

PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER:

We look forward to our first program of the season. It will be presented by Dr. Jack T. Hughes of WTSU. His topic will be "The Recent Archaeological Investigations in the Texas Panhandle". We hope to have a large turnout to hear this most interesting speaker.

SUMMER SIGHTINGS:

The pace of birding in the Texas Panhandle continued its interesting and exciting way. Observed after publication of the May newsletter and of noteworthy interest to birders in our area were a Magnolia Warbler and a Bay-breasted Warbler seen near Canyon by Nancy Elliott on May 24. Observation of the Bay-breasted may be expected almost every year, but the Magnolia is a much less frequent visitor.

The relatively frequent observation of the Black & White Warbler was unusual, both during the spring and fall migrations. As a migrant it can be expected with fair confidence. What is quite unusual, however, is to see one in the summer. Shortly after noon on July 20, Kenneth Seyffort became aware of an unidentifiable bird call coming from his backyard. Investigation soon disclosed that the species making the call was a female Black & White Warbler as she moved through the locust trees, feeding on insects. The bird remained throughout the afternoon and evening, and continued to be heard until nightfall. It is interesting to note that two years previously, to the day, Rena Ross heard and observed a singing male Black & White at her home at 2805 S. Travis.

A rare sighting of a warbler species was made by KS on May 19 when he observed a male Palm Warbler at Buffalo Lake. The bird obtruded itself upon his attention when two unidentified but warbler-like birds clashed briefly in mid-air before him, one then alighting in the top of a willow tree and the other diving into a thicket below it. The bird in the top of the tree proved to be a male Yellow Warbler while the one moving through the brush below was a Palm, its chestnut cap and streaked, whitish belly quite conspicuous. This is the third reported sighting of it from our area. Joe Bailey saw one at Canyon on May 6-8, 1956, and Peggy Acord and Katherine Whipple saw one in Amarillo on May 10, 1965.

To complete the warbler observations for the spring migration, there was a female Chestnut-sided Warbler seen at Buffalo Lake on May 26 by KS. On the same date and at the same place he reported a Philadelphia Vireo.

Up until the late summer rains, there had been a dearth of shorebird observations. KS was fortunate in watching, at some length, 25 White-rumped Sandpipers at the Elysian Fields (Hollywood Road sewage disposal plant) on May 26. The birds were not skittish at all and he was able to get very near them and observe them feeding and preening. When flushed their white rumps are quite noticeable and they give a shorebird call that is distinctive from that of the other "peeps".

KS further reports one, and possible two, pair of Spotted Sandpipers that remained throughout the summer along the creek that runs below the dam at Buffalo Lake. Obser-

vations over the past two decades have turned up numerous summer sightings of this species in the Panhandle but only once has there been direct evidence that it nested: KS observed an adult with one unfledged young at Buffalo Lake on July 17, 1966. KS's annual roadside count near Boys' Ranch turned up an interesting species this year: two Mountain Plover north of Channing, in Hartley Co., were unexpected. A return to the area a week or so later failed to disclose them again, so they must have been birds of passage.

A summering hummingbird in this area is generally assumed to be a Black-chinned. At Lake Tanglewood on July 7, however, Peggy Acord made a lengthy and detailed observation of a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird. A search of the literature fails to disclose any previous reporting of this species, save for some unsubstantiated observations made in the mid-twenties. This is an exciting find and should prompt us all to look very closely at every hummingbird we see. Rena Ross has reported many hummers in her yard in town during August and September particularly. These are the Black-chinned, Rufous, and Broad-tailed.

Rena made other noteworthy observations this summer. On June 26 she observed a chickadee in her yard in town. Presumably it was a Carolina Chickadee. We fully expect someone to report this species nesting in town some day. Just across the state line in Roger Mills Co., Oklahoma, she reported an American Bittern and 3 Least Bitterns in a marshy area on the Ross' place there. On Aug. 17 she reported a Carolina Wren in town.

KS again found the Curve-billed Thrasher nesting in west-central Potter Co. In an area of mesquite and cholla cactus, he found the species common. He again found the Eastern Phoebe in the Palo Duro Canyon, this time in the lower part of Timbercreek Canyon. The two birds he observed on July 7 did not appear to be nesting. The Verdin continues to be a nesting species in the canyon; he reported adults and immatures on July 7 and Aug. 4.

One of the most unusual observations was a mid-May sighting of a Ground Dove at Buffalo Lake made by Paul Ferguson, refuge manager. Paul says he remained in his car for some time and watched the bird as it fed along the roadside. The only other report of the species in the panhandle that I can find is one turned in by Doyle Foreman from near Vigo Park, either Swisher or Briscoe Co., in April, 1953.

Hardly less unusual was the sighting of another species from the order Columbiformes, a Band-tailed Pigeon seen at Buffalo Lake on June 3 by Milt Suthers, assistant refuge manager. Milt took pictures of the bird from which an identification can be made. Only three previous sightings from the Panhandle have been reported. A. S. Jackson and Dick DeArment reported a pair at Lake Marvin, Hemphill Co., on July 13, 1954, that remained in the area for several weeks; Esther Waddill et al., saw one in Amarillo, Potter Co., on Nov. 4, 1967; Carroll Littlefield reported one near Friona, Parmer Co., Dec. 12, 1970.

