

AN EDITOR'S APPEAL:

To maintain the standards of this newsletter as set by the preceding editors, the Galloways, will require more than the little talents your new editor, Kenneth Seyffert, possesses. He will need your continuing assistance to make this the usual informative and interesting edition that it has been in the past. An appeal is hereby made to you all to submit items for publication, either written by yourself or perchance found in your reading, that you believe would be of general interest. Of paramount importance will be your own observations of birds. House Sparrow or Knob, Cardinal or Golden Eagle, sensational or otherwise, please call or write the information to our Recorder, Peggy Acord, or to the Editor, direct.

SEPTEMBER MEETING:

The first fall meeting of the TPAS will be held on Monday, Sept. 18, at 7:30 p. m. in the Garden Center. It has become traditional that this first program of the Fall consist in the showing of 35 mm slides taken by members. We urge those who have done so this summer to bring a generous sampling of their work so that we all may enjoy them.

FIELD TRIP:

A field trip on the Currie Ranch near Lake Tanglewood has been set for Oct. 1, time and place of meeting to be set later.

COOPERATIVE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY OF N. A.:

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife crossed the Mississippi from the east for the first time in their survey work and this year appealed to the birders of Texas to aid them in their continuing program of, again, by random sampling, an index of abundance of breeding birds. Your Editor found the idea intriguing and made such a count in Hensley and Oldham counties, beginning at northeast of Clanning and continuing for 25 miles to a point south of Boys' Ranch. A summary of the count, made on 1/11, follows: number of species seen, 35; number of individuals counted, 646; highest number of individuals per species, 135 W. meadowlarks, 96 Horned Larks, 82 Mourning Doves, 56 Cassin's Sparrows, 59 Mockingbirds; most often recorded species on the 50 stops, Cassin's Sparrow 38 times, Mockingbird 36 times, Scaled Quail 22 times, Horned Lark 12 times. Some of the more interesting birds found were 9 Mississippi Kites, 2 Long-billed Curlews, 1 Marsh Hawk, 2 Red-shafted Flickers, 1 Curve-billed Thrasher, 7 Loggerhead Shrikes, and 1 Lark Bunting.

A special problem was posed to the counter in that the Volkswagen he was driving did not have a speedometer that registered the half-mile. Since a stop had to be made at every half-mile interval, he was in a quandry, indeed. The answer, when it came, was simple. He found there were 110 center stripes on the highway in every mile. He therefore stopped at every 55th stripe and reached his goal right on the button.

Since this survey will be a continuing one, it is hoped that more of us can par-

ticipate in it next year.

SOME SUMMER NESTING RECORDS:

Verdin - a report of a happy conclusion can be given to the nest found in the Palo Duro Canyon and written about by KS in the May newsletter. Three young fledged and were last seen in the nest vicinity on 8/4.

Barn Swallow - on 7/1 a nest was found by KS in a culvert beneath the highway that skirts the east side of Buffalo Lake. On 7/15 there were 5 fledged young present. On 8/5 5 more young were found in the same nest and on 8/27 all had successfully fledged.

Turkey Vulture - on 7/4 two young were found by KS in a side canyon located below the dam at Buffalo Lake. The nest cavity was situated just below the upper rim of the canyon and was excellently concealed by a dense growth of Skunkbush Sumac covered by grapevines. The often seen adult in that area had created the suspicion that a nest was somewhere about; however, several searches had not revealed it. The young gave themselves away as eventually a close approach caused them to hiss and sigh quite loudly. This sound was very startling as it resembled nothing so much as large cats about to attack. From the development of their primaries and tail feathers, it was estimated, from reading the literature, that they were 25 to 30 days old. They were last seen on 7/15. On 7/23 they were gone. Assuming they left the nest cavity on 7/22, they would have been about 43 to 48 days old. They could not have fledged at this age as they must be over 70 days old to do so.

Mississippi Kite - Three nests of this species in the Palo Duro Canyon were kept under observation by KS. Each produced one fledgling. It appears to be quite adaptable to human activity which may prove to be a saving characteristic in the face of increasing destruction of nesting habitat. Two of the nests in the Palo Duro were located in cottonwoods growing in the heavily used campgrounds. Nest building on each began a few days prior to 5/20.

