

PROGRAM FOR JANUARY:

Monday, January 17 at 7:00 in the evening the Texas Panhandle Audubon Society will hold its Annual Meeting in the Auditorium of the Amarillo Garden Center. Besides the election of officers for the coming year, an informative program on conservation will be presented.

We are fortunate to have three excellent speakers to discuss as a panel the subject "Conservation on the Front Burner". They are Dr. Dede Armentrout, Regional Director for the National Audubon Society, Mr. Richard DeArment, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, and Mr. Herbert Stoner, District Conservationist for the Canadian River Soil Conservation District. They know the needs of today and you won't want to miss them.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS:

Dec. 18 - Lake Meredith(west). 74 species. Participants - Fern Cain(Borger), E. B. Ellis (Pampa), Wes Phillips(Fritch), Rena Ross(Amarillo), Ken Seyffert(Amarillo), Frank Smith (Borger), Paul Taylor(Fritch), Esther Waddill (Amarillo), Jack Williams(Pampa).

Of the seven area counts, this one lived up most to its potential and it exceeded by six species the previous high set last year. The water level was the lowest in many years and the lake was completely dry off Bates Canyon and Plum Creek, yet a good variety of wildfowl was found. Most impressive was the eagle count, 17 Balds and 7 Golden, setting a record for each species. The most notable birds were the, not one, but three White-breasted Nuthatches. This species is seldom recorded in our area and it is always a pleasure to see one. The six Red-breasted Nuthatches was a record high and the species is seldom reported in the winter outside of the towns. New species for the count were the Prairie Falcon, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Swamp Sparrow. In seven years of counts, 101 species have been recorded.

Dec. 19 - Amarillo(Palo Duro Canyon). 71 species. Participants - Peggy Acord(Amarillo), Gary Burkman(Amarillo), Fern Cain(Borger), Roberta Currie(Amarillo), Ed and Nancy Elliott (Canyon), Thelma Fox(Amarillo), Mary Griffith (Amarillo), Jim Montgomery(Lubbock), Thelma Puntsch(Amarillo), Rena Ross(Amarillo), Ken Seyffert(Amarillo).

This was a particularly disappointing count and it was noteworthy as much for the number of common species not seen as for some uncommon ones that were. The variety of ducks on Lake Tanglewood was limited to the Mallard and Pintail and this hurt us badly, and no one saw a Red-tailed Hawk, a Bobwhite, an owl of any kind, nor a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, all species that one would normally expect to see. The eagle tally was a record high of 3 Golden and 11 Balds. Very unusual was the Say's Phoebe, recorded only once before on this CBC, and the Northern Shrike, also recorded only once before. This count was noteworthy also for one of its participants, a reporter with the Amarillo Globe/Times, who wrote an article on the day's events on a par with Plimpton's account of the Freeport count. In 14 years, 125 species have been recorded on this count. No new species were added this year.

Dec. 24 - Buffalo Lake NWR. 53 species. Participants - Ed and Nancy Elliott(Canyon),

Sonny Sanders(Pampa), Ken Seyffert(Amarillo), Rena Ross(Amarillo), Jack Williams(Pampa), Larry Wynn(Umbarger).

For such a small catchment of water, it was astounding as to the number of ducks and geese that were there. 400,000+ was no exaggeration. Wynn, Williams, Sanders and Seyffert surveyed that end of the refuge during the morning, and the Elliotts, Ross and Seyffert returned in the afternoon and looked and looked, and listened and gaped, and stood around and shook their heads in disbelief, and looked some more. The spectacle that greeted the birders even before the sun came up portended what they would see later for the sky was filled with birds. It looked as though the contents of a huge pot of pepper had been thrown into the air and the falling specks were all converging on one spot, literally miles and miles of them. There have been that many ducks and geese on Buffalo before, when the lake was full, but to see so many concentrated in such a small area was a sight never to be forgotten. New for the count was the Lapland Longspur. In 10 years of counts, 98 species have been recorded.

Dec. 26 - Quitaque. 68 species. Participants - Peggy Acord(Amarillo), Ed and Nancy Elliott(Canyon), E. B. Ellis(Pampa), Joel Reese(Kress), Ken Seyffert(Amarillo).

For such a small turnout, a creditable count was made, and a sanitary one. Many good areas had to be either passed by or were inadequately covered, but everyone gave his or her all. This count may possibly cover the crow capital of the Panhandle and the 1085 seen were all counted as they flew from one field. The 10 Roadrunners were also remarkable. This is only the second year for this count and already 89 species have been recorded. Although 11 fewer species were seen than last year, 10 new species were added.

Dec. 29 - Arnett, Okla. 63 species. Participants - Peggy Acord(Amarillo), Fern Cain (Borger), E. B. Ellis(Pampa), Eugene Laycock (Pampa), Rena Ross(Amarillo), Ken Seyffert (Amarillo), Jack Williams(Pampa).