Early and mid-August turned up some early species. KS observed his first Empidonax sp. on the 6th. On the 16th he saw 2 Marbled

Swifts on a playa in Randall Co., and 3 Pine Siskins and a Brown Towhee in the Palo Duro. On the 17th he found a Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Wood Pewee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Yellow Warblers and 2 Warbling Vireos at Buffalo Lake.

On Aug. 19 Rena Ross and Esther Waddill reported Empidonax flycatchers, Western Wood Pewees and Olive-sided Flycatchers at Buffalo Lake, along with a MacGillivray's Warbler, Wilson's Warblers, and many Tree Swallows. KS reports seeing several hundred of the latter species in the area during this time. Out on the plains, they reported seeing 3 Willets, 3 Marbled Godwits, and large flocks of Lark Buntings.

On Aug. 20, Rena and Peggy again reported 3 Marbled Godwits, a Mountain Plover, and 2 Long-billed Curlew.

The onset of a week of rain during the night of Aug. 20 brought a fall migration that has been unlike any previous one. One hardly knows where to start in recording species that arrived earlier than usual. Mid-August seemed more like mid-September.

Things started popping when Rena Ross and Mury Griffith toured the cemeteries on Aug. 23 and found a Black & White Warbler, a Green Heron, and Red Crossbills. The following day, Rena and Peggy returned to Memorial Park Cemetery where they observed 2 Red Crossbills, 2 male and 1 female Western Tanager, a Broad-winged Hawk, Bay-breasted Warbler, 3 Lark Buntings, a Black & White Warbler, a Green Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, several Western Wood Pewees and Olive-sided Flycatchers, and 30+ Empidonax flycatchers. Rena had a Black-throated Gray Warbler in her yard in town.

During this time a number of Great-crested Flycatchers were reported by various people. One spent 2 weeks or more in Peggy Accord's yard in town. Others were reported from Memorial Park Cemetery and Buffalo Lake. We are west of the normal range.

On Aug. 26 Rena Ross and Thelma Fox observed a very large flock of Chimney Swifts moving over town. On the same date, Rena and Esther Waddill observed a Summer Tanager, 2 Northern Waterthrushes and an American Redstart. KS had seen the latter species at Llano Cemetery on the 24th.

On Aug. 30th Estelle Stevens had 2 Evening Grosbeaks at her feeder in town. This is a very early date for this species. On the same date, Peggy, Rena, Esther and Thelma saw 36 Long-billed Curlew on a playa near town, along with 9 White-rumped Sandpipers and 2 Solitary Sandpipers. The latter species has been reported by several observers, beginning on Aug. 16.

On Sept. 1 Peggy observed 8 White-faced Ibis near town in Randall Co. A jaunt through the countryside southeast of town on Sept. 6 by Peggy, Esther and Rena produced a very exciting species - 3 Buff-breasted Sandpipers. This is the third reported observation of this species from our area.

COLORADO HAVEN FOR PRAIRIE FALCONS:

A haven for the Prairie Falcon has been secured in a new 14,720 acre wildlife sanctuary on the shortgrass prairie of northeastern Colorado. The National Audubon Society has leased the land from ranch owner Mark Cox and designated the site Eagle Rock Audubon Sanctuary. A greater concentration

of Prairie Falcons nest within the bounds of the sanctuary than in any other part of the country. Eagle Rock also has pronghorn, mule deer, coyotes, and golden eagles.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM:

On Sept. 29 the new series of Audubon Wildlife films begins. John D. Bulger will present "Sweden---Mountains to the Sea". Here is a look at the wild side of Sweden. To the north, Lapland; reindeer and troll; eastward to bird-speckled beauty of fabled islands Gotland and Oland. And all along the way, more than fifty species of wildlife to match the variety of topography in a film which takes the viewer on an unforgettable journey through Sweden from the mountains to the sea.

Below you will find an order form for the 1974-1975 Wildlife Film Series. Please help us make this season's series a financial success by filling it out and sending it in soon. Encourage your friends to do the same!

CALENDAR:

- Sept. 16 - Regular meeting of the Society at the Garden Center - 7:30 p.m.
Topic: "The Recent Archaeological Investigations of the Texas Panhandle."
Speaker: Dr. Jack T. Hughes
- Sept. 29 - Audubon Wildlife Film at the Garden Center - 2:30 p.m.
Topic: "Sweden - Mountains to the Sea".
Speaker: John D. Bulger

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* Order form for 1974-1975 Wildlife Film *
 * Series. Tentative dates: Sept. 29, Oct. *
 * 27, Feb. 9 & March 2. *
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* Please enter my order for ___ Adult Season*
 * Ticket at \$5.00. *
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* Send order to: Amarillo Garden Center, 1400*
 * Streit Drive, Amarillo, Texas 79106 *
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LAST MINUTE REPORT:

Seen at Buffalo Lake on 9/8 by KS - 1 immature Peregrino Falcon, 3 Townsend's Warblers, 2 Black-throated Gray Warblers