

FIRST FALL OUTING:

Though few attended, those who did reported a rewarding field trip made on the Currie ranch on a beautiful Oct. 1 morning. On a two hour hike made on the ranch, which is located below the dam at Lake Tanglewood, Peggy Acord, Margaret, Raymond and Cheyenne Bailey, Mrs. Fiedler and children, with their guests, and Katherine, Ken and Barbara Whipple saw, among other more common species, 17 Turkeys, 2 Cassin's Kingbirds, a Sage Thrasher, and numerous Lesser Goldfinches. It is hoped that on our next outing, scheduled for later this month and which will be discussed at our next Society meeting, more of us can attend.

ABOUT THE GARDEN CENTER:

Vera Deason writes as follows on the status of the Garden Center: "Mr. Parr, Building Chairman, considered the building 7 1/2% completed Sept. 1st, after payment to the contractor of \$17,729.46 which covered 90% of the work completed to date. There was an additional expense of \$65.00 paid out for some last minute surveying.

The city has provided water at the site. Southwestern Public Service Company's installation of a power line to the site will be underwritten by the Amarillo Area Foundation. The estimate to bring sewer line connection across the creek from Wallace Blvd. is not a firm one at this time - may be as much as \$5,000.00 - which we will have to bear. Telephone service to the site will be installed at no charge to us. All utilities on the Medical Center will be underground.

Sept. 1st, total unpaid pledges and cash in the building fund amounted to \$263,376.94. The contract with the builder amounted to \$262,900.00. That figure does not include the architect's fee of 6%, or the items listed above. It is estimated by the time all of these items are totalled the cost will be about \$282,000.00.

Furnishings, equipment and landscaping are not yet provided for. These things could run another \$80,000.00.

At the time the contract was signed the total in the building fund of cash and pledges amounted to \$221,000.00 so you see \$42,000.00 has come in since July. Our biggest problem is as always - too few people working to raise money!"

"MARIPOSA"

This word, meaning "butterfly" in Spanish, has been appropriately selected by Peggy Acord to carry the theme of the TPAS entry in the annual Xmas tree pageant. The butterflies will be made of blue foil and the flowers among which they will be hovering will be of styrafoam with pine cone petals in gold and white. Peggy welcomes any assistance you can give in making them.

FALL MIGRANTS:

Long-billed Marsh Wren - 1 at Buffalo Lake 9/16 (KS); Black-crowned Night Heron - 40 at Buffalo Lake 9/17 (KS); Yellow-crowned Night Heron - 1 in the yard of Thelma Fox (date unknown) and 1 at Buffalo Lake 9/17 (KS); White-crowned Sparrow - 1 at Buffalo Lake 9/24 (KS); Sharp-shinned Hawk

- 3 at Buffalo Lake 9/24 (KS); Yellow-breasted Chat - 1 at Buffalo Lake 9/24 (KS); Green Heron - 1 at Buffalo Lake 9/24 (KS); Franklin's Gull - 100 on a playa 9/24 (KS); Am Bittern - 1 at Lake Tanglewood 9/30 - seen by the parents of Peggy Acord; Song Sparrow - 1 at Buffalo Lake 10/1 (KS); W. Tanager - 1 at Buffalo Lake 10/1 (KS); Cooper's Hawk - 1 at Buffalo Lake 10/1 (KS); Audubon's Warbler - 1 flock of 250+ at Llano Cemetery 10/2 by Peggy Acord, et al.; Sage Thrasher - 1 at same place 10/2 by Peggy Acord, et al.; Ruddy Duck - 1 at Elysian Fields 10/1 by same; Prairie Falcon - 1 at Elysian Fields 10/1 (KS); Wood Thrush - 2 at Llano Cemetery 10/6 by Peggy Acord and Thelma Fox; Double-crested Cormorant - 2 at Buffalo Lake 10/8 (KS); Lincoln's Sparrow - 2 at Buffalo Lake 10/8 (KS); Oregon Junco - 1 at Buffalo Lake 10/8 (KS); Rufous-sided Towhee - 1 at Buffalo Lake 10/8 (KS).

NEWS FROM A MEMBER WHO MIGRATED:

Mrs. Clyde Biller, who was transferred to San Antonio this summer, writes from there that she is now enjoying her leisure moments by sitting on the balcony of her apartment and watching the many hummingbirds that visit the feeders of her neighbors. Her address is 1002 Oak Manor Drive, Apt. #1108, San Antonio, Texas 78229.

NEW BIRD FOR OUR CHECK LIST:

The Ringed Turtle Dove can now be officially added to the Potter-Randall County check list of birds. A number of our members have observed the species within Amarillo during the past several years but its successful nesting outside of captivity has never been reported. Vera Deason, who lives at 2204 S. Parker, reports the following: "Yesterday, Sept. 14, I continued to hear the cooing of a dove and located a Ringed Turtle Dove perched on a high wire at the back of our property. The dove lingered and lingered and I thought fresh water or grain was needed so I walked quietly toward the feeder to replenish the supply and walked within ten feet of a young, very small, but well feathered dove on the ground under the feeder. The girl who works for me came to the door and she too saw the little dove. In a few moments it flew into the tree and soon both were gone. Such excitement!"