It was gratifying to find 15 Lesser Prairie Chickens this year, up from the all time low of 2 seen last year. It was last year, for the first time, that another count(Morton Co., Ks.) had a higher chicken count than we did, but I talked to the compiler of that count and was told that they saw only 4 this year. Though they could not be counted as separate species, it was unusual to see an albinistic Dark-eyed Junco and Tree Sparrow. The junco's body and wings were streaked with white while the sparrow had a snow white head. One very unusual species, and one new for the count, was the Rusty Blackbird seen by the Ross/Cain/Acord party. Also new for the count was the Merlin bringing the total to 101 species recorded in eleven years of counting.

Dec. 30 - Lake Meredith(east). 66 species. Participants - Lula Bell Adams(Borger), Orilla Bryant(Miami), Richard Bryant(Borger), Fern Cain(Borger), Bob Gravestock(Sanford), Ruth Marshall(Fritch), Ken Seyffert(Amarillo), Frank Smith(Borger), Jack Williams(Pampa).

I don't know why it is but this count is almost always the coldest of them all. The

temperature was around freezing when the count began and it continued to drop for the rest of the day and was 21° when the count ended. What made it so bitterly cold was the 20-30 m.p.h. wind from the north that blew all day making it impossible to go out on the lake, as we usually do, in search of wildfowl. Despite this handicap, a good variety of ducks was found, and the eagle count was again outstanding - 6 Golden and 7 Balds. New for the count was the Carolina Chickadee. 98 species have been recorded in seven years.

Jan. 1 - Kenton(Black Mesa), Okla. - 80 species. Participants - Cynthia Clinton (Lawrence, Ks.), Jeff Cox(Wichita, Ks.), Ruth Fahl(Lawrence, Ks.), Andy Finrock(Lawrence, Ks.), Joann Garrett(Pleasant Hill, Mo.), Nannette Johnson(Kansas City, Mo.), Rodney Kemper (Lawton, Okla.), Earl McHugh(Shawnee Mission, Ks.), Jananne McNitt(Cincinnati, Ohio), Sebastian Patti(Shawnee Mission, Ks.), Galen Pittman(Bloom, Ks.), Ruth Rouland(Overland Park, Ks.), Jean Schulenberg(Admire, Ks.), Ken Seyffert(Amarillo), Tom Shane(Littleton, Colo.), Dwight Tanner(Lawrence, Ks.), Jack Tyler(Lawton, Okla.), Jack Williams(Pampa).

What is a better way to begin the New Year than by spending a snowy day in the Black Mesa country of Oklahoma? This year we were blessed with a lot of help and the count total reflects it. The temperature remained in the 19-21° range all day, with a brisk wind from the SE, and it snowed for most of the morning. These conditions, however, did not dampen the spirits of 18 intrepid birders, 14 of whom were members of the Kansas Ornithological Society, led by Sebastian Patti. It was this same party who found the female Pyrrhuloxia on the Regnier Ranch on Dec. 28, 1976, making it the first sighting of this species in Oklahoma, and the bird was still there when they returned on count day. Also unusual, and new for the count, were the two Northern Shrikes, one seen by Patti and one by Williams. Like the other area counts this winter, this one was noteworthy for its high eagle count, 10 Golden and 4 Balds, and the 3 Prairie Falcons was a record high. Almost as remarkable as the Pyrrhuloxia was the Swainson's Thrush observed at length and from a close distance by the Tyler/Kemper party. The village of Kenton is no doubt used to birders by now but even they must have been puzzled by 18 birders, dressed in all kinds of garb, milling around the center of town at noon with sandwiches and other assorted foodstuffs dangling from frostbitten hands, and faces red from exposure, followed by numerous dogs and cats looking for a handout, which they got. 118 species have been recorded in nine counts.

BIRD NOTES:

Hooded Merganser - Peggy Acord reported 6 at Lake Tanglewood on Jan. 8 (3 males and 3 females). This is a high number to be seen at one time.

Eagles - Larry Wynn of the Buffalo Lake NWR reported 9 Bald Eagles (5 adults and 4 immatures) and 2 Golden Eagles on Jan. 3. This is further evidence of the increased numbers of eagles in the Panhandle this winter.

Golden-crowned Sparrow - this bird has again reappeared in the yard of the George Ross'. It was seen on Dec. 11 and 12, and again later in the month.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1976/77

1. Dec. 18 - Lake Meredith(west), Texas
2. Dec. 19 - Amarillo(Palo Duro Canyon), Texas
3. Dec. 24 - Buffalo Lake NWR, Texas
4. Dec. 26 - Quitaque, Texas
5. Dec. 28 - Arnett, Oklahoma
6. Dec. 30 - Lake Meredith(east), Texas
7. Jan. 1 - Black Mesa(Kenton), Oklahoma

