

PROGRAM FOR MAY:

Our Program Chairman, Jim Jokerst, has lined up a film for our May meeting that will be of great interest to both old and young. It is Walt Disney's 33-minute color production "Nature's Half Acre". It is an engrossing nature drama depicting the continuity of life in birds, plants and insects through the four seasons and is the result of patient camera work by fifteen naturalist-photographers who spotlight the dramatic interdependence of one life upon another and nature's master plan for providing for all. This is a film your entire family will want to see.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN:

Action within a democracy is the result of pressure from concerned segments of society. Good legislation does not just happen; it is the result of special interests organizing and acting. In recent years the National Audubon Society has moved more deliberately into the political arena to secure responsible legislation to protect and preserve our environment. To be political means simply to harness power in behalf of a particular interest with certain goals in mind. In the case of Audubon, the special interest is a beautiful and habitable nation and earth.

Each local chapter is also taking on an added dimension of awareness. Political sensitivity is but an extension of an awareness previously confined to the movement of other creatures in the environment. We are now required to be more aware of the movement of the political creature, man, and his potential for using power to enhance or destroy the earth.

While we must continue to inform ourselves and share our personal experience and insights with all interested persons, we must also act in the larger political arena. It is not easy. It requires time to gather facts, patience to creatively participate in situations of misunderstanding and anger, humility to realize that environmental mismanagement calls every person's life-style into question. So, do not be intimidated, the special interests we espouse is survival (repeat:

S-U-R-V-I-V-A-L).

....Charles Pedersen

NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome the following new members to the TPAS:

Gladys Davis, 3814 Monroe, Amarillo.
Dr. Richard Chastain, 3000 Julian Blvd., Amarillo.
Alvin H. Bell, 141 N. Beverly, Amarillo.
Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Empie, P. O. Box 3417, Amarillo.

THE NEWS MEDIA AND RESPONSIBILITY:

Recently the President of our TPAS responded to editorial comment by an editor, Mr. W. S. Izzard, in the Amarillo DAILY-NEWS. Mr. Izzard however, chose not to print the letter in its entirety, but only the opening and closing paragraphs in his Golden Spread Forum. The complete letter is printed here.

Dear Editor:

There is no way to assess the damage done by your editorial columns of April 20 and 22 to Earth Day and the Environmental Teach-In programs in the Panhandle. Both programs had

the support of federal agencies, national legislators, as well as the Governor of Texas.

It is an act of irresponsible journalism to deprecate the legitimate concern of Panhandle citizens for improving the quality of their environment by suggesting that because the program coincides with Lenin's birthday it is conspiratorial in purpose. I would suggest that a concern for a more habitable environment is the deepest kind of patriotism. It will be academic to talk about the preservation of our democratic institutions if there is not habitable environment in which they may exist.

Your comments on ecology are equally irresponsible. Ecology stresses the interdependence of all living things upon each other and with their environment. It is both a biological discipline as well as an important survival attitude for all thoughtful persons. It simply states that man cannot "go it alone" on this earth. He must have a deep reverence and respect for all life if he expects to pass on this generous inheritance of life on earth to future generations.

You will better serve the Panhandle region if you will enlist your age and wisdom in the cause of healing the polarities that exist through such misinformation. It takes little to divide our citizens.

Sincerely,

Charles Pedersen
President, Texas Panhandle Audubon Society

"All things by immortal power

Near or far

Hiddenly

To each other linked are,

That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling a star."

....Francis Thompson

BIRD NOTES:

Attached to this Newsletter is a list of those birds seen in Potter and Randall

Counties on our annual "Big Day" count, May 9th. We select a day in the Spring which we believe will be at the height of migration and make a sunup to sundown count in the two-county area. 145 species were recorded this year for an all-time high. It is doubtful that this record count means there are more birds present this year than previously; most of those making the count thought, rather, that there were fewer and they had to work harder to find them. A good count is largely a result of good organization. We had people at the Buffalo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Palo Duro Canyon State Park, the Palo Duro Club on down to Lake Tanglewood, in the city at the cemeteries and at key feeders in back yards, and running up and down the back roads. They were there at the right times of the day, the weather was good, and there were a lot of sharp eyes looking. We were probably spurred to an extra effort this year after learning that the MIDNATS recorded 127 species in Midland County on their "Big Day" count. While our count covers two counties and their only one, in Randall County alone we recorded 139 species. Those participating in the count were: Peggy Acord, Lucile Fiedler, Thelma Fox, Leo Galloway, Mary Griffith, Jim and Carol Jokerst, Charles and Sharon Pedersen, Kenneth Seyffert, and Esther Waddill.

