1 & 20. Killdeer: 4 Chat CC and 1 Cox flats Feb 23. Pomarine jaeger: 1 imm HR at Waterford Dec 29 & 30. Photographs compared to specimen series at American Museum of Natural History (RPG et al). Iceland gull: 1 Troy CC; also Jan 8 MR at Colonie.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: Mourning dove: 568 Chat CC; 392 SoRens CC. Screech Owl: 14 reported incl 1 taking mice from NB feeder nightly. Great-horned owl: 25 reported incl. 7 SoRens

Field Notes (con't.)

CC. Barred owl: three reports. Great-gray owl: 1 Jan 21-22 Carmen, Schen. Co., unquestionable photographs (LT). Short-eared owl: Feb 10-23 Cox Flats max 6. Saw-whet owl: one found dead Rensselaer (PC). Belted Kingfisher: numerous reports thru Feb 1, max 5 RensCo CC. Common flicker: many thru period, max 12 Chat CC. Pileated woodpecker: at least 15 reported. Red-bellied woodpecker: 1 Chat CC (DA). Red-headed woodpecker: Dec 6, 8 & 12 ColCo (KD). Hairy woodpecker: 46 SoRens CC; 21 Chat CC; 18 Troy CC, rather high numbers. Downy woodpecker: 101 SoRens CC; 59 Chat CC; 28 Troy CC.



Submitted by Walton Sabin

Pomarine Jaeger (imm)

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Horned lark: scattered flocks, max 540 Chat CC. Gray jay: five reports as follows: Dec 9-Troy; Dec 21-Glenville; Dec 30-Niskayuna; Jan 4-Delmar; Jan 25-Clifton Park, each bird was reported at a feeder and staying less than 30 minutes. Blue jay: wide disparity --- 304 SoRens CC, while only 33 on the Catskill count. One lucky feeder in Schenectady had 20 visiting to help them dispose of all that sunflower seed. Black-capped chickadee: despite some reports of few at feeders, the SoRens CC had an impressive 561 and Troy 308. White-breasted nuthatch: the SoRens CC had 108 equalling the total of all the rest of the counts. Red-breasted nuthatch:

Field Notes (Concluded)

1 each Chat and SoRens CCs. Brown creeper: wide-spread and frequently reported: 26 reported, max 6 NB Jan 26. Winter wren: 1 Dec 22 Glenmont, only report. Catbird: 1 Chat Dec 10 (KD). Hermit thrush: 1 Feb 4 Chat (KD). Carolina Wren: five widely scattered reports. Mockingbird: 89 reports. Bluebird: a refreshing 44 reported; a good omen? Golden-crowned kinglet: Chat Dec 23 (DA); Hudson thru Jan 19. Northern shrike: 1 each Jan 1 Stony Creek & Fort Plain Dec 23, quite a contrast to last year's plethora of reports.

VIREOS-WARBLERS: Yellow-rumped warbler; at least 11 reported thru Feb 24. Common yellowthroat: 2 Collins Lake, Scotia Dec 15.

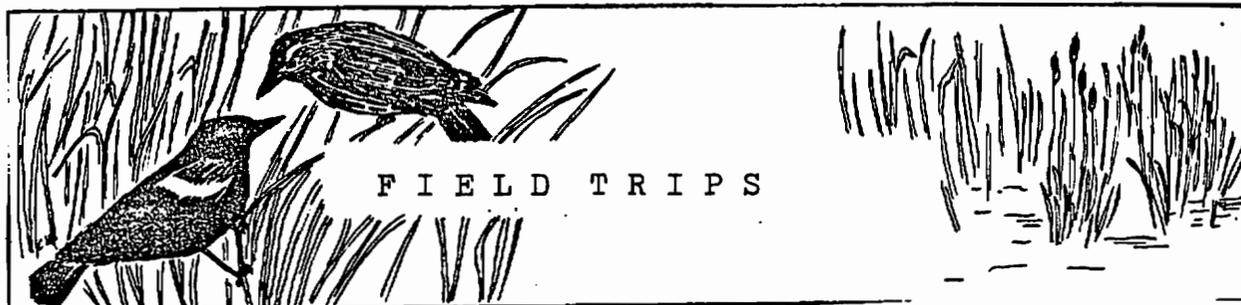
WEAVERS-SPARROWS: Eastern Meadowlark: widespread, max 60 Feb 19 Castleton. No. oriole: 1 Dec 17-19 Schenectady. Cardinal: 314 reported. Dickcissel: 1 at feeder Dec 16 Salem, Washington Co. (RPG et al). Evening grosbeak: generally scarce with spotty distribution, good numbers from CCs, max 137 SoRens CC. Purple finch: even scarcer, max 21 Chat CC. House Finch: 590 reported incl. 209 Chat CC and 107 Ft Plain CC. Pine grosbeak: only four reported. Pine siskin: 1 Ft Plain CC. Red crossbill: 6 Stony Creek, Warren Co., Jan 1 (RPY). Rufous-sided towhee: two reported, one Jan 5-Feb 17 Schen and one Dec 15-Feb 27 MeutzeKill, ColCo. Savannah sparrow: 2 Feb 13 Cox Flats. Vesper sparrow: 1 Feb 20 Colonie, only report. Chipping sparrow: one at feeder Jan 5 thru period (DS). Field sparrow: 2 at E. Greenbush feeder where one has wintered the last five years (BG). White-throated sparrow: 222 reported. Swamp sparrow: 3 SoRens CC. Song sparrow: 118 reported. Lapland longspur: only 4 reported. Snow bunting: 138 reported monthly Col Co.

- Richard P. Guthrie

A WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to HMBC. We hope to see you on bird trips. Joan A. Shiel, Ann Sklar, Thomas B. Lyons, Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Keyes, Harriet A. Flinn, Theodore Koniowka, Jr., Barbara Plecan, David Hassel, Paul Hebert, Jr., Henry H. Stebbins, David Harrison, Rosalie Hagadorn, Helen Mabee, William R. Cleveland, Charles Cobb, Robert D. Kirker, Ruth V. Mangan, David Pannone, Martha M. Ritter, Ann Skrivanek, Margaret Krolick, John J. McTavey, Eric S. Seyferth, and Patricia O'Donnell.

. .DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600. . . . DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600



RONDOUT RESERVOIR
February 9, 1980

Eleven adults and four children made the trip to Rondout Reservoir in the southern Catskills, hopeful of seeing bald eagles. The trip began with a slight detour to the vicinity of West Point, where we waited for several hours beside a frozen lake in hopes that two golden eagles would show up to feed on a deer carcass on the lake, as had been their wont for the previous week. No luck! After bidding one party adieu, the rest of us went to Rondout Reservoir, the scheduled destination for this trip, and were soon rewarded by the appearance of two adult bald eagles. After observing the eagles sufficiently, we all dispersed homeward-bound, carrying a good feeling about Rondout Reservoir and its avifauna. Aside from a few common mergansers, black ducks, and gulls, birds were noticeable by their absence.

-Walt Sabin

MONTEZUMA WILDLIFE REFUGE AND DERBY HILL
April 19-20, 1980

Three cars with eleven birders left Schenectady shortly after 7 a.m. on the 19th headed toward the west. We stopped briefly at Derby Hill to make sure we didn't miss a heavy raptor flight. We didn't, so we continued on to Montezuma where we had good, though distant, views of a large flock of snow geese. There were over a thousand in the flock and they were quite impressive when they all took to the air and milled around a bit before settling down again. We also had some nice views of several ospreys in the area. The next day we returned

Field Trips (con't.)

to Derby Hill to try our luck again in seeing raptors. Threatening clouds left some sprinkles but then stopped. A short while later the raptors started to move and came by in almost a steady stream for about two hours when a light rain cut the flight off rather abruptly. Gerry Smith, the official recorder for Derby Hill, indicated that the morning's count, while we were there, was close to one thousand birds with most of them being broadwings. It was interesting to see kettles of 25, 50, 75, and even one of 200 broadwings pass over. It would have been nicer if they hadn't been so high up. We also saw some turkey vultures, sharp-shinned, Cooper's, red-tails, a couple of rough-legs, harriers, kestrels, ospreys and two merlin.

One car with HMBC birders arrived Sunday morning just as the flight started. They remained after the rest of us embarked for home; but, we found out later, the flight was over for the day.

A total of 54 species was logged for the trip.

-Walt Sabin

FERD'S BOG
May 4, 1980

Although the quantity of species at Ferd's Bog was not impressive (24), the quality was very good. Everyone got an excellent look at both male and female three-toed black-backed woodpeckers. We were so close that we actually could count the toes. Both birds took turns working on the nest hole and allowed the photographers to take many pictures. A friendly brown-headed cowbird kept coming so close that it was too near to focus on. Yellow-rumped warblers were all over and nearly ran into us on occasion. Among other species of birds seen were an osprey and a sharp-shinned hawk. We also saw a porcupine sleeping in a tree, a couple of snakes, and some bear droppings.

