

COMING EVENTS:

Monday, Nov. 21 - Monthly meeting

Place..... The Garden Center
 Time..... 7:30 p.m.
 Program..... Outdoor Classroom Projects
 Hostess..... Rosemary Scott

Christmas Bird Counts - see below for
 schedule

PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER:

The Texas Panhandle Audubon Society will meet at the Amarillo Garden Center on Monday night, November 21 at 7:30 in the evening. Mrs. Edward Elliott of Canyon will preside at the meeting.

In keeping with one of the goals of the National Audubon Society to further the outdoor awareness of children, a program will be presented demonstrating the work in the Outdoor Classroom Projects of the Amarillo School District. Mr. Hill Hill, Principal of Puckett Place Elementary School, has pioneered this work in the Amarillo schools, and he will explain his experiences at Lamar Elementary School and the follow-up work in the other schools of Amarillo. Following his presentation, Miss Stephanie Brooks of the Potter County Soil Conservation District will show some slides of work in Lubbock. Lowell Lindsay of the YMCA staff will present some plans for a permanent outdoor educational site. There will be opportunity for questions and discussions of future plans, led by Mr. Bill Holliday, Chairman of the Educational Committee of the Audubon Society.

Anyone interested in this topic is welcome to attend the meeting and learn of future plans of both Potter and Randall Counties.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS SCHEDULE:

- Dec. 17 - Buffalo Lake NWR - meet at refuge headquarters at 8:00 a.m.
- Dec. 18 - Amarillo - meet at the entrance gate of Palo Duro Canyon State Park at 8:00 a.m.
- Dec. 20 - Lake Meredith (west) - meet at National Park headquarters in Fritch at 7:00 a.m.
- Dec. 22 - Arnett, Okla. - meet at the restaurant east of the Circle C Lodge at 7:00 a.m.
- Dec. 27 - Lake Meredith (east) - meet at National Park headquarters in Fritch at 7:00 a.m.
- Jan. 1 - Quitaque - meet at the headquarters building at Lake Theo at 8:00 a.m.

You will note that we are omitting the Kenton (Black Mesa), Okla. count this year. Without firm commitments of participation from enough area birders, it is not practical to schedule the count. Two or three people cannot do it justice. Last year we had the help of 14 members of the Kansas Ornithological Society. This year the group will be in the area during the last week-end of the year. Sebastian Patti, the leader of the group, has agreed to complete the count in our stead. If any of you wish to take part in the count, please contact Ken Seyffert and he will put you in touch with Mr. Patti,

BIRD NOTES:

White Pelican - two were on the lake at the Palo Duro Club near Canyon during the week of Oct. 24 as reported by Esther and George Waddill.

Double-crested Cormorant - seen at Lake Tanglewood on Oct. 16 by Peggy Acord; 9 were in Bugbee Canyon, Lake Meredith, on Oct. 29 as reported by Fern Cain.

Least Bittern - one seen at Lake Weatherly near Borger on Sept. 24 by Fern Cain.

Bald Eagle - first report of the season was of one at the ranch below Lake Tanglewood by Roberta Currie on Nov. 5. Elizabeth Moss told her that she had seen it there two or three days earlier. Last year Roberta reported the first sighting on Oct. 25.

Prairie Falcon - two were seen in Carson Co. on Nov. 6 by Ken Seyffert.

Sandhill Crane - Ken Seyffert reported seeing 1000+ on the ground in a field in south-central Carson Co. on Nov. 6.

Poor-will - one seen in Memorial Cemetery in Amarillo on Oct. 24 by Fern Cain. While birding there, she just happened to step on the home of a garter snake. "He flailed a bit underfoot and crossed over her foot. She didn't scream because it seemed unseemly to cry out in a cemetery". Birding does induce self-control and discipline upon its devotees!

Red-breasted Nuthatch - reported in Amarillo by Peggy Acord, Thelma Fox and Ken Seyffert. Orilla Bryant of Miami reported one in her yard on Oct. 22.

Northern Shrike - one in the Palo Duro Canyon State Park on Oct. 23 by Peggy and Don Acord.

Chestnut-collared Longspur - Ken Seyffert found them very abundant in Carson Co. on Nov. 6. A Prairie Falcon made repeated attempts to catch one, but it never succeeded.

CAVE CREEK CANYON NEEDS BIRDERS' HELP:

Birdwatchers travel hundreds of miles to Cave Creek Canyon, in Arizona's Coronado National Forest, to see Mexican Chickadees, Zone-tailed Hawks, Painted Redstarts, a dozen species of hummingbirds, and Coppery-tailed Trogons (of about 25 pairs of these trogons nesting in the United States, 18 nest in Cave Creek). About 25,000 birders a year are said to visit the canyon just to see the trogons. It's a birders' paradise, but it won't be much longer if the Forest Service gives in to current pressures to give the area over to mass recreation that would destroy its natural values.

At present, the canyon has no roads, only hiking trails. Rocky Mountain Regional Representative Robert K. Turner has written to the Regional Forester, 517 Gold Avenue NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102, and urged him to put the canyon under some classification that will continue to protect its natural values, and keep out roads and off-road

vehicles. Birders who want to help save Cave Creek Canyon are urged to follow Turner's lead.