A number of these sightings are of particular note. The Virginia's and Magnolia Warblers that Leo Galloway got at Buffalo Lake were sightings that are rarely made here and single Bay-breasted Warblers were recorded in the Palo Duro by the Pedersen/Seyffert party, at Buffalo Lake by Leo Galloway, and in Amarillo by the Acord/Fiedler group, which is also unusual for this seldom seen species. The 4 White Pelicans obliged us by remaining at Buffalo for another week as they were seen there the previous Sunday. The Eared Grebe count was high while the Sparrow Hawks almost disappeared. While we did get the Mississippi Kite, there were none in the "Big" canyon. The story of the Black Terns sighting is something else again. Eating the dust of the "Wandering Tattler" as it scooted over the dirt roads of Buffalo, your Editor came very near crashing into the rear of it as it came to a sudden halt. The ever alert eyes of Leo had caught the flash of wings in the sky and a careful scrutiny proved them to be those of 28 Black Terns wheeling very, very high with wind moving them steadily northward. All of which proves that good counts don't just happen. The Fox/Waddill/Griffith party found a Barn Owl at the Palo Duro Club while the Acord/Fiedler group reciprocated with a Long-eared Owl in the cemetery. It pays to be nice to birds by providing them with a feeder. The 10 Red Crossbills showed up again at Thelma's feeder and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak obligingly came in to the feeder across the way from Peggy's folks at Lake Tanglewood. A singing Brown Towhee in the Palo Duro was unexpected as the few that come here in the winter are usually long gone by now. The last bird tallied was a single Common Nighthawk that arrived a twilight as Peggy and Kenneth, two very weary birders, were sitting at the lake side compiling the day's count.

Some other unusual sightings have been made since reporting in last month's Newsletter:

Dunlin - 1 in breeding plumage at Buffalo Lake on 4/25 by KS.

Swamp Sparrow - 1 at the Palo Duro Club on 4/29 by Esther Waddill and Peggy Acord.

Long-eared Owl - 1 at Buffalo Lake on 5/2 by KS.

Hooded Warbler - 1 male at Llano Cemetery on 5/2 by Peggy Acord, et al.

Prothonotary Warbler - 1 male at Lake Tanglewood on 5/3 by Peggy Acord.

Green Heron - 2 at the Palo Duro Club on 5/5 by Peggy Acord.

Purple Martin - 1 female at her home on 5/9 by Peggy Acord.

Red Crossbill - 10 staying right with Thelma Fox and her feeder.

Semi-palmated Plover - 11 in one group at Buffalo Lake on 4/25 by KS (an unusual number).

Empidonax flycatchers - less than half a dozen seen thus far which is an unusually low number.

PALO DURO STATE PARK:

There is a plan to build a "scenic road" into Palo Duro Canyon. It will join the existing road at the "turnaround" with construction through the 1½ mile area east of this place where the regular road ends. This area extending 1½ miles to the east park boundary is the ONLY tract of undeveloped canyon floor remaining. A road in this area of the park could destroy this final portion of the canyon floor.

There are alternative routes available which would leave this 1½ mile area intact.

IMMEDIATE NEED: Write state officials and cite the threat to the canyon ecology this proposed road in particular would pose, as well as the problem that any road poses to this fragile canyon environment. Once this 1½ mile area is destroyed, there will be no more undeveloped canyon floor available to the general public to enjoy in its natural untouched beauty. Letters should express concern rather than anger to be most effective; they should be brief and to the point. Write Mr. J. R. Singleton, Executive Director Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept., John H. Reagon Building, Austin, Texas.

Cars and motorcycles are making an ever increasing web of "new roads and trails" in Palo Duro State Park. The damage to plant life, increased signs of erosion, are direct results of motor vehicles not being confined to authorized roads. In addition, unlicensed operators are driving motorcycles in the park both on and off authorized roads. Local park officials are either unwilling or unable to enforce these park regulations. Also write Mr. Singleton urging that these laws be enforced and that local park officials be directed to see that they are enforced. If proper law enforcement in the park requires more manpower and further authority for park officials, they should be urged to provide it.

(from the Newsletter of the Sierra Club/
Panhandle Regional Group)

INVITATION TO THE GARDEN CENTER:

The Texas Agricultural Extension Service of Potter/Randall Counties and the Amarillo Council of Garden Clubs are co-sponsoring a Plant Clinic at the Garden Center on 6/25 from 9:30 AM until 4:00 PM.