The weather was partly cloudy; the wind was 5-20 mph; and the temperature was 60°; number in party-14. Species seen in addition to those mentioned above were black duck, wood duck, tree swallow, barn swallow, black-capped chickadee, red-breasted nuthatch, winter wren, American robin, Swainson's thrush, golden-crowned kinglet, ruby-crowned kinglet, solitary vireo, Blackburnian warbler, red-winged blackbird,

Field trips (con't.)

evening grosbeak, purple finch, dark-eyed junco, white-throated sparrow, and song sparrow.

-Marilyn Fancher

- - - - -
BIRD BANDING - VISCHERS FERRY
May 17, 1980

Banding day broke sweet and clear with bright sun as early as 7 a.m. and no wind.

The woods were teeming with birdlife and Bob Yunick and Jim Covert kept busy. Thrushes, jays, rosebreasted grosbeaks, red-wings and robins were everywhere; but the tiny yellow warblers made themselves heard all over with their constant "Sweet, sweet calls.

Bob explained the "brood patch" to the group. When a female lays its eggs, it loses a patch of feathers on its stomach-- then the very warm skin of the bird comes in contact with the eggs.

The two exciting finds of the day were a northern oriole previously banded by Bob; (Records showed the bird to be 9 years old.) and a mourning warbler which Bob said is a Canadian resident and very rarely seen in this area. It, too, had been banded before.

Eighty-one birds were banded representing twenty-four species.

Blue violets were blooming everywhere. Carp thrashed in the shallow water and a pair of black ducklings, filling their stomachs as only ducks can, followed a shoreline along one of the ponds.

Species: Black-capped chickadee, American robin, wood thrush, hermit thrush, Swainson's thrush, veery, starling, solitary vireo, yellow warbler, magnolia warbler, ovenbird, northern waterthrush, common yellowthroat, Wilson's warbler, red-winged blackbird, northern oriole, brown-headed cowbird, cardinal, rosebreasted grosbeak, American goldfinch, white-throated sparrow, swamp sparrow, and song sparrow.

-Lois A. Norton

AUDUBON SCHOOL OFFERS SCHOLARSHIP AID

Since September, a teacher from Pennsylvania has been getting academic credit for camping out from Maine to California. She is experientially learning first hand about the ecology of America. Accompanying her, as classmates on her educational odyssey, are eighteen college and high school students and teachers hailing from many different areas of the U.S.A. Although the travel-study program is relatively expensive, it is within her means due to new sources of financial aid which will continue to be available to the expedition participants.

Ranging in age from fifteen to twenty-seven, the young people are enrolled in a unique environmental school sponsored by the National Audubon Society. It operates in cooperation with the Lesley College Graduate School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and is coordinated by their specially trained adjunct faculty. The program makes available challenging full year, semester, or summer B.S. and M.S. degree program courses of study to persons interested in "hands on" learning, ecology, or careers in conservation and outdoor education.

During the school year a large variety of environments serve the students as both classroom and teacher. These include New England's forests and shores, Amish farm communities, Audubon sanctuaries and centers, Florida rivers and Everglades, Arizona Indian and desert communities, Rocky Mountain and Alaskan wilderness areas, national parks, outdoor museums, archaeological sites, and conservation associations. Over one hundred guides and specialists share their knowledge with the group.

The Audubon participants obtain useful skills within the natural and social sciences. They develop a working knowledge of group process, traditional music and arts, environmental science and ethics, mental health, outdoor education and recreation, independent study, and community development. They are enthusiastically engaged in making their own education and welcome the new opportunities now available to them through the recently established financial aid program.

Two informative books have been made available which fully describe the Expedition Education process. An internship program is also available. For complete details contact Expedition Institute, National Audubon Society, 950 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

. . . . DIAL-A-BIRD 377- 9600 DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600 . . .

MAILING LIST

Some of you recently received unsolicited material from an area realtor because an HMBC member took the liberty of using the Membership Directory for an unauthorized commercial use.

The Board of Directors occasionally approves requests for the Directory's use by other environmental organizations to promote their programs and functions. We share common interests with such groups as The Nature Conservancy, Albany County Audubon Society, and the Schenectady Museum; and they reciprocate by promoting our film series. We evaluate each use carefully, and believe you are interested in these materials. We do not, however, approve commercial use of the Directory.

The Directory is sent to each of us for our convenience, and thus it becomes an open directory. Therefore, we depend upon our fellow birders to respect the integrity of our list to prevent commercial abuse of it.

-Robert Budliger, President

Vol. 43, No. 2
Spring
1980



Shirley Schadow, Editor
230 Lake Hill Road
Burnt Hills, NY 12027

Published Quarterly by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

Membership: Life, \$150.; Sustaining, \$10.; Active, \$5.; Student, \$2.; with an additional charge of \$1 per additional family member. Write or call Membership Chairman: Mrs. E. L. Thomas, 37-B Fuller Road, Albany, N.Y. 12205 - 518/489-2267

HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.: Robert Budliger, President; William Shuster, Vice-President; Alfred Schadow, Treasurer; Alice Ross, Secretary.

Address Correction Requested

HUDSON MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.
C/O M&M Mail Processing
241 Broadway
Schenectady, N.Y. 12205

BULK RATE
NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #195
Schenectady, NY

Wayne & Ann B'Rells
3 Okara Drive, Apt. 7
Sch'dy, NY 12303

MANY RECORDS SET ON CENTURY RUN

By Robert P. Yunick

Perfect weather and the enthusiasm of 38 observers combined on May 17, 1980 to produce a spectacular, all-time record list of 180 species and one hybrid for the Club's 35th consecutive Guy Bartlett Century Run. Between 0300 and 2245, nine groups of birders beat the local bush to gather this most impressive list of sightings and soundings. After reviewing many years of this effort, I have become accustomed to seeing records broken in small increments—a species here, a species there. But this year, everything came together to crush the previous record of 168 species set in 1971 by 42 observers.

Not before, in recent years, have so many rare species been recorded on a Century Run. Using those species that have been recorded in ten or fewer years as the criterion for rarity, there were 18 species and one hybrid in that category. As another indication of the importance that sightings of rarities played in setting this record, there were a remarkable 33 species reported by one group only. That number exceeds the 30 seen by all groups and the 20 seen by all but one group. Interestingly, every participating group had at least one species recorded by that group only. And, a new species, the little blue heron, was added to the composite list to bring it to 239 and two hybrids. This composite total reaches back to the first Century Run in 1932, thereby going beyond the 35 consecutive counts otherwise cited here.

Four of the groups of observers exceeded the century mark with lists of 116 and a hybrid, 126, 127, and 128 species and a hybrid. Another group fell exasperatingly short of the mark at 99. The record of 129 species for one group set in 1965 still stands, but this year's 128 species exceeds the previous all-time second-best total of 127 set in 1964. The longest that any one group was afield was 19 3/4 hours from 0300 to 2245. Not surprisingly, that group had the top list of 128 species, and added the one new species to the list. The group that had the second longest tenure in the field, 19 hours, had the second highest list of 127 species; and it contributed the highest total, 11, of species seen by one group only. It managed also to out-owl everyone else combined. Century Run records of the past have long been associated with long hours in the field—early and late—so this year's result is not unexpected.

Century Run (con't.)

Under the effect of high pressure that had spent three days moving into the Northeast from the midcontinent, the air was clear and cloudless. There was a cool dawn at 38° F.; and the lack of wind and the presence of a brilliant sun warmed the air to a comfortable, dry 73° F. at Albany Airport. One word describes the weather: perfect. However, these weather conditions which augured so well for human activity were not conducive to much migration activity by small landbirds. Banding operations at Vischer Ferry that morning confirmed that there was very little migratory movement. An examination of the various groups' warbler lists did not show an abundance of warblers on individual lists. However, everyone seemed to contribute something and the composite added up to a total of 29 species out of the 33 expected. The calm air and moderate advance of the foliage aided listening and locating of birds. The lack of wind on local bodies of water made observing ideal and a very respectable waterfowl list was gathered.

Those rarities that were listed for the tenth time or less in Count history are as follows: red-throated loon in Fulton Co. for the fifth time, last in 1974; little blue heron at Basic Creek Res. for the first time; brant at three locations for the sixth time, last in 1973; American wigeon at Saratoga L. for the sixth time, last in 1977; oldsquaw at Alcove Res. for the eighth time, last in 1974; white-winged scoter on the Hudson R. and in Fulton Co. for the seventh time, last in 1975; ruddy duck for the sixth time, last in 1974; peregrine falcon for the fifth time at Black Creek Marsh, last in 1949; short-billed dowitcher at the Widewaters for the fourth time, last in 1978; barn owl at Cocksackie for the second time, last in 1979; saw-whet owl at Lake Luzerne for the third time, last in 1979; red-headed woodpecker at Sloansville and another location for the tenth time, last in 1976; alder flycatcher for the third time, last in 1978; willow flycatcher for the fourth time at three locations, last in 1979; short-billed marsh wren at Black Creek Marsh for the seventh time, last in 1976; Lawrence's warbler for the fourth time at Five Rivers Env. Ed. Center, Delmar, last in 1977; orange-crowned warbler for the second time, last in 1959; mourning warbler for the eighth time at Vischer Ferry and Fulton Co., last in 1978; and orchard oriole for the eighth time at Cocksackie, last in 1979.

