

February, 1969

2709 S. Fairfield, Amarillo, Texas 79103

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ANNUAL DINNER:

On the night of Jan. 20 the TPAS held its annual dinner at the Garden Center during which its officers for the coming year were elected. They are:

President - Mr. Kenneth Seyffert
 Vice-President - Mr. Charles Pedersen
 Secretary - Mrs. Alvin Fiedler
 Treasurer - Mr. Armon Mays
 Recorder - Mrs. I. D. Acord
 Board Members - Mrs. George Waddill
 Mr. Jim Jokerst

This covered-dish dinner was undoubtedly the most delightful and tastefully prepared meal we have ever had for this occasion and congratulations and thanks are due our lady members for their hard work in preparing it. Special recognition is due to Sharon and Charles Pedersen for their work in organizing and directing the undertaking.

John L. Spinks, Jr., Southwest Field Representative of the NAS was our guest speaker. The message he brought was CONSERVATION, with particular emphasis on the Texas Water Plan and the effort to establish a Big Thicket National Park. His talk was followed by a question and answer period that could have gone on much longer than our limited time allowed. The TPAS looks forward to a closer association with National, particularly in relation to its conservation battles. Closer, better informed, and coordinated efforts on the State issues are needed badly and with a man in Austin as enthusiastic and articulate as John Spinks we think this will be forthcoming.

Those who attended the meeting were Peggy Acord, Vera Deason, Thelma Fox, Mrs. W. T. Graham, Mary Griffith, Mrs. W. E. Harrison, Jim Jokerst, Armon Mays, Charles and Sharon Pedersen, George and Rena Ross and their niece, Glenda, Kenneth Seyffert and Esther Waddill. Their guests were Mr. and Mrs. Bozeman, Mr. and Mrs. B. C. Elliott, Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Kollar, all from Amarillo, Mrs. Earline Moreman and Dr. Charles Smith of Canyon, Marie Mayfield of the Buffalo Lake Wildlife Refuge, and Douglas Grayson and two of his friends from White Deer.

The President wishes to take this occasion to thank the retiring officers for their time and efforts spent in the Society's behalf, and to welcome the new officers in our task of promoting conservation and in making this a still better society.

PROGRAM FOR FEBRUARY:

Our program emphasis for February will be "youth" but the topic will be that age-old "Art of Falconry". To unfold the pages of this exciting and exacting art we are fortunate in having a bone fide practitioner of the discipline, Douglas Grayson of White Deer, who not only will discuss falconry but will show slides taken in the U. S., Canada, Mexico, and the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Douglas is a member of the North American Falconers Association, Raptor Research Foundation, and has gathered information for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Though still a high school student, he has been practicing falconry for nine years. If at all possible, Douglas will bring a falcon with him to the meeting.

This meeting will be at 7:30 p.m., Fe. 17 at the Garden Center. Bring a young friend with you!

JUNIOR AUDUBON SOCIETY:

We have just discovered thirty-one memberships in the National Junior Audubon Society! These memberships are all in the third grade at Rex Reeves Elementary School in Canyon. Their teacher is Mrs. Earline Moreman, who has always managed to provide memberships for her students. To our knowledge, this is the only Junior Audubon Club in the entire Panhandle. Although Rex Reeves has an excellent science curriculum, Mrs. Moreman believes that the Audubon Club program augments the curriculum and stimulates a deeper sense of wonder and reverence for the earth and a more intense commitment to the conservation of its resources.

The students elect officers and program chairmen who plan the content of the meeting. Committees do corporate research on one of five subjects: ecology, mammals, birds, trees or wild flowers. All meetings are conducted according to parliamentary procedure. Research on birds can be done from a library of over twelve books on birds belonging to the classroom. They have a choice of using Birds of the World by Oliver Austin, and Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds of Texas to several of the books on birds published by the National Geographic Society. They can also study any of the 35 mounted birds which belong to the class - from the Sparrow Hawk to the Golden Eagle and Williamson's Sapsucker. They can witness "live" birth by female Mollies in their aquarium or they can witness birth in their glass insect box. Currently, inhabiting the insect box are cocoons of the Yellow Tiger Swallowtail butterfly, cocoons of the Luna, Cecropia, and Polyphemus moths, and a Preying Mantis nest, among others. Mrs. Moreman says that the excitement that prevails when a birth occurs is almost electric!

These students seem really "turned on" to the wonder of the world. Mrs. Moreman and the Junior Audubon Club are the reasons. Their faces are very serious when they recite their Audubon Junior pledge. It says:

As a Audubon Junior Member and a good citizen, I pledge myself
 - to protect my country's natural resources, its soil, water, plants and wildlife, and
 - to try in every way I can to make them more abundant.

We salute these junior conservationists and their teacher!