Swinson's Hawk - Two successful nestings can be reported by KS. Those of you who made trips to Canyon during the early spring before the trees were fully leafed out possibly noticed the bulky nest of this bird located high in a large cottonwood growing in the hollow below Buffalo Stadium. This site has been used regularly for the last several years and this year two young were fledged. Nest building began on 4/9. Another nest was observed at Buffalo Lake and it, too, produced two fledglings. Its success can be attributed largely to the lack of human activity in the area, which lack was a direct result of heavy water pollution caused by the discharge of the wastes of Tierra Blanca creek into the lake. This latter nest was built about 15' up in a small cottonwood and it was extremely exposed.

NEW RECORD:

On 7/14 Leo Galloway reported the presence of a Cactus Wren in the alley behind his house. The appearance of this species

represents a first for Potter County. It has been rumored and implied by many of his friends that this bird was an import. If any of you have birded in the Lubbock area you are aware of the fact that Cactus Wrens are fairly common there. When confronted with this rumor, Leo roared: "That 's adirtyrottinostakkinkie!"

T.O.S.:

The Bulletin of the Texas Ornithological Society came under the editorship of Dr. Michael Kent Rylander beginning with the April issue. This issue is dressed in a refreshingly new format and contains much informative and interesting material. Membership in the TOS can be obtained by sending \$3.00 to W. Russell Weill, Treasurer, at 1429 Lovers Lane, Dallas, Texas 75225. Individual issues can be purchased for fifty cents a copy by addressing Dr. Rylander at the Department of Biology, Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

COME OBSERVATIONS ON THIS YEAR'S SUMMER BIRDS:

The presence of two species of sparrows is noteworthy: the Cassin's Sparrow, while usually present every year, was found in unusual abundance this summer, while the Grasshopper Sparrow, an irregular summer resident, was here in numbers. Observations of this latter species were made by KS from 6/3 thru August and it was seen and heard at Buffalo Lake, topside in the Palo Duro, and in suitable habitats in other areas of the plateau. The Snowy Plover nested on the Flats at Buffalo Lake and on 6/10 it was observed by KS as they scampered about. The Amer. Avocet also nested in this area but their success in completing the nesting cycle is doubtful as water inundated the area in the middle of June. The Semi-palmated Sandpiper was last seen by KS on 6/10 (2 at Buffalo Lake) and was seen first returning thru the area on 7/10 (60 on Tradewinds plays). Early or late, 7 female Wilson's Phalaropes were seen by KS 6/13 on Tradewinds plays, on 7/9 9 more females were seen on another plays, and on 7/30 both sexes were present in large numbers. Apparently the Spotted Sandpiper summered here as a pair of them engaged in alarm activities around KS at Buffalo Lake on 7/1. The first return of the Greater Yellowlegs was noted by KS on 5/31 (2 on Tradewinds plays) and on 7/21 Peggy Acord recorded a large flock along with many Amer. Avocets and a Long-billed Curlew and Marbled Godwit at the same place. On 7/31, on a plays along the road into Palo Duro Canyon, KS observed 3 Cinnamon Teal, 1 Amer. Coot, and 2 Soras, while on 7/20 Rena Ross and Thelma Fox named the first of the returning Lark Buntings at Tradewinds plays and saw a large flock of mixed shore birds. By 8/5 the Stilt Sandpipers were still common at Elysian Fields but had been replaced in dominance by 200+ Lesser Yellowlegs along with 12 Long-billed Dowitchers, many Semi-palmated, Baird's, and western Sandpipers, and 1 Semi-palmated Plover (KS). On 7/23 13 Great Blue Herons were present at Buffalo Lake (KS) while on 8/6 he saw 2 Redheads there along with 3 Canada Geese. These latter repre-

