

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN APPOINTED:

The following members were appointed by the President to serve as committee chairmen during the coming year:

- Conservation - Barbara Lund
- Membership - Rita Kenney
- Publicity - Vera Deason
- Refreshments - Thelma Fox
- Field Trips - Peggy Acord
- Program - Esther Waddill
- Finance - Armon Nays

Dorothy Harrison will continue to represent our society at the meetings of the Amarillo Council of Garden Clubs.

BIRD NOTES:

About the only noteworthy bird reports that have come in are from the Lake Meredith area where Barbara Lund has observed 8 Bonaparte's Gulls, several Hooded Mergansers, and Cinnamon Teal. Barbara has asked everyone who goes birding at Lake Meredith to share with her their observations so that a check-list of birds of that area can be compiled. Our own Potter/Randall Counties check-list is the result of 20 or so years of work done by many people; the same needs to be done for Lake Meredith which covers not only part of Potter County but also Moore and Hutchinson Counties.

A RARE ENCOUNTER:

The sky was partly cloudy, the wind strong and gusty. The cliffs around Lake Meredith glowed red and purple in the intermittent sunshine with the white-capped blue waves licking at the rugged shores.

High above the water's edge on the point a group of ladies with glasses and powerful scopes scanned the water looking for ducks and gulls.

Suddenly the figures showed signs of excitement - eagles began appearing over the far rim. Their arrival on the scene began a thirty minute pageant of thrilling viewing. One, two, four, six, seven Golden Eagles in the air, one on the rocks below and a cousin Bald Eagle down the rim, nine eagles at once. Hanging almost motionless over the rim, at times almost lost against the clouds, the eagles were magnificent in their mastery of the air.

Minutes later, while scanning the ducks, one, then two, eagles were noticed harrying a wounded Pintail duck separated from the main flock. Over and over the eagles dove on the frantically diving Pintail. Once the eagle dropped into the water on top of the duck. The eagle struggled out of the water and once again the eagles, joined by a third one, began diving at the duck. Over and over they dove, then an eagle went into the water again. Seconds went by. Could the eagle remain in the water that long and not get water-logged? With great wings flopping the great dark bird struggled free of the water, the duck held close to his body by those strong talons. Once, twice, the duck touched the surface of the lake as the eagle worked to gain altitude. The eagle flew to a group of boulders on the point where it was joined by five others who were hoping to share the meal. Eventually, some of the eagles gave up hopes, once again soaring above the cliffs and leaving two birds to sit on the sandy

beach with their duck dinner.

On the high point six ladies rather limply packed up their optical gear and climbed into the cars, still tingling with the exhilarating sequence of events just observed.

.....Peggy Acord.....

WINTERING BIRD STUDY:

The 4th annual Winter Bird-Population Study in the Palo Duro Canyon has just been completed. Beginning the first week in December and continuing through the last week in February, a weekly census (weather permitting) is made of a 30.9 acre plot during which the kinds and numbers of species is recorded. 12 counts were made this year, each count lasting 2 1/2 hours. The following results of the 4 counts may be of interest to you:

SPECIES	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Oregon Junco	26	38	21	39
Slate-colored Junco	11	5	4	2
Mountain Bluebird	10	9	+	25
Bobwhite	7	1	+	1
Robin	7	22	7	50
Song Sparrow	6	4	18	7
Scaled Quail	5	1	5	3
Common Bushtit	5	2	1	12
Cedar Waxwing	5	0	1	1
Cardinal	5	3	5	3
Golden-fronted Woodpecker	4	4	4	4
Am. Goldfinch	4	3	6	2
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	3	1	1	2
Red-shafted Flicker	2	4	3	2
Bewick's Wren	2	3	6	4
Mockingbird	2	2	2	5
Townsend's Solitaire	2	1	+	2
Black-headed Towhee	2	4	5	1
Brown Towhee	2	0	0	0
Sparrow Hawk	1	+	1	+
Killdeer	1	1	+	+
Belted Kingfisher	1	1	0	+
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	+	2	1
Field Sparrow	1	0	0	0
White-crowned Sparrow	1	15	8	1
Mallard	+	0	0	3
Golden Eagle	+	+	0	0
Marsh Hawk	+	+	1	+
Mourning Dove	+	+	1	+
Roadrunner	+	+	0	0
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	+	+	0	+
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	+	1	2	2
Black-crowned Titmouse	+	2	1	3
Verdin	+	0	0	1
Curve-billed Thrasher	+	+	0	+
Eastern Bluebird	+	0	0	0
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	+	2	2	1
House Sparrow	+	0	1	2
W Meadowlark	+	+	+	0
House Finch	+	+	3	1
Pine Siskin	+	2	19	1
Gray-headed Junco	+	+	+	0
Tree Sparrow	+	1	0	+
Brown Creeper	0	1	+	0
Canyon Wren	0	1	+	+
Hermit Thrush	0	1	+	0
American Widgeon	0	+	0	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	+	0	+
Rock Wren	0	+	1	1
Brown Thrasher	0	+	0	+
Loggerhead Shrike	0	+	0	+
Starling	0	+	0	0
Myrtle Warbler	0	+	0	0
Audubon's Warbler	0	+	0	0

