

NEW FEE SCHEDULE FOR CBC:

The new fee schedule has been received, and the fees for participation in the Christmas Bird Counts will be as follows:

- A. \$1.00 - Subscriber to AMERICAN BIRDS (presently or new).
- B. \$1.00 - Member of subscriber's family.
- C. \$2.00 - Non-subscriber (the first one of your counts this year). For the first time, you will get more than the simple enjoyment of participation in a CBC for your money. These persons will receive a free copy of the April issue of AMERICAN BIRDS (The Christmas Count issue).
- D. \$1.00 - Non-subscriber (your second and succeeding counts this year).
- E. \$0-1-2 - Feeder Watcher. If you don't want your name included in the CBC issue of AMERICAN BIRDS, and do not go out in the field, and do not want to receive the free issue of AMERICAN BIRDS, pay nothing. If you want your name listed, pay \$1.00. If you wish to receive the April issue of AMERICAN BIRDS AND ARE A non-subscriber, pay \$2.00.

If you are not presently a subscriber to AMERICAN BIRDS, and wish to enter your subscription now, you may pay for it at the time you pay your registration fee for the CBC. A subscription costs \$6.00 per year (six issues), and would start with the Feb. 1974 issue. NOTE: Participants in the Palo Duro Canyon count do not have to pay fees as they will be paid by the TEXAS PANHANDLE AUDUBON SOCIETY.

T.O.S MEETING AT EL PASO:

The Fall meeting of the Texas Ornithological Society was held in El Paso on Nov. 22, 23 and 24. Five members of the organization from the TPAS attended, an almost unheard of number! They were Fern and Norman Cain, Margarete and Gus Empe, and Peggy Acord. The El Paso Audubon Society, especially Geth and Ed White, are to be congratulated for a well planned meeting and gracious hospitality.

Field trips to the Franklin and Organ Mountains, to Hueco Tanks State Park, and various local areas were well led. About 94 people saw 151 species of birds. Really good birds were the pair of Anna's Hummingbirds seen at a local feeder, and a Green Kingfisher seen along the drainage canal, and a Prairie Falcon at Hueco Tanks. Almost as exciting was the discovery of a number of barrel cactus. The Franklin Mountains are the eastern limit of these big cacti and were of great interest to the botanists present.

Hueco Tanks State Park is a jumbled mound of huge boulders heaped on the desert and holding small pools of water. Our first stop was at a picnic shelter at the edge of one tank. The birds were coming in to drink: Black Phoebe, Verdin, Rock and Canyon Wrens, a large covey of Scaled Quail (which sat on top of a boulder and watched the bird watchers watching them), Cooper's and Red-tailed and Swainson's Hawks, House Finches, juncos, White-crowned Sparrows, and a Townsend's Solitaire. Many of these birds common to us in the Panhandle are real treats for those from the eastern half of the state.

We enjoyed shopping in Juarez and touring McKelligon Canyon with John Galley.

The panel of speakers at the Jerry Wolfe restaurant in Juarez Friday night was a fine one. Luther Jones, recently elected State Representative from El Paso reported on his efforts to get the State Land Commissioner to trade a patchwork of state owned lands for a continuous acreage south of Hueco Tanks State Park as a wilderness area. We certainly commend Mr. Jones and wish him success in what we feel to be a worthy but very difficult task.

John Henneberger of the National Park Service in Santa Fe spoke on wilderness area problems. In Guadalupe Mountain National Park an aerial tramway will reach from the Pine Springs campsite to the rim, leaving McKittrick Canyon and the Bowl open to foot travel only. A number of people want a good road put into the parking area of McKittrick. It is a formidable approach at this time. The Basin of the Big Bend will have almost all development moved well out of it. Unexpected problems arise here and there, such as an overabundance of wild burros at Bandelier, and a population explosion of Cave Swallows at Carlsbad Caverns, along with a serious die-off of the Cavern's bat population.

Ro Wauer spoke of efforts to correlate existing materials on the resources of each National Park area into a bank of information computerized in order to stop duplication of studies made by each area and have comprehensive material made available when needed.

Mrs. Jane Peckham, a member of the Environmental Education Council of El Paso, spoke of her experiences with outdoor classrooms: how much it means to the children; how they prepare for visits; what use is made of the trips in school work. The school system has two sites and is looking for additional sites.

Ed Kutac, President of T.O.S. spoke briefly on habitat development for birds.

Saturday night's dinner was held at the Del Camino Motel. Dr. Ira Gabrielson, retired head of the National Wildlife Management Institute, reminisced about the early days of conservation, where we stand now, and where we must try to go. Monoculture in farming and forestry seems a great threat to wildlife.

