

## BIRD NOTES:

The list of unusual sightings continues to grow making this Fall one to remember. On 10/12 Estelle Stevens reported several Pinon Jays and one Steller's Jay in her yard in town and the latter species was seen again on 10/25 by Mrs. F. D. Hill. On 10/13 Carol Jokerst reported a Clark's Nutcracker at the ranch and on 10/18 Peggy Acord had a Swamp Sparrow, 4 Black-throated Green Warblers and a female Purple Finch at Lake Tanglewood. As reported by the newspaper, 38 "swallows" were trapped on the 11th floor of the Santa Fe Building and Jim Jokerst was called upon to rescue them and release them. He states that upon letting them go it became readily apparent that the "swallows" were actually White-throated Swifts. He also reports that during October a Red-bellied Woodpecker has been a frequent visitor at his place. The best Ken Seyffert could come up with during this period was an immature Northern Shrike and a Verdin in the Palo Duro Canyon on 11/1. The shrike was in hot pursuit of a Song Sparrow, but it was not successful in catching its intended prey. Going further afield but staying within our area of interest, there were two exciting finds. On 10/24 Mrs. M. H. Robinson (Editor of the TOS Newsletter) called Leo and Ruth Galloway in Lubbock and told them she had spotted an immature Sabino's Gull on a small playa east of town. We are happy to say that Leo and Ruth were able to confirm the sighting and that the bird was still there the following morning. In early October, while at her farm in Roger Mills County, Okla. Rona Ross was able to identify a European Widgeon swimming in the company of American Widgeons. Also on the lake were 10 Horned Grebes. We cannot help but mention the fact that Midland County had four new species added to their bird list within a two week period of time. This is extremely unusual when you consider that records have been kept there for 25 years. The four new birds were the Black-capped Vireo, Canada Warbler, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and Red-shouldered Hawk.

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS:

Though seven months late, the April issue of the Audubon Field Notes has arrived containing the results of the 70th Christmas Bird Count. For the many members of the TPAS who do not subscribe to the journal, it may be of considerable interest to make mention of some of its highlights. Well over 15,000 birders took part in 877 counts that were made in North America, plus one count in Hawaii. This was 24 more than the previous all-time high of 853 last year. San Diego broke the national record for a single count by recording 224 species, 7 more than last year. The counts that recorded 150 or more are as follows: San Diego, Calif. (224); Cocoa, Fla. (196); Monterey Peninsula, Calif. (189); Freeport, Tex. (188); Corpus Christi, Tex. (180); Santa Barbara, Calif. (178); Drake's Bay, Calif. (176); Crystal Springs Reservoir, Calif. (169); Morro Bay, Calif. (169); Corpus Christi (Flour Bluff), Tex. (167); Cape Charles, Va. (166); Coot Bay-Everglades National Park, Fla. (166); Jacksonville, Fla. (166); St. Marks, Fla. (166); Orange County (coastal), Calif. (166); Houston Tex. (161); St. Petersburg, Fla. (156); West Palm Beach, Fla. (155); Western Sonoma County,

Calif. (155); Cape May, N. J. (153); Wilmington, N. C. (153); Oceanside-Carlsbad-Vista, Calif. (153); Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, Tex. (152); South Broward County, Fla. (151). Those recording less than 10 species were: Nome, Alaska (4); Waubay National Wildlife Refuge, S. D. (9); Craters of the Moon, Idaho (9). Texas led with the most counts at 54, California and New York had 47 each, Ohio 43, Pennsylvania 39, Wisconsin 37, Ontario, Canada 36, Florida 32, and Illinois 30.

If you would like to participate in the 71st Christmas Bird Count plan to be with the TPAS when they make their annual count in the Palo Duro Canyon. Be at the November meeting when the date of this count will be set. Remember, last year we found a record-breaking 79 species.

## JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH: 1893-1970:

Many specialists are very contemptuous of such activities as mine---but not all of them are. Some steal time from their exacting pursuits to be amateurs at something else or even, like me, of things in general. Thus they recapture some of the spirit of the old naturalists who, whether they were professionals like Linnaeus or hobbyists like Gilbert White, lived at a time when there seemed nothing absurd about taking all nature as one's province. And there are even some, eminent in their specialty, who experience a certain nostalgia for the days when the burden of accumulated knowledge was less heavy. "The road," said Cervantes, "is always better than the inn" and discovering is more fun than catching up with what has been discovered.

Your amateur is delightfully if perhaps almost sinfully free of responsibility and can spread himself as thin as he likes over the vast field of nature. There are few places not covered with concrete or trod into dust where he does not find something to look at. Best of all, perhaps, is the fact that he feels no pressing obligation to "add something to the sum of human knowledge." He is quite satisfied when he adds something to his knowledge. And if he keeps his field wide enough he will remain so ignorant that he may do exactly that at intervals very gratifyingly short.

Men have spent a great deal of time wishing they were angels. Cats, dogs, and the rest never seem to wish they were anything else. To some this is lack of ambition. But should we, perhaps, call it contentment instead? The two are often terribly difficult to tell apart.

## CALENDAR:

- Nov. 8 : Field trip in the Palo Duro Canyon at 8:30 a.m.
- Nov. 16 : Monthly society meeting at the Garden Center - 7:30 p.m.