While scrutinizing this list for the best find of the Run, I am torn between the newcomer to the list, the cautious deliberate little blue heron of the south; the elusive and inconspicuous orange-crowned warbler of the far west; and admirable peregrine falcon of the far north. In the final analysis, my vote goes to welcome back after a 31-year absence, the regal peregrine with the hope that recent restocking efforts will someday restore this species to its ancient eyrie at Thacher Park where

Century Run (con't.)

it was recorded on that very first local Century Run in 1932.
Of such dreams is the future made.

Beside the peregrine being my candidate for the best bird of the count, I am sure that those who saw it ranked it also as one of the most spectacular sightings, let alone records, of the day. Rare indeed is one able to look up and recognize a peregrine at such close range; that one never, for a moment, responds to that instinctive urge to summon one's field glasses for assistance. To be able to indulge in that close an encounter without having to fumble with focus and field of view creates a life-long memory of a fleeting moment.

In a year of record species abundance, it seems contrary to think about species that were missed. However, almost every Century Run misses something—some years more and other years less. This year was no exception. Among all of those species deemed most likely to be seen, but were not, was only one—the upland sandpiper. It was missed for the first time since 1967.

My thanks to all who participated, and good luck next May.

The species listed in the following key are those seen by that group only.

Key to Groups:

Group A: Robert P. Yunick and James C. Covert III. 0415 to 1700, Banding at Vischer Ferry Nature Preserve and at feeder in Niskayuna. 53 species. Evening Grosbeak and Lincoln's sparrow.

Group B: Marion Ford, Gretchen DeKalb, and Betty Hicks. 0530 to 1930. Black Creek Marsh, Vly Res., Vischer Ferry, Galway L. W. Charlton, and Latham. 76 species. Northern harrier and yellow-bellied flycatcher.

Group C: Richard and Andrew Guthrie, Peter Feinberg, Bill Cook, and Lester Thomas. 0330 to 2230. Greene, Albany, Saratoga and Warren Cos. 127 species. Horned grebe, American wigeon, oldsquaw, barn owl, barred owl, saw-whet owl, gray-cheeked thrush, pine warbler, orchard oriole, grasshopper sparrow, and vesper sparrow.

Group D: Thomas and Charles Cobb and William Cleveland. Seward, Cobleskill, Carlisle, Sloansville, and Central Bridge in Schoharie Co., and Niskayuna. 72 species. Lesser yellowlegs.

Group E: C. W. Huntley and Carl George. 0500-2100. Black Creek

Century Run (con't.)

Marsh, Indian Ladder, Vischer Ferry, Mohawk R. and Glenville. 99 species. Pectoral sandpiper.

Group F: W. Gorman, M. Gruett, M. Kuhrt, P. Connor, M. and N. Fancher. 0300 to 2100. Castleton Marsh, Cherry Plain, N. and E. Greenbush, Five Rivers, Black Creek Marsh, Niskayuna, Round and Saratoga Lakes, and Vischer Ferry. 126 species. Ruddy duck, bobwhite, brown creeper, and golden-crowned kinglet.

Group G: Jeff Gardiner, Sam Hoyer, Tom Palmer, and Doug Allen. 0530 to 2130. Fulton Co. 96 species. Red-throated loon and rusty blackbird.

Group H: Bill Brooks, Hollis Ingraham, Bob Kornis, Sam Madison, Carl Parker, and Walt Sabin. 0415 to 2145. Round and Saratoga Lakes, Vischer Ferry, Black Creek Marsh, Thacher Park, and Five Rivers. 116 species and one hybrid. Double-crested cormorant, bufflehead, Cooper's hawk, olive-sided flycatcher, and golden-winged warbler.

Group I: R. Budliger, W. Lee, A. Mapes, A. Ross, J. and W. Suozzo, and A. Schroeder. 0300 to 2245. Entirely in Albany Co. 128 species and one hybrid. Pied-billed grebe, little blue heron, peregrine falcon, yellow-breasted chat, and indigo bunting.

GUY BARTLETT CENTURY RUN

May 17, 1980

Common Loon	c fghi	White-winged Scoter	c g
Red-throated Loon	g	Ruddy Duck	f
Horned Grebe	c	Common Merganser	c g
Pied-billed Grebe	i	Turkey Vulture	c ghi
Double-cr Cormorant	h	Sharp-shinned Hawk	d fg i
Great Blue Heron	abcde g i	Cooper's Hawk	h
Green Heron	abcdef i	Red-tailed Hawk	bcdefghi
Little Blue Heron	i	Red-shouldered Hawk	c e
American Bittern	ef hi	Broad-winged Hawk	c fg i
Canada Goose	bc efghi	Northern Harrier	b
Brant	c e g	Osprey	ab gh
Mallard	abcdef hi	Peregrine Falcon	i
Black Duck	bc ef hi	American Kestrel	cdefghi
Blue-winged Teal	b def hi	Ruffed Grouse	b fghi
American Wigeon	c	Bobwhite	f
Wood Duck	bcdefghi	Ring-necked Pheasant	c f h
Bufflehead	h	Virginia Rail	c f hi
Oldsquaw	c	Sora	ef hi

Century Run (con't.)

Common Gallinule	c f i	Bank Swallow	a c efghi
American Coot	c ef hi	Rough-winged Swallow	cdef hi
Semi-pal Plover	f hi	Barn Swallow	abcdefghijkl
Killdeer	bcdefghi	Cliff Swallow	c f g i
American Woodcock	b f hi	Purple Martin	c fgh
Common Snipe	b defghi	Blue Jay	abcdefghijkl
Spotted Sandpiper	bcdefghi	Common Crow	abcdefghijkl
Solitary Sandpiper	b efghi	Black-cap Chickadee	abcdefghijkl
Greater Yellowlegs	f i	Tufted Titmouse	abcdefghijkl
Lesser yellowlegs	d	White-br Nuthatch	bcdefghi
Pectoral Sandpiper	e	Red-br Nuthatch	fg
Least Sandpiper	c f hi	Brown Creeper	f
Short-billed Dowitcher	f h	House Wren	abcdefghijkl
Gr. Black-backed Gull	c ef hi	Winter Wren	e ghi
Herring Gull	bc efghi	Long-billed Marsh Wren	b ef i
Ring-billed Gull	bc efghi	Short-bil Marsh Wren	hi
Bonaparte's Gull	f i	Mockingbird	abcdef hi
Common Tern	c i	Gray Catbird	abcdefghijkl
Black Tern	c f h	Brown Thrasher	bc efghi
Rock Dove	abcdefghijkl	American Robin	abcdefghijkl
Mourning Dove	abcdefghijkl	Wood Thrush	abcdefghijkl
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	a c f i	Hermit Thrush	c efghi
Black-billed Cuckoo	c ef hi	Swainson's Thrush	a f h
Barn Owl	c	Gray cheeked Thrush	c
Screech Owl	c i	Veery	a cdefghi
Great Horned Owl	c hi	Eastern Bluebird	b efghi
Barred Owl	c	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	bc ef hi
Saw-whet Owl	c	Golden-cr Kinglet	f
Whip-poor-will	c f	Ruby-cr Kinglet	d i
Common Nighthawk	c ef hi	Cedar Waxwing	c ef hi
Chimney Swift	bcdefghi	Starling	abcdefghijkl
Ruby-thr Hummingbird	c fg	Yellow-thr Vireo	bcdef hi
Belted Kingfisher	abcd fghi	Solitary Vireo	ab fg i
Common Flicker	abcdefghijkl	Red-eyed Vireo	bcdefghi
Pileated Woodpecker	fghi	Philadelphia Vireo	b e
Red-headed Woodpecker	de	Warbling Vireo	cdefghi
Yellow-bel Sapsucker	b d fg	Black-and-white Warbler	efghi
Hairy Woodpecker	abcdefg i	Worm-eating Warbler	e hi
Downy Woodpecker	abcdefghijkl	Golden-winged Warbler	h
Eastern Kingbird	abcdefghijkl	Blue-winged Warbler	bcdef hi
Great Cr Flycatcher	abcdefghijkl	(Lawrence's Warbler)	hi
Eastern Phoebe	bcdefghi	Tennessee Warbler	cdefghi
Y-bel Flycatcher	b	Orange-crowned Warbler	e
Willow Flycatcher	c f hi	Nashville Warbler	fg
Alder Flycatcher	ef	Northern Parula	c g i
Least Flycatcher	abcdefghijkl	Yellow Warbler	abcdefghijkl
Eastern Wood Pewee	cde hi	Magnolia Warbler	a c fg
Olive-sided Flycatcher	h	Cape May Warbler	c f
Horned Lark	c f	Black-thr Blue Warbler	c efghi
Tree Swallow	abcdefghijkl	Yellow-rumped Warbler	bcdefghi

Century Run (con't.)