He also believes that personal hand-written letters (directed by uniform information) are the best approaches to reaching congressmen. He thinks Senators are harder to impress than Representatives. It was a privilege to hear once again this "grand old man of conservation"; 62 years actively working, most of them in the days when nobody had even heard of ecology.

Enroute we enjoyed the Short-eared Owl at Bovina, the majesty of white-capped Sierra Blanca rising above the desert, the golden cottonwoods full of warblers at Rattlesnake Springs, the spectacular beauty of the Guadalupe Mountains.

We remember with pleasure the Black-chinned Sparrows of Franklin Mountains, the Anna's Hummingbirds at the Santaella feeders, the Green Kingfisher on the canal, and the many hawks along the way, and who could forget the majesty of a Golden Eagle surveying the plains from the top of a power pole?

We remember with fond amusement David Mar-rack's deep British accent and determined pursuit of birds, Hazel Nichol's "doggie bags" at dinner, Ro Wauer talking about the new names the ABA is coming out with, and all the fun things of watching nice people having a

good time pursuing a common interest.

Our special thanks to Goth and Ed White and the El Paso Audubon Society, and my personal thanks to Fern and Norman Cain for being such gracious hosts in our "home away from home."

....Peggy Acord....

BIRD NOTES:

Poor Will - 2 unusually late sightings of this species were reported by Ken Seyffert. In a side canyon just east of the old concessions area at Buffalo Lake, one was seen on Nov. 18 and again on Nov. 25. The abnormally warm weather we are experiencing this fall has perhaps held the bird here later than usual. One can speculate that perhaps the species winters here but has not been observed heretofore since it enters into a torpid state during the winter and is not active; the warm weather we have had has kept this one active?

Hummingbird species - Peggy Acord received a report of one in Amarillo Nov. 15. This is another unusually late sighting of a species.

Grey-headed Junco - ONE SEEN IN THE Rolling Hills section of Amarillo on Nov. 22 by Rita Kenney, and one on the same date in the Palo Duro Canyon by Ken Seyffert.

Osprey - one at Lake Meredith Nov. 11 by Maurine Forbus.

White Pelican - 4 near Clarendon, Donley Co., Oct. 27, by Mary Shave.

DOVES MORE LIKE HOMING PIGEONS:

With a few exceptions, mourning doves are pretty much home bodies, according to results of a Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. banding study. The department and private individuals banded 51,095 doves between 1925 and 1965 and have recovered 1,734 bands from birds marked in Texas, according to a recent article in TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE magazine.

Department biologists say that 85% of the birds were recovered in Texas, and the majority of these recoveries were made in the same ecological region where the birds were banded. Because 63% of the recoveries from winter-banded adults were made during the following hunting season in the same region of the banding, biologists believe that adult doves return to the same wintering area year after year. A portion of the population could be there year-round. More than two-thirds of the recoveries from nestling and juvenile mourning doves banded in summer were taken the following fall within the same ecological region where they were banded, indicating that a substantial proportion of immature doves remain in the area where banded until hunting season begins.

Louisiana accounted for 24% of Texas-banded birds recovered in the United States. Hunters in 18 other states, including California, Minnesota, North Dakota and Florida at the extremes, have recovered bands from Texas birds.

Biologists do not know the speed of dove migrations, but they have a couple of indications that doves can travel great distances in a short time. One dove banded in Manitoba was killed in Travis County 37 days later after a journey of 1,600 miles. Another dove banded in Brooks County in Texas was killed 66 days later in North Dakota after a 1,500 mile trip. Biologists point out that there is no way to determine how long the

doves had been in the area before they were shot.

Mexico accounted for 54% of the bands recovered from doves killed outside of Texas. Bands were also received from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The record for the longest time between the date banded and the date recovered is held by a dove banded June 4, 1953, in Palo Pinto County. The bird was shot 11 years and four months later in Mexico. Another dove was recovered 10 years after it was banded as a nestling. Biologists say these long lapses between banding and recovery are rare since at least 50% of mourning doves never see their first birthday.

C ALENDAR:

- Dec. 15 - Lubbock CBC
- Dec. 16 - Palo Duro Canyon CBC; meet at park entrance 7:45 a.m.
- Dec. 22 - Arnett, Okla. CBC: meet a motel restaurant between 6 & 6:30 a.m.
- Dec. 29 - Lake Meredith CBC: meet a Park headquarters at 7:00 a.m.
- Dec. 31 - Lake Meredith CBC: meet a Park headquarters at 7:00 a.m.