

**NEW OFFICERS ELECTED:**

At the annual dinner of the TPAS, the following slate of officers was submitted by the Nominating Committee, headed by Peggy Acord, and unanimously approved by the members present:

- President - Dr. Charles Smith
- Vice-President - Esther Waddill
- Treasurer - Armon Mays
- Secretary - Rita Kenney
- Recorder - Peggy Acord

To replace Lucille Fiedler and B. W. VanNoy whose terms expired, Fern Cain and C. P. "Chip" Elliott were elected to serve on the Board of Directors.

**HYBRIDIZATION IN THE FLICKERS:**

In 1965, Lester L. Short, Jr. of the American Museum of Natural History published a monograph on the "Hybridization in the Flickers (*Colaptes*) of North America". This study disclosed the presence of a hybrid zone between the Yellow-shafted Flicker in the east and the Red-shafted in the west, with the zone extending down through eastern North and South Dakota and Nebraska, eastern Colorado, western Kansas, and the central and eastern portions of the Texas Panhandle, at least as far south as the Red River and its headwaters. In the December issue of the "Colorado Field Ornithologist", Paul R. Billian of Boulder, Colo. published a summary of this study that I think will be of interest to birders in our area.

For some time I have been bothered by the manner in which eastern slope birders have been reporting flickers as either a Red-shafted Flicker...or Yellow-shafted Flicker...only rarely is a flicker reported to be a hybrid.

There is convincing evidence...that nearly all the flickers in the study zone are hybrids; that is, they show plumage characteristics of both the red-and yellow-shafted 'species'. I will summarize the evidence presented by Short and include the suggestion that field observers commence using the scoring system outline below in order that we might gather evidence on hybridization in our flickers (and coincidentally begin teaching ourselves to look for hybrid characteristics).

....To ascertain, quantitatively, hybrid characteristics he constructed a scoring system based on the following easily observed plumage features: crown, ear covert, and throat color; shaft color; presence or absence of nuchal patch; and, for males, the malar strip color. The scoring table shown here is somewhat simplified from that of Short's, but will adequately serve our purpose.

The score for an individual can range from zero for a pure Yellow-shafted Flicker to a 10 (female) or 12 (male) for a pure Red-shafted Flicker. Note particularly that five or six plumage characteristics are involved. The color or status of any single one does not classify the individual as either red- or yellow-shafted. Also note that these are 'field-guide' characteristics which can be observed, provided the observer has sufficient time, in the field.

Remembering that 0 indicates pure yellow- and 12 (male) or 10 (female) pure red-shafted

features, we see a region in which a gradual transition from the yellow- to the red-shafted species occurs,

I would like to suggest that birders spend a few moments longer at their flickers, and try their hand at scoring a few. Don't just look for shaft color."

**Scoring Table for Flickers**

		Score
1 - Crown Color	gray	0
	mixed	1
	brown	2
2 - Ear Coverts	vinaceous tan	0
	intermediate	1
	gray	2
3 - Throat Color	vinaceous tan	0
	intermediate	1
	gray	2
4 - Nuchal Patch	present, broad	0
	trace, broken	1
	absent	2
5 - Shaft Color	yellow	0
	orange to red, barbs yellow-orange	1
	salmon pink	2
6 - Malar Color (males)	black	0
	intermediate	1
	red	2
Summary	pure yellow	0
	pure red	10(females) 12 (males)

**PROGRAM FOR FEBRUARY:**

Our program for Feb. promises to be a good one and we urge everyone who can to be there. Roberta Currie will show color slides taken by herself of birds of our area. Bring your field guides with you and have a crack at identifying what you see.

**TRINITY RIVER PROJECT:**

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has described the notorious Trinity River Project as "wholesale devastation" at a Dec. 14 public hearing held by the Corps of Engineers in Fairfield. Addressing the question of potential damage to fish and wildlife resources, the Department has put its best foot forward in allowing its competent biologists to express their professional judgements on a highly controversial project.

A Palestine newspaper editorialized shortly after the public hearing about the "surprise" and "disappointing shock" of an official of the Department condemning the project and disagreeing in the process with other state agencies. In contrast to this editorial, we applaud the Department for its integrity and courage in standing for factual representation of biological studies.

If the Parks and Wildlife Department is to resist what must be enormous pressure seeking its blanket approval of water development projects, the Department must have public public support. The Department's analysis of the Trinity River Project, its opposition to channelization and wetland drainage, and its

Efforts to protect wildlife and fish-  
resources from water development projects  
are actions deserving the highest recognition  
for responsible resource agency programs. If  
your support and encouragement of the Texas  
Parks and Wildlife Department is to be mean-  
ingful, it must be known. Express yourself by  
writing Clayton T. Garrison, Executive Direc-  
tor, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, John  
H. Reagan Building, Austin 78701.

Growing opposition to the Trinity River Pro-  
ject is being coordinated through COST, an  
acronym for the Citizens' Organization for a  
Sound Trinity. The COST mailing address is  
2940 Fondren Drive, Dallas 75205. They need  
your assistance.

While agencies such as the Texas Parks and  
Wildlife Department join with citizens' orga-  
nizations and thousands of individuals in op-  
posing the wasteful and destructive Trinity  
River Project, the feelings of many are surely  
expressed in the follow poem. Written by Fr.  
Angelico Chavez as the Bureau of Reclamation  
threatened to destroy a portion of the Rio  
Grande River in New Mexico, its application  
is far more reaching than one river and one  
state.