....Sharon Pedersen

BIRD NOTES:

Whistling Swan - 4 at Lake Clarendon on 1/23/69 by Peggy Acord, Thelma Fox, and Mary Griffith.

Bohemian Waxwing - 50 at the large camp grounds in the Palo Duro Canyon on 1/27/69 by Peggy Acord, Thelma Fox, Rena Ross and Esther Waddill. Approximately 50 for several weeks reported by a Mr. Watts in the LICO block of Broadmore and Rosemont. Several located there on 2/3/69 by Peggy Acord.

A WHITE-WINGED JUNCO IN TEXAS:

Heretofore the only records of the White-winged Junco in Texas have been sight records, and these are questionable. Because of the lack of confirmation, the authorities have never recognized them as being authentic. A specimen has now been collected and will be given to the U. S. National Museum by John Weske, its collector, who is a graduate student in ornithology now working in the East on his Ph. D. thesis. He writes: "I had always figured that to find a White-wing I'd have to find large junco flocks in the Palo Duro Canyon and then sort through the Slate-colored and Oregons. Not so; the bird came up all alone in response to 'spishing'. I did subsequently find a couple of other juncos (not W-w) in the vicinity.

"The locality was Haynes Scout Camp, 5.7 miles North and 3.5 miles West of Quitaque, Briscoe Co., Texas. The bird was in heavy oak-juniper growth on the canyon bottom downstream from the campsite. It is an area well worth visiting both for its good habitat and for its spectacular scenery."

The date it was found was 12/19/68.

OVER THE TOP:

We are happy to report that WTSU's first course in Ornithology, taught by Dr. Charles Smith, has gotten off to a good start with the enrollment of 24 students.

FOR THE LIBRARY:

As a gift from the TPAS to the Amarillo Garden Center the following manuals published by the National Audubon Society were placed on the Center's Conservation book shelf:

"Manual of Outdoor Interpretation"

"Wildlife Habitat Improvement"

"Manual of Outdoor Conservation Education"

"Trail Planning and Layout"

TWO NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome two new members to our society, Mrs. Bill Tarwater of 1505 Travis, and Mr. E. F. Browder of 1803 Harrison. Our membership now stands at 47.

EARLY SPRING?:

This has undoubtedly been one of the driest and mildest winters we have had in a long time. This is reflected in the activity of birds, particularly in their vocal demonstrations. While making a tour of the Palo Duro Canyon on the morning of 2/9, Kenneth Seyffert recorded the following bird songs: Bewick's Wren, House Finch, Cardinal, Mourning Dove, White-crowned Sparrow, Robin, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Roadrunner. While the wren, Cardinal, White-crown and Robin will sing on warm days all during the winter, it seems extremely early to be hearing Mourning Doves and Roadrunners singing so constantly and vigorously. The Rufous-sided Towhee songs came from two males separated by about 30 yards. The songs were not delivered in full force but in a subdued manner, sometimes only a "whisper" song. Two male cardinals came to blows in what appeared to be preliminary bouts to the establishment of nesting territories. The House Finch sang continuously as it flew overhead.

WELCOME TO YELLOWSTONE WOLVES:

"There's a chance to restore a bit of the balance of nature out in Yellowstone National Park. Wolves may be making a comeback there

- an area in which they were once thought to have been exterminated.

At least six have been sighted this season, the park superintendent says. The park officials hope the wolves are here to stay because they could help deep down the numbers in the elk herd. The protected herd, left without any major predators, keeps outgrowing its supply of forage.

The elk are protected. Let's hope the wolves will be protected, too - not only from hunters who could pick them off if they stray into the wild areas that surround the park, but also from old-fashioned notions of 'predator control.'"

... (Audubon Conservation Guide)

CALENDAR:

Feb. 17: Monthly society meeting at the Garden Center, 7:30 p. m.
Topic: "The Art of Falconry".
Speaker: Douglas Grayson, student, White Deer, Texas

March 17: Monthly society meeting.
Topic: "Fossils of the Panhandle".
Speaker: Dr. Gerald Schultz, Associate Professor, Geology Dept., WTSU.

April 21: Monthly society meeting.
Topic: "Birds and their Parasites".
Speaker: Dr. Derl Brooks, Associate Professor, Biology Dept., WTSU.

~~May 19: Monthly society meeting.~~
Topic: Wild Flowers of the Rocky Mountains".
Speaker: Dr. John Denko, Pathologist.

MORE ON CHRISTMAS COUNTS:

As of this writing, San Diego, California leads the nation for the most species seen on a Christmas Count at 217. This is an all-time high and is the second year in a row in which San Diego has taken the top spot. Prior to last year Cocoa, Florida usually took the number one position.

IMPORTANT!:

All members who can are urged to attend the February meeting as a business matter of considerable importance will be introduced at that time.