PROGRAM FOR OCTOBER MEETING:

Mrs. Elizabeth Crabb, head of the reference department of the Amarillo Public Library, has kindly consented to present the program for October. Those of us who have used the facilities of our fine public library are aware of the excellent coverage given there to our favorite subject "birds, as well as related fields in natural history and conservation. We urge as many members as possible to attend to hear Mrs. Crabb explain the libraries' functions, uses, and facilities.

CALENDAR:

Oct. 16 - Monthly Society meeting.
Oct. 22 - Field trip, to be announced.
Nov. 20 - Monthly Society meeting.

THE UPLAND PLOVER

W. A. HUDSON (1922) - "Lying awake in bed, I would listen by the hour to that sound coming to me from the sky, mellowed and made beautiful by distance and the profound silence of the moonlit world, until it acquired a fascination for me above all sounds on earth, so that it lived ever after in me; and the image of it is as vivid in my mind at this moment as that of any bird call or cry, or any other striking sound heard yesterday or but an hour ago. It was the sense of mystery it conveyed which so attracted and impressed me - the mystery of that delicate, frail, beautiful being, traveling in the sky, alone day and night, crying aloud at intervals as if moved by some powerful emotion, beating the air with its wings, its beak pointing like the needle of the compass to the north, flying, speeding on its 7,000-mile flight to its nesting home in another hemisphere."

FRED J. PIERCE - "The bird's song is very interesting, but it is given little attention in books relating to ornithology. On still wings, these large birds circle slowly about, usually so high as to be mere specks in the sky, and give their shrill, penetrating whistle, which will carry nearly a mile, depending upon the wind and the altitude of the whistler. First there are a few notes sounding like water gurgling from a large bottle, then comes the loud whip-whee-ee-you, long drawn out and weirdly thrilling. When I first heard this strange cry I at once thought of some species of hawk as being the author of it, and I have known others to think the same thing. It is too penetrating a cry to be attributed to one of the sandpipers. I have heard the bird whistling in this manner as late as July, but I do not believe that this is a common practice. On more than one occasion I have seen the bird, after circling at such height as to be almost out of sight, close its wings and shoot to earth like a falling stone. This thrilling performance is similar to that of the prairie horned lark, which takes a head-first drop to earth when it has finished singing its contribution to the usual spring morning chorus."

ALDO LEOPOLD (1949) - "The ecstatic upland plover, hovering overhead, poured praises on something perfect: perhaps the eggs, perhaps the shadows, or perhaps the haze of pink phlox that lay on the prairie."

PETER MATTHIESSEN (1965) - "The wind birds are not credited with the ability to sing, a disgrace that they share with all nonmembers of the Passeriformes, or perching birds - the so-called songbirds. Yet the calls of shorebirds are often more melodious than the songs of songbirds. Since songbirds and non-songbirds use their voices for the same purposes, and since birdsong is a functional activity, seldom if ever performed for pleasure, the term "songbird" becomes even more unreliable than the term 'shorebird'. Any man who, hearing the spring fluting of the upland sandpiper as it drifts down through the morning over a sunny meadow, finds this beautiful sound less songlike than that of the song sparrow on the fence below, is making a mysterious distinction."

DOCTER COUES (1874) - "Young birds are abroad late in June - curious little creatures, timid and weak, led about by their anxious parents, solicitous for their welfare, and ready to engage in the most unequal contests on their behalf. When half grown, but still in the down, the little creatures have a curious, clumsy, top-heavy look; their legs look disproportionately large, like those of a young colt or calf; and they may be caught with little difficulty, as they do not run very well. I once happened upon a brood, perhaps two weeks old, rambling with their mother over the prairie. She sounded the alarm to scatter her brood, but not before I had secured one of them in my hand. I never saw a braver defense attempted than was made by this strong-hearted though powerless bird, who, after exhausting her artifices to draw me in pursuit of herself, by tumbling about as if desperately wounded, and lying panting with out-stretched wings on the grass, gave up hope of saving her young in this way, and then almost attacked me, dashing close up and retreating again to renew her useless onslaught. She was evidently incited to unusual courage by the sight of her little one struggling in my hand."

ED B. BENNERS (1887) - "At the former place we found immense flocks on the prairie, and they were so tame that the flock would part in the middle and let us drive between them. We often shot enough birds while going through a flock in this way to last for several meals. When they thought we did not see them they would stand perfectly still, and being the same color as their surroundings they easily escaped detection."

EDWARD H. FORBUSH (1912) - "About 1880, when the supply of passenger pigeons began to fail, and the marketmen, looking for some other game for the table of the epicure in spring and summer, called for plover, the destruction of the Upland Plover began in earnest. The price increased. In the spring migration the birds were met by a horde of market gunners, shot, packed in barrels and shipped to the cities. There are tales of special refrigerator cars sent out to the prairie regions, and parties of gunners regularly employed to follow the birds and ship plover and curlews by the carload to the Chicago market. These may not be based on facts, but we know that the birds came to market in great quantities."