Specialists trained in plant diseases, plant insects, weed control and landscape horticulture will be present to advise gardeners on all phases of production. Plant disease, insect, soil and other specimens for control and identification will be welcome. The consultants will visit and advise those who wish to take advantage of this educational opportunity. There will be no charge.

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" asked Alice.

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where --" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

...from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

CALENDAR:

May 18 - Monthly society meeting at the Garden Center - 7:30 PM.
Topic - "Nature's Half Acre"

Summer adjournment

Spet. 21: Monthly society meeting.

"BIG DAY COUNT" OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE AUDUBON SOCIETY
May 9, 1970

Hared Grebe	67	Common Bushtit	9
Pied-billed Grebe	2	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1
White Pelican	4	House Wren	14
Great Blue Heron	1	Bewick;s Wren	15
Black-crowned Night Heron	1	Carolina Wren	1
Canada Goose	1	Long-billed Marsh Wren	1
Mallard	25	Canyon Wren	2
Gadwall	505	Rock Wron	5
Green-winged Teal	35	Mockingbird	42
Blue-winged Teal	30	Catbird	1
Cinnamon Teal	5	Brown Thrasher	2
American Widgeon	20	Robin	19
Shoveler	432	Hermit Thrush	12
Redhead	2	Swainson's Thrush	2
Canvasback	4	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3
Lesser Scaup	22	Cedar Waxwing	10
Ruddy Duck	157	Loggerhead Shrike	3
Turkey Vulture	7	Starling	59
Mississippi Kite	9	Solitary Vireo	2
Swainson's Hawk	3	Orange-crowned Warbler	8
Ferruginous Hawk	1	Virginia's Warbler	1
Marsh Hawk	2	Yellow Warbler	6
Sparrow Hawk	3	Magnolia Warbler	1
Bobwhite	17	Myrtle Warbler	13
Scaled Quail	3	Audubon's Warbler	20
Ring-necked Pheasant	2	Bay-broasted Warbler	3
Turkey	2	Northern Waterthrush	1
American Coot	27	MacGillivray's Warbler	4
Semi-palmated Flover	1	Yellowthroat	4
Snowy Flover	3	Yellow-breasted Chat	1
Killdeer	37	Wilson's Warbler	26
Black-bellied Flover	2	American Redstart	1
Upland Flover	8	Houso Sparrow	150
Spotted Sandpiper	7	Western Meadowlark	182
Willet	1	Yellow-headed Blackbird	1
Least Sandpiper	21	Red-winged Blackbird	422
Long-billed Dowitcher	136	Orchard Oriole	6
Stilt Sandpiper	41	Bullock's Oriole	29
Semi-palmated Sandpiper	1	Brewer's Blackbird	1
Sandpiper species	100+	Boat-tailed Grackle	15
American Avocet	26	Common Grackle	9
Wilson's Phalaropo	2050	Brown-headed Cowbird	35
Ring-billed Gull	9	Western Tanager	1
BLACK Tern	28	Summer Tanager	4
Mourning Dove	242	Cardinal	26
Roadrunner	4	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1
Barn Owl	1	Black-headed Grosbeak	4
Great Horned Owl	1	Blue Grosbeak	5
Burrowing Owl	16	Lazuli Bunting	3
Long-eared Owl	1	Painted Bunting	6
Common Nighthawk	1	Houso Finch	52
Chimney Swift	2	Fine Siskin	58
Belted Kingfisher	5	American Goldfinch	8
Yellow-shafted Flicker	3	Red Crossbill	10
Red-shafted Flicker	3	Green-tailed Towhee	4
Golden-fronted Woodpecker	20	Rufous-sided Towhee	3
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	Brown Towhee	1
Hairy Woodpecker	1	Lark Bunting	459
Downy Woodpecker	3	Grasshopper Sparrow	1
Eastern Kingbird	9	Vesper Sparrow	4
Western Kingbird	139	Lark Sparrow	79
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	6	Rufous-crowned Sparrow	10
Ash-throated Flycatcher	6	Cassin's Sparrow	11
Say's Phoebe	3	Chipping Sparrow	176
Empidonax flycatcher species	2	Clay-colored Sparrow	44
Western Wood Pewee	3	Brewer's Sparrow	2
Olive-sided Flycatcher	2	Harris' Sparrow	5
Horned Lark	169	White-crowned Sparrow	14
Tree Swallow	7	Lincoln's Sparrow	2
Bank Swallow	2	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	3
Rough-winged Swallow	17		
Barn Swallow	7		
Cliff Swallow	3		
Blue Jay	21		
Common Crow	2		
Black-crested Titmouse	11		
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