"I hope that I shall never see  
Our river shorn of every tree,  
No robins nesting in their hair  
Because the banks are straight and bare,  
What if Joyce Kilmer's song lives on  
When all the trees and birds are gone?  
If Ogden Nash's billboards fall,  
We'll still not see a tree at all,  
Poems are made by foolish seers,  
But, God, who made the engineers?"

....Southwest Regional News (Audubon)

#### TEXAS BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REQUEST:

At a meeting of the Texas Bird Records Com-  
mittee held at the Big Bend National Park,  
27 April, 1972, rules for the recognition of  
any species of bird for the state were estab-  
lished that the species must be represented by  
(1) a specimen taken in Texas and placed in a  
recognized collection, or (2) represented by  
a photograph taken in Texas and either pub-  
lished in a recognized journal or placed in  
the Texas Photo-Record File at Texas A&M Univ.,  
or (3) represented by a voice tape recording  
made in Texas and confirmed by a recognized  
authority.

The Check-list Committee has now authenti-  
cated nearly all species generally listed as  
Texas birds but have not been able to secure  
any definite authentic details concerning the  
following: White-tailed Tropicbird, Chukar  
Partridge, Bridled Tern, Ringed Turtle Dove,  
Costa's Hummingbird, Allen's Hummingbird, Gray  
Kingbird, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Olive  
Warbler, Red-faced Warbler, Common Redpoll,  
and Lawrence Goldfinch.

It is requested that any one who has infor-  
mation concerning a specimen, a photograph  
or a tape recording of any of these write to  
Dr. Keith A. Arnold, Dept. of Wildlife and  
Fisheries Science, Texas A&M University,  
College Station, Texas 77843, or to Col. L.  
R. Wolfe, P. O. Box 11, Kerrville, Texas 78028.

Several of these species have been observed  
in the Panhandle, viz., the Chukar, Ringed  
Turtle Dove, and Common Redpoll, but none, to  
my knowledge, have been documented by a speci-  
men, a photograph or a tape recording. If  
you do possess such documentation, or know  
where it can be secured, please contact Dr.

Arnold or Col. Wolfe.

The individual who has submitted the most  
documentation in support of unusual observa-  
tions in the Panhandle has been Carolyn  
Stallwitz of Dumas. Recently she sent in  
color slides of a male Cape May Warbler taken  
in Dumas in late April, 1972. Dr. Arnold  
writes: "the slides of the Cape May Warbler  
represent the only documentation for Texas!"

#### BIRD NOTES:

Though we have entered our period of the  
doldrums during which birding activity dimin-  
ishes and we await the arrival of the spring  
migration, several observations of interest  
have been reported. Rena Ross reports con-  
tinued activity at her feeder with the pre-  
sence of Evening Grosbeaks, Steller's Jays,  
Red Crossbills, and most unusual of all, a  
male Cassin's Finch on Jan. 25. This repre-  
sents the second reported observation of this  
species from the Panhandle. Following closely  
on its wings, two more were reported by Estelle  
Stevens at her feeder on Jan. 31.

The only report of the Bohemian Waxwing this  
winter was turned in by Ken Seyffert on Jan.  
14 when one flock of 30 birds and one of 24  
were seen in the Palo Duro Canyon. On the  
same date he saw one Blue Goose at Buffalo  
Lake NWR.

Both Peggy Acord and Ken Seyffert report  
the continued presence of Evening Grosbeaks  
in the Palo Duro Canyon, and on Feb. 4 the  
latter saw a Cinnamon Teal at Buffalo Lake.

The feeder at the Rita Kenney's continues  
to attract its large numbers of Scrub Jays  
as well as Harris' Sparrows and a Downy Wood-  
pecker. The Mountain Bluebird is a species  
thought to be declining in numbers and they  
have not been unusually conspicuous in the  
canyon country this winter. However, Roberta  
Currie reported large numbers of them at her  
place near Lake Tanglewood on Feb. 3 and this  
upward trend has been reported by other ob-  
server in the Palo Duro since that time.

#### calendar:

- Feb. 18 : Audubon Wildlife Film at the  
Garden Center, 2:30 p. m.  
Topic: "Treasure of East Africa"  
Speaker: Bower E. Rudrud
- Feb. 19: Monthly society meeting at the  
Garden Center, 7:30 p. m.  
Topic: "Birds of the Panhandle"  
Speaker: Roberta Currie
- March 19: Monthly society meeting.

"To pick up even what Newton called "a smooth-  
er pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary,  
whilst the great ocean of truth lay all un-  
discovered before me" one usually needs nowa-  
days to be a specialist, and even within the  
limits of one science the specialist must  
specialize. He is a zoologist or a botanist  
or a cytologist or a biochemist and if he is  
a botanist he limits himself to the ferns or  
the fungi, the grasses or the flowering plants;  
and even then he may be regarded by the real  
specialists as inclined to spread himself  
rather thin. Once when I was window-shopping  
in a side canyon of the Catalina Mountains I  
met a stranger who turned out to be the great-  
est living authority on the ants of the United  
States. Noticing my binoculars he amiably  
told me that he had seen some interesting-  
looking birds not far away. 'what were they?'  
'Oh, I don't know the names of birds. In fact  
I try not to know any. There are so many ants  
that it is all I can do to remember them.'"  
...Joseph Wood Krutch....