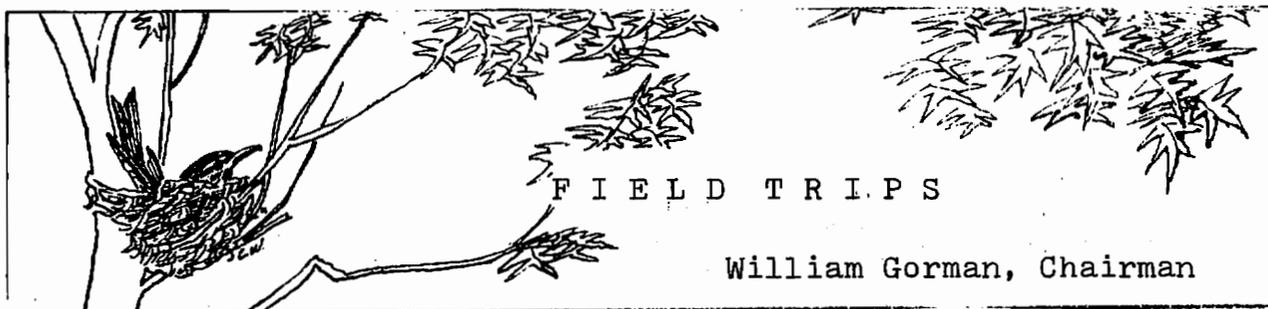
Blk-thr Green Warbler	c efghi	Common Grackle	abcdefghi
Blackburnian Warbler	c fg i	Brown-headed Cowbird	abcdefghi
Chestnut-sided Warbler	c efghi	Scarlet Tanager	bc efghi
Bay-breasted Warbler	c e i	Cardinal	abcdefghi
Blackpoll Warbler	a c	Rose-br Grosbeak	abcdefghi
Pine Warbler	c	Indigo Bunting	i
Prairie Warbler	c ef hi	Evening Grosbeak	a
Ovenbird	abcdefghi	Purple Finch	bc fg i
No. Waterthrush	a cdefghi	House Finch	abcdefghi
Louisiana Waterthrush	c f hi	American Goldfinch	abcdefghi
Mourning Warbler	a g	Rufous-sided Towhee	bcdefg i
Common Yellowthroat	abcdefghi	Savannah Sparrow	cd ghi
Yellow-breasted Chat	i	Grasshopper Sparrow	c
Wilson's Warbler	a cde h	Henslow's Sparrow	c f hi
Canada Warbler	cd ghi	Vesper Sparrow	c
American Redstart	abcdefghi	Dk-eyed Junco	ef hi
House Sparrow	abcde ghi	Chipping Sparrow	bcdefghi
Bobolink	bcdefghi	Field Sparrow	c ef hi
Eastern Meadowlark	bcdefghi	White-cr Sparrow	bcd hi
Red-winged Blackbird	abcdefghi	White-thr Sparrow	a cd fg i
Orchard Oriole	c	Lincoln's Sparrow	a
Northern Oriole	abcdefghi	Swamp Sparrow	abc efghi
Rusty Blackbird	g	Song Sparrow	abcdefghi



RESCUE EFFORT

A pair of red-tailed hawks nesting underneath a bridge in Rochester, New York, were almost removed by wildlife authorities last week after several persons complained that the birds were attacking pedestrians and joggers on the sidewalk above the nest. But as officials were preparing to take away the nest, Allan Klonick, president of Burroughs Audubon Society, was in court getting a restraining order to stop nest removal. Klonick then helped officials construct a plywood barricade to block pedestrians from the birds' view. The birds he said apparently were alarmed at the sight of bobbing heads passing their nest. Since the wall was completed, no further attacks have been reported.

--Audubon Leader



LOWER HUDSON
April 12, 1980

The day was cloudy but warm and pleasantly spring-like, the temperature rising into the low 60's F. Our group of 13 observers visited the creeks, marshes, and other habitats from Rensselaer south to Stockport Creek. More land birds were in evidence than usual for this trip. On the other hand, waterfowl were relatively scarce; and this also seemed to be true for the entire 1980 spring season in this area, at least judging from rather casual weekend trips. Altogether, 42 species were recorded.

Canada geese (150 est.), mallards (100 est.), black ducks (150 est.), green-winged teal (15), blue-winged teal (8), American wigeon (2+), wood ducks (30 est.), and common mergansers (13) were seen. Five ospreys, relatively common here this spring, were observed, mainly along Schodack Creek. Turkey vulture, common snipe, belted kingfisher (4), and Eastern phoebe (6) were among other species noted. About 100 tree swallows were observed, many of these in a group over the Paps-canee Marshes; also, about 15 swamp sparrows were singing in the marshes. Non-avian marsh noise-makers included many spring peepers and some leopard frogs.

Additional species seen: Red-tailed hawk (10); American kestrel (2); ring-necked pheasant; killdeer (4); great black-backed gull (10); herring gull (20); ring-billed gull (10+); rock dove; mourning dove (20); common flicker (10); downy woodpecker (4); barn swallow; blue jay (10 est.); common crow (30); black-capped chickadee (6); tufted titmouse (3); mockingbird; American robin (50); starling (50); red-winged blackbird (1,000 est.); common grackle (2,000+); brown-headed cowbird (10); cardinal (10); house finch (6); dark-eyed junco (100 est.); field sparrow, swamp sparrow (15); song sparrow (35).

--Paul F. Connor

Field Trips (con't.)

BLACK CREEK MARSH - PANCAKE BREAKFAST
May 10, 1980

A total of 55 people made up the annual Black Creek Marsh field trip on May 10, 1980.

As usual, the trip was split into two groups. Twenty-five early risers met at 6 a.m. for the trip led by Ron Laforce. On the 8 a.m. trip, led by Bob Budliger, there were thirty people.

Highlights of the trip were excellent views of a pileated woodpecker working on a tree and blue-gray gnatcatcher (both male and female) building their nest.

After the trip, thirty-four birders enjoyed a pancake breakfast at the Tom Sawyer Motor Inn.

A total of 69 species were counted.

Additional species seen: Great blue heron, green heron, American bittern, Canada goose, mallard, black duck, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, wood duck, red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, ruffed grouse, Virginia rail, sora, American coot, killdeer, common snipe, spotted sandpiper, solitary sandpiper.

Rock dove, mourning dove, belted kingfisher, common flicker, hairy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, Eastern kingbird, Eastern phoebe, tree swallow, rough-winged swallow, barn swallow, blue jay, common crow, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, house wren, long-billed marsh wren, mockingbird, gray catbird, brown thrasher, American robin, wood thrush, starling.

Yellow-throated vireo, red-eyed vireo, warbling vireo, blue-winged warbler, yellow warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, palm warbler, northern waterthrush, common yellowthroat, American redstart, bobolink, Eastern meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, Northern oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, scarlet tanager, cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, American goldfinch, field sparrow, white-throated sparrow, swamp sparrow, and song sparrow.

---Carolyn Laforce

...DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600.....DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600.....

Field Trips (con't.)

HENRY G. REIST SANCTUARY
May 11, 1980

A group of eight of us gathered at the Reist Sanctuary on a sunny Mother's Day (which I suspect cut down on our attendance). Within the hour it became cloudy and overcast with a strong southerly wind which seemed to affect the bird activity--not much movement at all.

We had a good look at two male rose-breasted grosbeaks preening themselves; a female was nearby also. Nice views were had of a great crested flycatcher and an ovenbird. The only warblers we saw, in addition to the ovenbird, were black-and-white, yellow-rumped, black-throated blue, common yellow-throat, and American redstart.

We saw a total of only 33 birds; but, all in all, we had our usual enjoyable trip with a companionable group of birders.

Additional species: Sharp-shinned hawk, broad-winged hawk, ruffed grouse, mourning dove, common flicker, downy woodpecker, least flycatcher, blue jay, common crow, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, gray catbird, brown thrasher, American robin, wood thrush, starling, red-winged blackbird, Northern oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, cardinal, American goldfinch, rufous-sided towhee, white-throated sparrow, and song sparrow.

---Alice G. Ross

CHERRY PLAIN
June 1, 1980

Heavy foliage and wind made birding difficult; but 44 species including dark-eyed junco, purple finch, and white-throated sparrow were recorded. A ruby-throated hummingbird was observed in the same area as the previous year and it is assumed that the bird is nesting nearby.

Additional species: Canada goose, mallard, hairy woodpecker, Eastern kingbird, great crested flycatcher, least flycatcher, Eastern wood pewee, tree swallow, barn swallow, blue jay, common crow, black-capped chickadee, gray catbird, American robin, wood thrush, veery, and cedar waxwing.

Field Trips (con't.)

Solitary vireo, red-eyed vireo, warblers: yellow, magnolia, black-throated blue, yellow-rumped, black-throated green, chestnut-sided, bay-breasted, ovenbird, Northern waterthrush, common yellowthroat, and American redstart; bobolink, red-winged blackbird, Northern oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, scarlet tanager, rose-breasted grosbeak, rufous-sided towhee, chipping sparrow, and song sparrow.

---Michael Kuhrt

- - - - -

SARATOGA NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK
June 14, 1980

At 8 a.m. our group was met at the Visitor Center by Chief Park Ranger William Gibson. Bill, an avid birder and HMBC member, acted as co-leader as we started with a walk around the Visitor Center area. Then we auto-toured the beautiful 9-mile road thru the battlefield. Excellent birding was experienced as we parked and took short walks at Freeman Farm Overlook, American River Fortifications, Breymann Redoubt, and other points of historical significance. After a picnic at the Fraser Burial Site, the group walked the one-mile-loop nature trail.

It being mid-June, probably most of the 53 species found were nesting. What colors do you see in your mind as you read this partial list of birds we observed?