Species	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Horned Grebe						1	
Pied-billed Grebe				7		8	7
Great Blue Heron	12	3		1	3	4	x
Canada Goose	2142	278	30050	83		325	800
Snow-Geese			107				2
Mallard	4331	299	175350	422	8	256	3008
Gadwall	3					8	
Pintail	2000	131	200100			4	7
Green-winged Teal	54		200	50	3	89	3
American Wigeon	102		1000	8		81	100
Northern Shoveler	1					4	
Redhead			2			11	
Ring-necked Duck				1	2		24
Canvasback					7		5
Lesser Scaup				6			16
Common Goldeneye	1				13	10	58
Bufflehead				1	2		10
Ruddy Duck				1			6
Hooded Merganser		2					4
Common Merganser	156	61	1	7	3	212	110
Sharp-shinned Hawk		4	1	1			
Cooper's Hawk	1	1				1	2
Red-tailed Hawk	20		4	2	13	5	6
Rough-legged Hawk			5	1		2	1
Ferruginous Hawk	3	1	6	3	2	1	3
Golden Eagle	7	3	1	1	1	6	10
Bald Eagle	17	11	2			7	4
Marsh Hawk	13	2	17	6	12	6	2
Prairie Falcon	2		1				3
Merlin					1		
American Kestrel	17	6	12	32	19	4	11
Lesser Prairie Chicken					15		
Bobwhite	20		125	124	155	58	
Scaled Quail	101	6	26	71		31	198
Ring-necked Pheasant			1				
Turkey	39	18			27		14
Virginia Rail					2	4	
American Coot	19	15		20	275	52	28
Killdeer	7		1	1		3	1
Herring Gull	2		1				
Ring-billed Gull	79	43	2		1	43	
Rock Dove		5	4	11	1		29
Mourning Dove	18		6	8	130	3	
Roadrunner	7	1		10	3	3	x
Screech Owl				1			
Great Horned Owl	3		4		5		2
Burrowing Owl			1		1		
Belted Kingfisher		4		3	1	1	1
Common Flicker	111	21	21	27	30	64	34
Red-bellied Woodpecker	4				19		
Golden-fronted Woodpecker		43		5			
Hairy Woodpecker	1				4		6
Downy Woodpecker	5	4		1	22	2	4
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	17	9	2	1		9	18
Say's Phoebe		1					
Horned Lark	2	963	1242	40	8	144	3
Blue Jay	1	1			1		3
Scrub Jay		3		6			10
Black-billed Magpie							36
Common Raven							36
White-necked Raven							5
Common Crow	46	12	11	1085	82	3	4
Carolina Chickadee	29				67	4	
Black-crested Titmouse		21					
Plain Titmouse							3
Bushtit		14		10			15
White-breasted Nuthatch	3						1

Species	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Red-breasted Nuthatch	6						1
Brown Creeper	19	4			1		2
Winter Wren	1						
Bewick's Wren	15	16	1	8	9	8	8
Long-billed Marsh Wren	15	1		5	2	8	3
Canyon Wren		4		2			5
Rock Wren	1	1		4		2	
Mockingbird	2	20		22	1	4	2
Brown Thrasher	4	2			2		1
Curve-billed Thrasher	2	2	2			1	12
Sage Thrasher				1			
American Robin	1171	4874	3	309	233	70	139
Hermit Thrush	1	1					
Swainson's Thrush							1
Eastern Bluebird	79	31		29	43		1
Mountain Bluebird	10	39		146			107
bluebird sp.						1	
Townsend's Solitaire	3	7		2		1	48
Golden-crowned Kinglet	8	3		3	3	2	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2			1	5	2	1
Cedar Waxwing		75					1
Northern Shrike		1					2
Loggerhead Shrike	19	3	13	10	21	4	7
Starling	223	45	9	224	255	977	280
Yellow-rumped Warbler		6					
House Sparrow		51	139	20	163	19	107
Eastern Meadowlark					1	5	
Western Meadowlark	164	124	202	134	1	81	105
meadowlark sp.					292		
Red-winged Blackbird	3451	1509	866	1500	435	800000	151
Rusty Blackbird					1		
Brewer's Blackbird	1000	1	127		1446	61	
Common Grackle						1	
Brown-headed Cowbird	4					7	
Cardinal	15	38	1	19	35	15	
Pyrrhuloxia							1
Purple Finch		1					
Cassin's Finch							4
House Finch	24	22	6	8		53	127
Pine Siskin	3	2	6	2	1		39
American Goldfinch	92	36	40	272	225	120	162
Rufous-sided Towhee	16	14	1	6	2	2	9
Brown Towhee		1		1			173
Lark Bunting		1					
Savannah Sparrow				1			
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	6	7		13		7	3
Dark-eyed Junco	719	376	151	454	186	833	473
Tree Sparrow	369	4	30	22	301	122	117
Field Sparrow	1	1		1	12	4	
Harris' Sparrow	33	1	1		52	13	32
White-crowned Sparrow	309	163	75	166	2	22	112
White-throated Sparrow	2	6		3	1		
Fox Sparrow				2			
Lincoln's Sparrow						1	
Swamp Sparrow	1			3			
Song Sparrow	21	5	12	28	29	9	13
McCown's Longspur		288	250				
Lapland Longspur			10				
Chestnut-collared Longspur			700				
longspur sp.			585				
Total	74	71	53	68	63	66	80
x - seen during count week but not on count day							1