SPECIES	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71
Savannah Sparrow	0	+	0	0
White-throated Sparrow	0	+	0	0
Lincoln's Sparrow	0	+	+	0
Flicker (hybrid)	0	0	1	0
Western Bluebird	0	0	1	3
Great Blue Heron	0	0	+	0
Sage Thrasher	0	0	+	0
Pine Grosbeak	0	0	+	0
Green-winged Teal	0	0	0	1
Red-tailed Hawk	0	0	0	+
Common Goldeneye	0	0	0	+
	117	135	123	191

These figures represent the average number seen each trip with the + sign denoting less than 0.5 seen each trip. 44 different species were seen in 1967-68, 50 in 1968-69, 43 in 1969-70, and 47 in 1970-71. The high count this year is attributable to the large numbers of Robins, Mountain Bluebirds and Common Bushtits present. If you wish to initiate your own study, instructions on how to conduct and prepare it can be obtained from the National Audubon Society.

A STUDY OF THE BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*):

The following excerpt from the first issue of the AUK of 1883 on the behavior of the blue jay, written by an irreverent but devoted bird lover, is of such delightful interest that it must be shared with all:

"There's more to a bluejay than any other creature. He has got more moods, and more different kinds of feelings than other creatures; and, mind you, whatever a bluejay feels, he can put into language. And no mere commonplace language, either, but rattling, out-and-out book-talk—and bristling with metaphor, too—just bristling! And as for command of language—why you never see a bluejay get stuck for a word. No man ever did. They just boil out of him! And another thing: I've noticed a good deal, and there's no bird, or cow, or anything that uses as good grammar as a bluejay. You may say a cat uses good grammar. Well, a cat does—but you let a cat get excited once; you let a cat get to pulling fur with another cat on a shed, nights, and you'll hear grammar that will give you the lockjaw. Ignorant people think it's the noise which fighting cats make that is so aggravating, but it ain't so; it's the sickening grammar they use. Now I've never heard a jay use bad grammar but very seldom; and when they do, they are as ashamed as a human; they shut right down and leave.

"You may call a jay a bird. Well, so he is, in a measure—because he's got feathers on him, and don't belong to no church, perhaps; but otherwise he is just as much a human as you be. And I'll tell you for why. A jay's gifts, and instincts, and feelings, and interests, cover the whole ground. A jay hasn't got any more principle than a Congressman. A jay will lie, a jay will steal, a jay will deceive, a jay will betray; and four times out of five, a jay will go back on his promise. The sacredness of an obligation is a thing which you can't cram into no bluejay's head. Now, on top of all this, there's another thing; a jay can outswear any gentleman in the mines. You think a cat can swear. Well, a cat can; but you give a bluejay a subject that calls for his reserve-powers, and where is your cat? Don't talk to me—I know too much about this thing. And there's yet another thing; in the one little partic-

ular of scolding—just good, clean, out-and-out scolding—a bluejay can lay over anything, human or divine. Yes, sir, a jay is everything that a man is. A jay can cry, a jay can laugh, a jay can feel shame, a jay can reason and plan and discuss, a jay likes gossip and scandal, a jay has got a sense of humor, a jay knows when he is an ass just as well as you do—maybe better. If a jay ain't human, he better take in his sign, that's all!"

...Sam Clemens
Hannibal State Normal
Hannibal, Missouri
(no zip given).

The AUK has certainly come a long way since that first issue. However much it has gained in scientific accuracy in the meantime it has indubitably lost in literary style.

CALENDAR:

- March 15: Monthly society meeting - 7:30 p.m. at the Garden Center.
Speaker: Peggy Acord
Topic: "The Use of Natural Dyes".
- March 28: Audubon Wildlife Film - 2:30 p.m. at the Garden Center.
Speaker: Dr. Edward Bogusch
Topic: "Cactus Empire".
- April 4 :Field trip to Lake Meredith - 9:00 a.m. - meet at Sanford Recreation Area parking lot.
- April 17 :Bird Walk - Memorial Park Cemetery - 8:30 a.m.
- April 19 :Monthly society meeting.

SOAP:

In case you have reached the point where you feel you really must use a soap that is phosphate-free, enzyme-free, and hormone-free, and at the same time you realize you must keep reasonably clean, then the following recipe is offered to help you out of your

distress;
1 can lye 2 tablespoons Sal Soda
1 cup ammonia 3 quarts cold water
2 tablespoons borax 2 quarts grease (animal fat) lukewarm.

Mix ammonia, borax, sal soda together in small container. Put 3 quarts of cold water in large cast iron pan; mix lye in and stir until outside of pan feels warm. Then stir in grease and ammonia preparation. Stir for at least 5 minutes; then stir about every 15 minutes until mixture starts to granulate. (Note: If you make it early in the morning, it should form granules before night. It takes 2 or 3 days for all moisture to evaporate. You may use your electric mixer to make it fine after first day.)

This may take your hide off but your conscience will sleep alot better!

"O let your strong imagination turn
The great wheel backward, until Troy unburn,
And then unbuild, and seven Troys below
Rise out of death, and dwindle, and outflow,
Till all have passed, and none has yet been
there;
Back, ever back. Our birds still crossed
the air;
Beyond our myriad changing generations
Still built, unchanged, their known inhabita-
tions."

....J. C. Squire....