

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of the members who contributed money and materials and those who spent so many hours in preparing the TPAS Christmas tree. I especially want to thank the chairman, Mrs. I. D. Acord. Our plea for gum balls was heeded from afar. A big "thank you" to the Lloyd Fosters in Tennessee, the L. G. Hueys in Tyler, Texas, and Peggy Acord's relatives in California. Sprayed with glitter, the gum balls added much to the beauty of the tree.

Although the bids on the trees were lower than anticipated, I feel the Festival of Trees was a very successful event, as considerably more money for the new Garden Center was taken in this year than last year due to increased ticket sales. Much interest was shown in our tree, and the cornhusk angels were quite an attraction, receiving many favorable comments. --Leo A. Galloway

WHOOPIING CRANES

After the three Whooping Cranes were reported on TV November 15, several parties searched for them on the 16th. After the birds were found on a playa lake two miles west of Panhandle in Carson County, Mrs. Acord did an excellent job in notifying people so that before the cranes left at approximately 10:30 a.m. November 18, most active members had been able to see them at least once. Some of their activities were dancing, calling, and flying out into a maize field about 1/4 mile from the playa to feed.

The week following the departure of the birds, an AP release stated 41 Whooping Cranes were counted at Aransas on Sunday, November 21, and that there were three more at Panhandle, giving a total of 44. We felt the Panhandle birds might have arrived at the Refuge by the 21st and, thus, have been included in the aerial count; however, another item on December 12 confirmed that 44 Cranes had arrived, including 8 young born this year and 10 born in 1964.

RARITY - REDPOLL

A greater rarity in Texas than the Whooping Crane was discovered by Kenneth Seyffert at Buffalo Lake Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25. There are probably not more than half a dozen previous records for the Common Redpoll but six of them were with a flock of Goldfinches in willows in a protected cove of the lake. The find was confirmed the following day by Leo and Ruth Galloway. Again the telephone played its part, and before the day was over, Mrs. Grady Fox and Mrs. Acord had seen the Redpolls. The birds were seen a few days later by Mrs. Fox and Mrs. George Ross. Kenneth Seyffert and Leo Galloway were able to locate one bird Saturday, December 11.

NEXT MEETING

No December meeting is scheduled. In lieu of the regular meeting, we will have the Christmas Count at Palo Duro Canyon on Wednesday, December 22. Unless notified otherwise, birders will assemble at 8:00 a.m. at the first water crossing.

The annual meeting of the TPAS will be held on January 17, at which time officers for 1966 will be elected. The nominating committee consists of Tol Settle, chairman, Mrs. Kenneth Whipple, and Mrs. George Ross.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Sunday, November 14, 15 birders met at Vega for a field trip to the Tom Green Ranch. Apparently the trip was one of general interest, as Dr. Waddill brought home a bag of rocks, Mrs. Fiedler picked up some petrified wood, Barbara Whipple collected plant fruits, and Jim Jokerst was prevailed upon to carry some deer bones back to the cars for one of the less ambitious members. It was also a pleasure to see an individual with seemingly boundless energy running up and down the bluffs; Mike Cheek covered at least twice as much ground as any other hiker. Birds of greatest interest were two Curve-billed Thrashers, Turkeys, a Townsend's Solitaire, and a caged Swainson's Hawk that had been injured.

BIRD NOTES

Peggy Acord and Thelma Fox recorded the Say's Phoebe at Buffalo Lake on Nov. 26, a late date for that species. November 29, Rena Ross and Thelma Fox saw a Horned Grebe, a Swamp Sparrow, a Long-billed Marsh Wren, and Rusty Blackbirds in the same cove with the Redpolls. On December 11, the Swamp Sparrow and Long-billed Marsh Wren were still present, according to Kenneth Seyffert and Leo Galloway. In addition, they sighted a Sora Rail. Various members have been seeing Longspurs for the past several weeks.

Mrs. Joe Deason described the actions of a Pigeon Hawk in her bird bath on an arbor-like open porch outside her window December 9; the bird flipped water with his tail up onto his head and appeared to enjoy his bath immensely. A White-breasted Nuthatch, Nov. 11, and Hairy Woodpecker, Nov. 19, visited Thelma Fox's feeders.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTION

There are many excellent nature and conservation books for both young and old listed in the current Audubon Magazine, at least some of which should be available at local bookstores for Christmas giving.

DEC. 22 - 8:00 a.m. - CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

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Mr. Kenneth Seyffert
2709 Fairfield
Amarillo, Texas

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