SOMETHING NEW UNDER THE SUN (TO SCIENCE):

Birding involves many levels and intensities of interest. Some of us grow quite excited over a species never before seen in our yard; others concentrate on discovering new species in their county, area, state or nation; still others range over continents. Regardless of the geographical extent of our interest, we tend to take it for granted that all the species of birds have been found and named by science, and that all that remains to be done is to record the ranges, or shifting ranges, of these species.

In 1963 the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology acquired a new genus and species of tanager from Peru, Wetmorethraupis sterrhopteron. This was of considerable interest to ornithologists as it was generally believed that the world's birds were so well known that only a handful remained to be discovered. This proved to be wrong as 21 new species, including four new genera, have been turned up since then in Peru alone. Because of the physiographical and ecological complexity of countries such as Peru, Columbia, Brazil, Ecuador and Bolivia, and the many pockets of unexplored terrain that remain, some scientists now believe there are still new species to be discovered. The following is a survey of some of the newly discovered species.

Black-faced Cotinga, Conioptilon mcilhennyi - the type specimen was collected by John P. O'Neill in Peru on 18 March 1965. In skinning the first specimens, dense patches of powderdown were found on the birds' bodies. This was unusual because powderdown had been previously reported in only three passerine species. For this reason, the bird was placed in a new genus Conioptilon from two Greek words meaning "a fine powder" and "soft feathers or down under the true feathers", referring to the powderdown feathers abundantly present over much of the body. The species name mcilhennyi was in honor of John S. McIlhenny of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who was the sponsor of the LSU 1964-65 Peruvian Expedition. The body of the bird is basically gray, with wings and tail black above and gray below; forehead and crown black, becoming gray on occiput; auriculars, chin and upper throat black. While this bird was unknown to science, it was well known to the Cashinahua Indians of the Rio Curanja who called it the "kuden ika", which may be translated as "it sings 'kuden', an allusion to its whistled call.

Elusive Antpitta, Grallaria oludens - this new species was collected by John P. O'Neill on 11 July 1967 in the same locality as the previous new species. Mr. O'Neill's own words illustrate one of the reasons new species continue to be found in this part of the world: "The vast lowlands of eastern Peru continue to produce unexpected ornithological novelties, but as anyone familiar with the tropics is aware, many of its inhabitants are extremely elusive. Prolonged field work, even in a small section of a humid forest, often results in the repeated discovery of species of birds not previously encountered there. Such has been our experience at Balta, a Sasinahua Indian village located on the banks of the Rio Curanja.... This locality has now yielded

in less than 3 years the astonishing total of three species of birds new to science, which is perhaps a record for any single collecting locality in any part of the world in the modern era.... The bird was shot by one of the Indians within a few hundred yards of the village in dense forest undergrowth frequently visited by our museum personnel." And the party had already spent 8 months of intensive collecting in the area! Once again, the bird was not unknown to the Indians who called it the "du xau".

Elfin Wood Warbler, Dendroica angolae - one would not expect that a new species of bird would be found in Puerto Rico. With a human population density now approaching 320 per square km. and less than 0.4 percent of land area of virgin forest remaining, it was presumed that knowledge of the distribution of native land birds was complete. In September 1968, Cameron and Angela Kepler established residence in the last remaining forest in Puerto Rico, the Sierra de Luquillo at the island's eastern end, for the purpose of conducting intensive studies of the Puerto Rico Parrot and Puerto Rico Tody. Two census routes were established in Elfin Woodland, "a distinctive forest type confined to the higher peaks and ridges". Here they occasionally noticed a warbler of peculiar appearance but were unable to identify it because of the difficulty of seeing it clearly in that type of habitat. It was similar to both the Black and White Warbler, a North American species, and the Arrow-headed Warbler, a resident species. On 18 May 1971 a specimen was collected and it proved to be a new species.

"One immediately wonders (and we have been asked by many colleagues) how an avian species could have escaped detection on an island as densely populated, deforested, and repeatedly studied by ornithologists as Puerto Rico.... The forest receives over one million visitors annually, many of them enthusiastic bird watchers in pursuit of local endemics. On the other hand, this forest has historically been the least known part of Puerto Rico, and the upper slopes, including.... the Elfin Woodland, have remained in virgin condition. The Elfin Woodland, crowning as it does the high peaks, is regularly enveloped in cloud and rain, and is in many places a dense, tangled thicket that resists efforts to enter it. Because of its remoteness and inhospitable character, it has apparently been neglected by past workers, and very few visitors hike the trails and roads that now enter the forest."

"The Elfin Woods Warbler itself is difficult to see, and is nowhere a common bird. Its black and white or greenish plumage is inconspicuous among the twisted vegetation, and it habitually frequents the densest parts of the canopy, particularly those thickets where vines entangle the crowns, binding it into a dense, dark mat."

Other species or subspecies of warblers have been named in honor of Adelaide, Francesca, Grace, Karlene, Laura, Lucy, Margaret and Virginia. It was only fitting that the tradition be continued as it was Angela Kay who was its co-discoverer and who found the individual that became the first collected specimen.

(To be continued in next Newsletter)....