Scarlet, tanager, Northern oriole, blue-winged warbler, indigo bunting, rose-breasted grosbeak, blue-gray gnatcatcher, Eastern meadowlark, golden-winged warbler, bobolink, black-billed cuckoo, grasshopper and Savannah sparrows.

One wonders what birds were here in 1777. Generals John Burgoyne, Benedict Arnold, and Horatio Gates obviously had other concerns at that time.

Additional species: Red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, mourning dove, chimney swift, common flicker, downy woodpecker, Eastern kingbird, great crested flycatcher, Eastern phoebe, willow flycatcher, least flycatcher, Eastern wood pewee, barn swallow, bluejay, common crow, black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, house wren, gray catbird, American robin, wood thrush, veery, cedar waxwing, and starling.

Field Trips (con't.)

Red-eyed vireo, warbling vireo, warblers: black-and-white, yellow, chestnut-sided, ovenbird, common yellowthroat, and American redstart; bobolink, Eastern meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, Northern oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, scarlet tanager, cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, indigo bunting, American goldfinch, rufous-sided towhee, sparrows: Savannah, grasshopper, chipping, field, and song.

---Bob Marx

- - - - -

FORTY YEARS AGO
Excerpts from FEATHERS

Vol. 2, No. 6, June, 1940 & No. 7, July, 1940

RAINY DAYS -- Are you a fair weather birder? Don't let rainy days keep you home when the weekend rolls around and your well-planned trip seems to have been spoiled. Much can be accomplished during the good season just by driving to the good hunting grounds and sitting in the car with eyes and ears sharply tuned. Try it sometime and you'll be surprised at the things you'll pick up.

---Editor

- - - - -

Ten members of SBC (Schenectady Bird Club) and eight of the Sassafras Bird Club of Amsterdam met at Long Trail Lodge, on Mendon Mountain, Vt., on June 8 & 9. Under the guidance of Maurice Broun, the resident naturalist, there was an outing and field trip. We arrived about noon, registered at the Lodge, and were assigned rooms in the new Annex, which was very attractive and most comfortable.

We met Mr. Broun working in his bog garden. The plants in this garden are all native to Vermont. Mr. Broun arranged to lead a group at 4 o'clock to the alder swamp near the Lodge. This trip did not produce many varieties of birds but did afford the opportunity of hearing four kinds of thrushes--hermit, veery, olive-backed, and wood--singing at the same time and of hearing the songs of the least and alder flycatchers. An olive-

Forty Years Ago (con't.)

sided and crested were also seen and heard. An osprey circling overhead gave an unusual record for the locality. At 8 o'clock we gathered in the Annex Recreation Hall, and Mr. Broun showed his beautiful and unusual movies of Florida wildlife. After the pictures we went out to hear the barred owl.

At 6:30 a.m. Sunday morning only a few hardy souls were ready for the morning walk in the drizzle, but they were rewarded by finding the mourning warbler, a summer resident, near the Lodge and also two pine siskins, not before recorded in that vicinity. The winter wren was heard singing high up the cliffs nearby.

After breakfast we followed Mr. Broun to Pico Pond. We had an interesting walk around the pond, and on the way back saw the Bicknell's thrush and scarlet tanager. We took a dirt road up and over the hills, where we had a beautiful view of the mountains. Then we drove to see a very large colony of cliff swallows. This was a real treat; we counted about 109 mud nests stuck up under the eaves of the barn.

--Esly Hallenbeck and C. N. Moore

- - - - -

**We repeat -- "only with the cooperation of all SBC members can this column of news and notes be complete and interesting. Jot down your observations briefly on a card and mail them to the Editor."

NOTE: This year's editor of 1980 echoes the sentiment expressed by the editor of 1940. The closing date for the Fall, 1980 issue of FEATHERS is November 15.

- - - - -

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to HMBC. We hope to see you on field trips. Walter Jorgensen, Karen Beck, Elizabeth Collins, Mrs. Mary Batutis, George & Leona Wagner, Mrs. Margaret A. Kelly, Miss Margaret M. Kelly, Paul G. Bishop-Wildlife Resources Center, Delmar.

. . DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600. . . . DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600. .

SUMMER BIRDING

By Tom Palmer

The following birds were observed near where I live on Langley Road:

Red-headed woodpeckers (3 pair - one of which had fledged 3 young); American kestrel (1 pair with three young -- another pair with five young); barn swallows with many young; tree swallows (4 pair raised successful broods); house wrens; great horned owl (three, plus one dead in a nearby creek bed); common yellowthroat; common flickers; Eastern wood pewee; cardinal; veery; brown-headed cowbird; Northern oriole; American robin; common crow; song sparrow; indigo bunting.

Yellow warbler; chestnut-sided warbler; gray catbird; starling; rock dove; scarlet tanager; mourning dove; downy woodpecker; wood thrush; common grackle; black-capped chickadee; Louisiana waterthrush; American goldfinch; blue jay; white-breasted nuthatch; American redstart; red-breasted nuthatch; red-eyed vireo; Eastern phoebe; cedar waxwing; warbling vireo; yellow-billed cuckoo; black-and-white warbler; killdeer; rose-breasted grosbeak; bobolink; tufted titmouse; field sparrow; kingbird; brown thrasher; red-tailed hawk; ruffed grouse; Savannah sparrow; house sparrow; alder flycatcher; chipping sparrow.

Orchard oriole (immature male in song), 6-30); pileated woodpecker; hairy woodpecker; belted kingfisher; ruby-throated hummingbird; black-throated blue warbler; turkey vulture; spotted sandpiper; chimney swift; great crested flycatcher, Eastern meadowlark; purple martin (flew over house 10 a.m., 7-27); barn owl - here since 6-19 and still present, 8-13).

The following species were seen just south of here during a survey for the Breeding Bird Atlas - section 5774A-Town of Florida, Montgomery County:

Eastern bluebird; upland sandpiper; mockingbird; blue-gray gnatcatcher.

Good Birding!



BIRDWATCHER'S GUIDE

The Adirondack-Champlain region boasts 270 bird species and 20 birding areas, all described in the latest edition of "Birds of Essex County." Published by High Peaks Audubon Society and written by Geoffrey Carleton, the chapter's former president, the booklet is available for \$3.50 from High Peaks Audubon Society, Inc., Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, New York 12932.

--Audubon Leader

Vol. 42, No. 3
Summer
1980



Shirley Schadow, Editor
230 Lake Hill Road
Burnt Hills, NY 12027

Published Quarterly by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

Membership: Life, \$150.; Sustaining, \$10.; Active, \$5.; Student, \$2; with an additional charge of \$1 per additional family member. Write or call Membership Chairman: Mrs. E. L. Thomas, 37-B Fuller Road, Albany, N.Y. 12205 - 518/489-2267.

HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.: Robert Budliger, President; William Shuster, Vice President; Alfred Schadow, Treasurer; Alice Ross, Secretary.

Address Correction Requested
Please Return to Sender

BULK RATE
NON-PROFIT

HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.
c/o M&M Mail Processing
241 Broadway
Schenectady, N.Y. 12305

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #195
Schenectady, N.Y.

Wayne & Ann B'Rells
3 Okara Drive, Apt. 7
Sch'dy, NY 12303

Published by Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

COUNTING BIRDS AT YOUR FEEDER

by Robert P. Yunick

Have you ever wondered how many birds use your feeders? Certain species such as evening grosbeaks (*Hesperiphona vespertina*), purple finches (*Carpodacus purpureus*), and American goldfinches (*Carduelis tristis*), to name but a few, appear easy game to count as they perch on the feeders or in nearby trees. Others such as blue jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*), black-capped chickadees (*Parus atricapillus*), and others that are given to scurrying about are more of a challenge. However, regardless of the ease with which you think you can count the birds at your feeders, your count is likely to be greatly in error, and here's why.

Bird counting at a feeder suffers from a lack of recognition of the individual bird. As chickadees come and go who can tell one from another to the point of accounting for all of them? Is the flock of grosbeaks that appeared in the afternoon the same as the one that was there in the morning? Therein lies the problem of obtaining an accurate count.

There is a partial remedy to this problem and it supplies some unexpected results. The answer lies in banding. By applying a numbered band to a bird's tarsus we give the bird individual identity and can then keep track of it. The outcome can be quite startling. My own experiences indicate that the actual numbers of birds using my feeders can be over three to twenty times more numerous than indicated by maximum counts, depending on species and conditions. Here are some examples.

The housefinch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) has become well established in the area in the past 15 years. The bird breeds abundantly in an urban/suburban surrounding and is common at feeders. It has been my experience at my feeders at 1527 Myron St. in Niskayuna that the species remains common until December, after which time only a few remain to spend the winter. In April this species and the purple finch return north at about the same time.

This past year, as in other years, I began feeding at home in early September and soon an abundance of birds developed at the feeders. As time passed, the birds were present at the feeders more of the time. At frequent and varied intervals I took head counts. At any particular time the max-

Counting Birds (con't.)

imum number present was of the order of 30 to 40 birds.