sent the surviving members of 29 cripples that began the summer at the lake. Other late and early observations made by KS: W. Wood Pewee, 2 on 6/10 and 2 on 8/6 at Buffalo Lake; House Wren, 1 seen and heard singing in Palo Duro Canyon 6/5 and 6/30; Black-headed Grosbeak, 1 female at Buffalo Lake on 6/10, Yellowthroat, 1 male singing at Buffalo Lake on 6/10 and 1 seen at same place on 9/9; Catbird, 1 male singing at Buffalo Lake on 6/10; Great-crested Flycatcher, 1 at Palo Duro Canyon on 6/13; Barn Owl, 1 at Buffalo Lake on 7/1 and several times thereafter; Empidonax, 3 at Buffalo Lake on 8/6; Common Egret, 1 at Buffalo Lake on 8/12; Solitary Sandpiper, 4 on a plays on 8/19; Pectoral Sandpiper, 1 at Elysian Fields on 8/26; Black & White Warbler, 1 at Buffalo Lake 9/3 and 9/9; Canada Warbler, 1 male at Buffalo Lake on 9/3; Black-throated Green Warbler, 1 male at Buffalo Lake on 9/3; Northern Water Thrush, 1 at Buffalo Lake on 9/3; and 9/9; Ovenbird, 1 at Buffalo Lake on 9/4; Red-eyed Vireo, Pied-billed Grebe, Townsend's Warbler, Double-crested Cormorant, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Hermit Thrush, 1 each at Buffalo Lake on 9/9 along with 2 Brown Thrashers. The Red-eyed Vireo had been seen earlier by Peggy Acord on 9/5 and she reported the passage of Upland Plover since the third week of July, the Olive-sided Flycatcher at her home on 8/13, the E. Wood Pewee on 8/11 (with Ethel Harris of the Dallas Audubon Society), the Amer. Redstart on 8/31 (seen the following day by Esther Waddill and Molly Marshman), the Yellow and Wilson's Warblers on 9/2, and in the company of Katherine Whipple, the Rufous Hummingbird at the home of Joe and Betsy Ross at 2600 Travis. Thelma Fox and Rena Ross pounced on the first returning Orange-crowned Warbler on 8/21.

FORMER MEMBER:

On 7/29 Joe Browder, a former member of TPAS, along with his wife Joan, visited with Peggy Acord. Both are active members in the W. Palm Beach, Florida, Audubon Society and they told Peggy much about the conservation work of that group.

GOOD NEWS:

From the reports coming in from various people it appears there was an increase this summer in the number of nesting pairs of Mississippi Kites and Robins within the city limits of Amarillo. An estimated dozen pairs of Kites were thought to be present which is considerably more than has been reported in the past. This is very heartening news as the nesting habitat of this bird has been steadily destroyed over the past few decades and if the bird can make an adjustment to city living its chances of survival are just that much better.

CONSERVATION NEWS:

Canyon's Gain is Wilderness' Loss (Audubon Leader's Conservation Guide) - "After three days debate, the Senate passed S. 1004 which authorized construction and operation of the Central Arizona Project as a means of bringing water to that part of Arizona. This bill excludes Marble Gorge and Hualapai Dams in the Grand Canyon, but

provided for building Hooker Reservoir in New Mexico, which would invade the Gila Wilderness Area. The area was the first wilderness unit to be preserved within the national forest 43 years ago. With the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, it was supposed to have had permanent protection. Now three years later the Senate has passed S. 1004 which threatens to violate, for the first time, the national wilderness preservation system. The House has not yet acted on the bill."

The Exorbitant Cost of Excessive Speed
(Sierra Club Bulletin) - "Sonic booms caused by military aircraft have triggered rockfalls that crushed cliff dwellings at Canyon de Chelly National Monument, have toppled pinnacles in Bryce Canyon National Park, and have damaged other wilderness areas. If civilian supersonic transports (SST's) were to be built, as planned, destruction caused by sonic booms would become more frequent and extensive. Damage to structures is estimated as high as \$1 million per day, and the wilderness experience would be shattered periodically anywhere within 25 miles of an SST flight path.

Concerned readers will be glad to learn of the formation of the Citizens League Against the Sonic Boom (19 Appleton St., Cambridge, Mass. 02130). No membership dues; contributions welcome."

A HIDDEN FRIEND:

On a day in the latter part of July, Peggy Acord received a telephone call from Mrs. T. L. Shumate of 4102 Cline Rd. reporting the presence of a hawk in her yard. The bird appeared to be injured, or at least quite tame, she reported, as it had been in the neighborhood for several days and seemed to be reluctant to move on. Mrs. Shumate voiced concern for the bird as she was fearful it would be shot unless someone took it under control and released it out of town. Your Editor offered to do what he could but the bird was very much alive and was not to be caught. It was an immature Swainson's Hawk and apparently had been thrust into the world on its own before it was fully ready and had luckily lit in the friendly neighborhood of Mrs. Shumate. The final fate of the bird is unknown but if Mrs. Shumate will attend the Sept. 18 meeting of the Society all the members present will be glad to hear of it.

CALENDAR:

- Sept. 18 - Monthly Society Meeting.
- Oct. 1 - Field trip, Currie Ranch.
- Oct. 16 - Monthly Society Meeting.
- Oct. 22 - Field trip, to be announced.