Once the feeding ritual was established, I began trapping. In the five-day period of 9-14 September I banded 22 house finches. Due to other commitments I had little time to continue banding in my yard until November. However, all the while the feeding continued and considerable seed was consumed. When I resumed trapping in November I caught 128 house finches 2-16 November. Thus, where I thought I had 30 to 40 birds coming to feed, I had accounted for 150 or nearly four to five times that number, and still there were some house finches left unbanded.

During the same period, my experience with the cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) was quite similar, though on a reduced scale. After feeding began in September, I was commonly seeing up to six cardinals feeding. In the period 14 September to 15 November I banded 17 cardinals, and still a few others of this sedentary species remained unbanded. My banding had accounted for nearly three times the number of birds I thought I had. In checking my 1979 results, I found a similar trend. Banding had accounted for nearly three to four times the observed number.

In the Adirondack Mountains at our camp at Jenny Lake near Corinth in northern Saratoga County, I have had the same experience with black-capped chickadees. I operate a feeder year round for the purpose of monitoring the abundance and irruptions of certain species. In the winter of 1971-72 there was a large chickadee irruption which brought an abundance of chickadees to Jenny Lake. Problems with raccoons at the feeders kept me from doing much banding until March.

It was the dead of winter in the woods, with abundant snow on the ground. Despite the calendar's urging that Spring comes on 21 March, one could not prove it based on the weather and the snow cover. Normally, Spring does not arrive there until mid-April. Thus, in March, the chickadees are on well-established winter territory and are normally not migrating.

While chickadees darting to and from the feeders and surrounding spruces and pines in the camp clearing were difficult to count, I estimated that about 25 of them were feeding when I set my nets on 19 March. In $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours I accounted for 76 chickadees, or three times the number I thought were there. On 25 March I caught 20 more in one-half hour and on 31 March 35 more were banded in eight hours of netting effort. My total of 131 was five times the observed 25. And I know I did not catch every chickadee using the feeders.

Counting Birds (con't.)

The most astounding results, so far, have been obtained with the capture of common redpolls (*Carduelis flammea*) in my yard at home. Here the circumstances were different from those described above. In each of the above cases, the birds in question were encountered as non-migratory residents or visitors. I was dealing with a reasonably fixed, momentarily stable population. In the case of the redpoll, I was dealing with a sample that began as a population of winter visitors, but which became quite transient as the season advanced.

It happened during the phenomenal invasion of the winter of 1977-78. These invasions occur generally with biennial rhythm, i.e., once every two years. This invasion was the greatest I have ever seen. I banded the first redpoll in my yard on 5 February 1978. By month's end I had tallied 526 of them with 149 of these on 25 February. In March I banded another 846 with 166 on 24 March.

But this was tame compared to what was about to happen. It was the first ten days of April that made this invasion so memorable and spectacular. In those ten days I nearly doubled my season total of the previous two months by banding 1,368 redpolls. Sunday, 2 April, produced a nearly unbelievable total of 492 of them, with another 147 on Monday. A week later I had 137 on Saturday and 374 on Sunday. Two factors caused these extraordinary catches: the timing and the weather. Early April is peak migration time for redpolls returning north through this area. Therefore, large numbers of birds were passing. On this occasion, however, there was some quite pronounced cold front activity followed by strong high pressure. As these fronts passed, they stopped the migration dead in its tracks and discouraged further progress. These birds were held by an invisible meteorological dam and the flood was beyond description.

On that fateful 2 April there were at any one time perhaps 200 redpolls in the yard (60x75 feet). However, as fast as I emptied nets and traps, more redpolls appeared to give the impression of wall-to-wall redpolls. Had I not been banding, surely I would have been impressed with the estimated 200 redpolls in such a small area flocking to the feeders and ground beneath them. However, the banding revealed a total of at least $2\frac{1}{2}$ times that number, and I could not begin to estimate how many of those present I did not band.

Then, when one reflects on the entire season from 5 February to 25 April, during which time I banded 3339 redpolls, the one-time maximum sighting pales in light of this total that is about 17 times greater. The actual number, including

Counting Birds (con't.)

all those that were not banded, is many times more.

So, you can see that counting birds at a feeder can be fraught with error. I do not advocate that feeder watchers attempt to correct the numbers they report on Christmas Bird Counts or other surveys because the numbers reported here are the result of a specific set of circumstances that may not prevail generally. Certainly the observed number of birds seen using a feeder as opposed to the total number of such users is dependent on some complex factors such as kind and amount of food, manner of dispensing, availability of other nearby feeders, habitat, etc. These results are presented to share the knowledge that counting can be inaccurate.

Beside offering some correction in the estimate of the number of birds present at a feeder at any one time, or over an extended period of time, banding provides some information on the length of stay and frequency of visit. In the 1978 invasion 608 (18.2 per cent) of the 3339 bandees were recaptured a total of 1518 times to give a redpoll total of 4857 captures. One bird was captured as many as 26 times from its time of first banding on 15 February until it finally departed on 24 April, 12 days before the last redpoll recapture on 6 May. This last lingerer had been banded on 16 March. The average number of recaptures among birds that were recaptured was 2.5 per bird.

During this flight there were some exceptional one-day repeat captures. There were two birds each of which was recaptured seven times in one day. There were three birds that each logged five captures in one day. These results are symptomatic of two attributes of these creatures that swarm so abundantly out of the far north: 1) they are extraordinarily tame and unassuming; 2) these grounded early April migrants were especially hungry because of the rigors of their journey and because of the cold temperatures they encountered following passage of the fronts.

A comparison of these 1978 results with those of the 1976 invasion offers some additional surprises. The total banded between 25 January and 18 April 1976 was not as great at 2477, but 1381 (55.7 percent) of these were recaptured a total of 5094 times for a redpoll total of 7571 captures! The last recapture was on 2 May of a bird which had been recaptured 21 times between that date and its original banding on 11 April.

However, the title for most-captured bird of any I have ever banded belonged to a redpoll which I banded on 1 February and last captured on 14 April 1976. In that 74-day period this bird was in my hand a total of 61 times on 37 of those

Counting Birds (con't.)

days. Our relationship became quite strained to say the least, because the bird became so familiar with the removal procedure from the trap that it became extremely difficult to remove him. Without having to look at his band, I could tell from his evasive behavior in the trap that I had caught my nemesis again. If this bird were so smart at evading removal from the trap, I wondered why he could not apply his intelligence at avoiding being trapped.

On several occasions, as I struggled to guide this bird into the transfer cage attached to the trap, only to have him tormentingly resist, I was attempted to open the trap and release the devil himself. With my patience worn thin, my arms aching to the point of feeling as though they would drop off from working with them at over-shoulder-height for so long, I had to reconvince myself several times that this bird would yield before I would. And he did--all 61 times. There was no release until the band number was confirmed in hand.

Others of his kind were also hooked on the thistle seed I was feeding. The next most frequently caught addict was captured a total of 37 times, followed by one each at 35 and 30. Among those that were recaptured, the average number of recaptures was 3.7 per bird.

With the onset of the winter of 1980-81, another redpoll invasion appears in the making, off schedule by one year. Nevertheless, it will offer additional opportunity to study these intriguing wanderers. Now, as a result of reading this, perhaps you can join me in wondering as you look out your window at your feeder how many birds really use the feeder. Surely, those that you see at any one time are only the proverbial tip of an iceberg of undetermined size.

- - - - -

Addendum: 1980 Century Run List

Group G: Jeff Gardiner, Sam Hoye, Tom Palmer, and Doug Allen. 97 species were seen. Whip-poor-will listing was accidentally omitted.

- - - - -

Did You Notice?

The Field Trip List for 1981 was stapled so that Page 4 follows Page 2. Don't overlook the trips listed on Page 3.

Federation of New York State Bird Clubs

New York has a state-wide organization composed of about 40 bird clubs. Individuals can also become members whether they are members of a bird club or not.

This organization states as its objects the following: "To encourage interest in the study of birds--to spread knowledge and appreciation of birds--to protect birds and their environment--to promote development of sanctuaries and refuges--and to educate the public about birds and their conservation."

THE KINGBIRD, a quarterly journal, contains regional reports relating to bird observations, migration data, and population changes. Good birding areas are noted. THE NEW YORK BIRDER, a quarterly newsletter, carries news about birders and bird clubs.

An annual meeting, a most popular event, is held at a different location in the state about the third weekend in September. Next year's meeting will be in Syracuse. Field trips, workshops, and paper sessions provide ample opportunity to make new friends, renew old acquaintances, and exchange birding news.

The Federation sponsors off-shore field trips, runs an annual mid-winter waterfowl count state-wide, and coordinates a spring migration peak count.

Members are kept posted on statewide conservation matters. The Federation is an energetic proponent for protection of our wildlife.

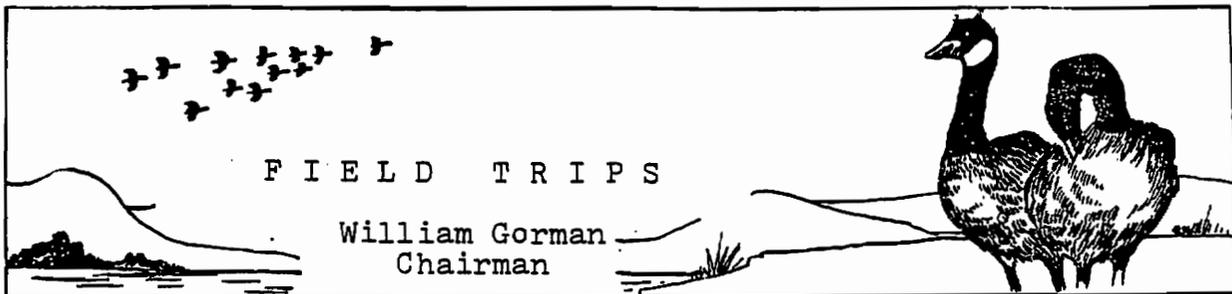
Some of the plans underway are to develop a speakers' list, compile a list of birders who might like to escort visiting birders in nearby birding areas.

A current program is the Breeding Bird Atlas being carried on in cooperation with the National Audubon Society and the Environmental Conservation Department of New York State.

Membership is open to those interested in conservation of birds and good fellowship. Classes of membership are Annual Membership, \$8.; Family Membership, \$10.; Supporting Membership, \$15.; Student Membership, \$3; Life Membership, \$150. Contact Membership Chairman, Mrs. Myrna Hemmerick, Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Box 203, Setauket, NY 11733.

- - - - -

DIAL-A-BIRD, 377-9600DIAL-A-BIRD, 377-9600



MIO, MICHIGAN
June 21-2, 1980

Ten enthusiastic birders left Schenectady on Friday, June 20th at 4:30 a.m. for a 700-mile ride to Mio, Michigan, the longest trip ever undertaken by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club. The trip's main objective was to sight the endangered Kirtland's warbler. The plan was to drive all day Friday, bird on Saturday and Sunday, and drive home on Monday. Two days were scheduled at Mio to afford a better chance to see the rare Kirtland's.

Drive we did and success we had! Following the major highways we averaged over 50 mph, including all pit stops. It required steady humping.

Access to the Kirtland's nesting habitat is restricted to trips led by either the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in Grayling or the U.S. Forest Service in Mio. Thanks to advance registrations with the Forest Service--no sightings guaranteed--we were in the nesting area early Saturday morning and found six Kirtland's. Most of them were seen by all ten of us. Everyone saw several individuals and all had excellent views by telescopes, binocs, and even the naked eye.

After that, the balance of the trip just had to be anticlimactic. Seventy species were seen in the Mio area and another 22 en route. A long trip, but well worth it.

Species seen en route: Common loon, pied-bill grebe, green heron, great egret, mute swan, Canada goose, mallard, black duck, blue-winged teal, broad-winged hawk, herring gull, ring-billed gull, black tern, black-billed cuckoo, common nighthawk, red-headed woodpecker, horned lark, mockingbird, yellow warbler, cardinal, house finch, and Savannah sparrow.

Field Trips (con't.)

Species seen at Mio: Great blue heron, turkey vulture, red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, bobwhite, killdeer, upland sandpiper, rock dove, mourning dove, chimney swift, belted kingfisher, common flicker, yellow-bellied sapsucker, downy woodpecker, eastern kingbird, great crested flycatcher, least flycatcher, eastern wood pewee, tree swallow, bank swallow, barn swallow, purple martin, blue jay, common raven, common crow, black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, red-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, house wren, gray catbird, brown thrasher, American robin, wood thrush, hermit thrush, veery, cedar waxwing, starling, solitary vireo, red-eyed vireo, black-and-white warbler, golden-winged warbler, Tennessee warbler, Nashville warbler, black-throated green warbler, Blackburnian warbler, pine warbler, prairie warbler, ovenbird, Canada warbler, house sparrow, bobolink, eastern meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, northern oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, rose-breasted grosbeak, evening grosbeak, American goldfinch, rufous-sided towhee, vesper sparrow, dark-eyed junco, chipping sparrow, clay-colored sparrow, field sparrow, white-throated sparrow, Lincoln's sparrow, and song sparrow. 6 Kirtland's warblers. Species: 70 plus 22 en route.

--Samuel Madison

COLUMBIA COUNTY, N.Y.

October 18, 1980

The field trip started at the Taconic Diner at the intersection of the Taconic State Parkway and Rigor Hill Road, Ghent, N.Y. Proceeding west toward the Village of Ghent, we stopped to watch several Canada geese walk across the road in front of us. At Dr. Brokaw's swamp we found common grackles, cedar waxwings, and a belted kingfisher.

In West Ghent a secluded roadside pond revealed a great blue heron. We had a great view of it as it took flight, circled the pond, and then flew out over the road.

At Stockport Landing Walt Sabin identified a black scoter on the Hudson River. At this point an En-Con officer arrived. After some conversation he decided we weren't doing anything illegal, and gave us some information on birds in the area.

The Olana State Historical Site and grounds didn't have much to offer in the way of birds, but was a nice place to have lunch.

The Hudson River at Germantown proved to one of the best

Field Trips (con't.)

stops of the day. Here we found a red-necked grebe, an osprey, a flock of brant, a mute swan, American wigeon, mallards, black ducks, herring gulls, mallards, and double-crested cormorants.

The Longs and Walt had to leave after this stop, but Paul, Ted, and I continued on to Ancram and the Copake Lake area. I always find it a good place to bird. We sighted a flock of several hundred Canada geese, wood ducks, ring-necked ducks, a pied-billed grebe, killdeer, and greater yellowlegs. As a heavy downpour cleared, a big northern harrier added a nice final touch to the day by winging its way over a nearby meadow.

Species seen: Red-necked grebe, pied-billed grebe, double-crested cormorant, great blue heron, mute swan, Canada goose, brant, mallard, black duck, American wigeon, wood duck, ring-necked duck, black scoter, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, red-tailed hawk, northern harrier, osprey, American kestrel, ruffed grouse, killdeer, greater yellowlegs, herring gull, rock dove, mourning dove, belted kingfisher, common flicker, pileated woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, blue jay, common crow, black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, mockingbird, American robin, cedar waxwing, starling, yellow-rumped warbler, house sparrow, red-winged blackbird, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, cardinal, purple finch, house finch, American goldfinch, dark-eyed junco, white-crowned sparrow, white-throated sparrow, and songsparrow. Species: 51

Weather: Overcast, some rain; wind: calm to 15 mph; temperature: 60-65°F; time: 8:30-4:30. Members in group: Paul Hebert, Ted Koniowka, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Long and daughter, and Walt Sabin.

--Nancy Kern

TOMHANNOCK RESERVOIR
November 8, 1980

Species seen: Common loon (6), horned grebe (3), great blue heron (2), Canada goose (500), snow goose (20), mallard (40), black duck (25), green-winged teal (3), common goldeneye, bufflehead (6), hooded merganser (45), common merganser (20), sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, red-tailed hawk (3), rough-legged hawk, killdeer (3), black-bellied plover, greater yellowlegs, white-rumped sandpiper, herring gull (20), ring-billed gull, rock dove (12), belted kingfisher (2), pileated woodpecker, hairy woodpecker (3), downy woodpecker (2), horned lark (5),

Field Trips (con't.)

blue jay (8), common crow (12), black-capped chickadee (12), white-breasted nuthatch, red-breasted nuthatch, American robin (8), starling, house sparrow, red-winged blackbird (50), evening grosbeak (26), American goldfinch (30), dark-eyed junco (6), tree sparrow (25).

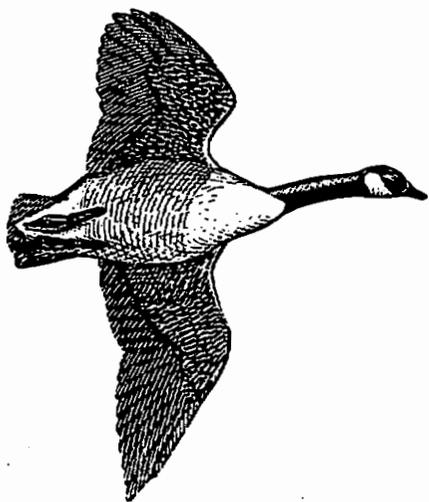
Weather: Cloudy, then sunny; wind: m-h; temperature: 40's F; time 8:30-2:30; observers: 17; species: 41.

--Monte Gruett

- - - - -
 Birding the Langley Road Area
 Amsterdam
 September 1 to November 30, 1980

by Tom Palmer

Great blue heron (1) in nearby swamp Sept. & Oct.; green heron (1) seen along Mohawk River 3 mi. east of Amsterdam Sept 1; Canada geese first seen 9/27, 28; 10/11, 12, 18, 19, 26, 28, & 30; 11/8, 11, & 21. Largest number on one given date: 10/18 (400). Note: Many cornfields in the Town of Florida and vicinity seem to attract this species.



Oldsquaw (1 male) 11/8 on Mohawk R. 3 mi. east of Amsterdam; Cooper's hawk 9/28 (1); red-tailed hawk*; rough-legged hawk (1) 11/22; northern harrier (1 on each date) 9/27, 10/19, 10/30; American kestrel*; ruffed grouse fairly common in area and seems to be increasing in numbers somewhat; ring-necked pheasant* 1 male and 4 females seen in nearby cornfields; killdeer common until October, last seen 10/19 (2); ring-billed gull 11/3 thru 11/9 in small flocks over nearby fields. Scattered sightings along Mohawk R. thru period; herring gull scattered sightings along Mohawk R. thru period; rock dove*;

mourning dove fairly common thru period especially around cornfields and farms; screech owl seen & heard in nearby ravine

Birding, Langley Road Area (con't.)

and usually responds to tape recording of own call; great horned owl (4)*.

Common flicker* less common at end of reporting period; pileated woodpecker* (1 pair); red-headed woodpecker* not seen after 9/20; hairy woodpecker*; downy woodpecker*; phoebe last seen 10/5; horned lark 10/18 (1), 10/19 (5), 11/8 (3); turkey vulture (1) 9/20; blue jay*; crow*; black-capped chickadee*; white-breasted nuthatch*; winter wren (1) 11/8 in ravine; Carolina wren 10/18 (1); red-breasted nuthatch 9/1 (1), 10/19 (1); catbird* last observed 9/20 (1); American robin* last observed 11/21 (1); hermit thrush (1) 11/18; wood thrush last observed 10/4 (1); Eastern bluebird scattered sightings, last seen 10/28 (4).

Golden-crowned kinglet migrating thru Oct. & Nov., last seen 11/30 (5); cedar waxwing (20) 9/4, 9/20 (2), 10/5 (6), 11/8 (42), & 11/30 (28); starling* very large flocks in Nov., 10,000 est.; black-throated green warbler (2) last seen during migration 9/20; yellow-rumped warbler (45) 10/5, (30) 10/6; 10/18-20 large numbers.

House sparrow common at nearby farm*; bobolink last seen 9/4, small flock in flight; Eastern meadowlark last seen 10/19 (8); red-winged blackbird* not many since middle of Nov.; Northern oriole (2) 9/1; common grackle in flocks until early Nov., few since then; brown-headed cowbird fairly common until Nov., scattered sightings since then.

Cardinal fairly common thru period; rose-breasted grosbeak (3) last seen 9/20; evening grosbeak (2) first seen 10/24 now fairly common; pine grosbeak (2) 11/30; purple finch (1) 10/19; house finch scattered sightings thru period; pine siskin (18) first seen 10/8, increased to a peak of 65 on 10/18, last seen (3) 11/8; American goldfinch*; dark-eyed junco seen migrating early in period, last seen 11/8 (2); tree sparrow first seen 11/8 (1), increasingly common since; field sparrow observed in early Sept., last seen 9/18 (2); white-throated sparrow first seen 10/5 (40), peaked 10/18 (60), last seen 10/30 (2); song sparrow common until late Oct., last seen 11/8 (2).

Species total: 63.

*Species seen throughout period

1979 SCHENECTADY CHRISTMAS BIRDCOUNT

Schenectady, N.Y. 42°45'N, 73°55'W, center at Lydius St. and Lone Pine Road in Guilderland; elevation 95 to 1220 ft., area and habitat coverage as described 1968.--Dec. 15; 5:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A.M.: mostly cloudy. P.M.: mostly clear. Temp. 24° to 33° F. Wind NW-SW, 0-10 m.p.h. Snow cover 1 to 3 in. Water mostly open. Wild food crop excellent. Forty-two observers, 30 in 9 parties, 11-12 at feeders. Total party-hours, 75 (34.75 on foot, 40.25 by car) plus ? hours at feeders; total party-miles 378.5 (42.5 on foot, 336 by car).

Horned Grebe 1; Great Blue Heron 1; Goose: Canada 15, Snow 1; Mallard 128; Mallard x Black Duck 3; Black Duck 126; Am. Wigeon 3; Wood Duck 1; Oldsquaw 1; Com. Merganser 4; Hawk; Sharp-shinned 2; Red-tailed 46, Rough-legged 3; Am. Kestral 15; Ruffed Grouse 7; Ring-necked Pheasant 2; Com. Snipe 1; Gull: Herring 84, Ring-billed 156; Dove: Rock 655, Mourning 613; Owl: Screech 3, Great Horned 3; Belted Kingfisher 8; Woodpecker: Com. (yel.-sh.) Flicker 6, pileated 3, Hairy 26, Downy 81; Blue Jay 295; Com. Crow 521; Black-capped Chickadee 681; Tufted Titmouse 126; Nuthatch: White-breasted 115, Red-breasted 3; Brown Creeper 5; Carolina Wren 1; Mockingbird 41; Am. Robin 400; Cedar Waxwing 31; N. Shrike 2; Starling 2837; Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler 1; Com. Yellowthroat 2; House Sparrow 1114; Com. Grackle 1; Brown-headed Cowbird 6; Cardinal 134; Evening Grosbeak 40; Finch: Purple 13, House 250; Am. Goldfinch 86; Dark-eyed (Slate-col.) Junco 151; Sparrow: Tree 119, White-throated 70, Song 54.

Total, 55 species (plus 1 hybrid); about 9097 individuals. (In count area count week but not seen count day: E. Bluebird, N. (Baltimore) Oriole.)---Douglass & Judith Allen, Kay Angell, Marie Bedford, William Brooks, Robert Budliger, Carol & James D'Aleo, Karl David, Martha Dunham, Laura Farrar, Dawn Force, Bernard & Christine Grossman, Ginnie Havens, Betty Hicks, Sam Hoye, Carolyn & Ron Laforce, William Lee (compiler--2171 Grand Blvd., Schenectady, N.Y. 1230), Arthur & Dee Long, Samuel Madison, Elayne & Richard Marine, Barbara Mateunas, Robert Marx, Thomas Palmer, David Pannone, Lee Perocchi, Mrs. Harold Plumley, Betsy Potts, Alice Ross, Walton Sabin, Alan Schroeder, Barbara Stott, James & Wendy Suozzo, Anne Thompson, Peter Worthington, Robert Yunick. (Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club).

---American Birds
July 1980

DIAL-A-BIRD 377-9600. . . .DIAL-A-BIRD 3779600

FORTY YEARS AGO
FEATHERS October 1940

WHAT WINTER OFFERS
Barrington S. Havens

With the fall season here and winter not far away, the old-timers in bird study are beginning to look forward to another season with the annual question: what unusual things can we expect this winter? A great many bird students, confining their activities to the spring migration period and the summer when nesting is in progress, miss some of the best thrills to be provided by birds.

For winter is the season which can well repay the amateur ornithologist. Far from being a time when all the birds have left for the south, it not only brings us certain birds characteristic of that season and none other -- in addition to the normal residents found the year around -- but also provides opportunities for study equalled by no other time of the year.

What birds can we find in winter? First of all, as has been said, there are the resident birds, like the grouse, sparrow hawk, screech owl, pileated woodpecker, blue jay, white-breasted nuthatch, chickadee, etc. In addition to these, many summer residents often remain to spend the winter with us in small quantities, including some ducks, marsh hawk, mourning dove, kingfisher, robin, meadowlark, cowbird, goldfinch, and song sparrow. Still another group includes those like the mergansers, gulls, goshawk, snowy owl, red-breasted nuthatch, winter wren, golden-crowned kinglet, Bohemian waxwing, shrike, rusty blackbird, evening and pine grosbeaks, redpoll, siskin, crossbills, junco, and snow bunting -- birds which we may see during migration or which visit us in winter only as a retreat from other regions where they normally stay.

Why should we study these birds in the winter? First of all, winter is the only time when we can see some of them at all - unless we want to travel far to the north to reach their summer breeding grounds. Secondly, the winter season, with the trees bare of leaves and general scarcity of birds making observation easy with little to distract the attention, is an excellent one to study appearance and habits. Thirdly, there is the great thrill of finding the unexpected. For in winter, with few exceptions, we never know what we'll be able to add to our list when we set out on a trip. We may turn up a flock of redpolls, grosbeaks, or Bohemian waxwings, or we may get a good look at a goshawk or a rough-legged hawk for first time in several years. So get out this winter and see what you can find. And don't let a snowy day discourage you. Some of the best reports have been turned in after a trip made during a snowfall.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to HMBC. We hope to see you on field trips.
 Roger T. Drew, Mrs. Ellen F. Picinich, Charles L. Royal,
 Claire K. Schmitt, Valerie J. Woods, Alan Wyckoff.



Vol. 42, No. 4
 Fall
 1980



Shirley Schadow, Editor
 230 Lake Hill Road
 Burnt Hills, NY 12027

Published Quarterly by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Inc.

Membership: Life, \$150.; Sustaining, \$10.; Active, \$5.; Student,
 \$2.; with an additional charge of \$1 per additional family mem-
 ber. Write or call Membership Chairman: Mrs. E. L. Thomas,
 37-B Fuller Road, Albany, NY 12205 - 518/489-2267.

HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.: Robert Budliger, President;
 William Shuster, Vice President; Alfred Schadow, Treasurer;
 Alice Ross, Secretary.

Address Correction Requested
 Please Return to Sender

BULK RATE
 NON-PROFIT

HUDSON-MOHAWK BIRD CLUB, INC.
 c/o M&M Mail Processing Co., Inc.
 241 Broadway
 Schenectady, NY 12305

U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Permit # 195
 Schenectady, NY

Dr & Mrs Robert P Yunick
 1527 Myron St
 Schdy NY 12309