

STEWARDSHIP:

"The earth is the Lord's, says the psalmist, and all that therein is. The traceless forests, the rivers that wind across our continent, the marshlands, the prairie and the deserts, all were made by Him.

"Man did not create the riches that are spread before him. All of these have been loaned to him as a trust. None of it really belongs to him. His days are as grass and when the span of his life is over, he is the owner of nothing on earth. For a time, he is called to be a steward of the riches of the Earth, leaving them as goodly inheritance to his children. He is given dominion over the works of his Creator, but such dominion is a frightening responsibility. One look at a dustbowl or at a poisoned stream or at a landscape blackened by fire shows how grave the responsibility can be.

"Conservation teaches the principle of wise stewardship. It counsels foresight in place of selfishness, vision in place of greed, reverence in place of destructiveness. Conservation involves concern for other generations. It sees beyond the immediate and the temporary. It takes into consideration not only our own generation but future generations as well. It recognizes the rights of people who are not yet born, citizens who will inherit this land a thousand years from now. It reminds us that they too have the right to enjoy what we enjoy, to profit from the same things, to be inspired by them as we are inspired, and to love them as we love them today. Conservation is designed to preserve the riches of the Earth for human happiness and welfare through the end of time."

....sent to us by Fern Cain....

BIRD NOTES: Highlights of the Summer Nesting Season in the Texas Panhandle:

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Oberholser in his Bird Life of Texas says there is one definite record of breeding in the Panhandle, viz., "Armstrong Co. (not located between May 18 and 30, 1876, C. A. H. McCauloy). Thought to have bred in Oldham, 1899)." On May 12, Max Trawoek of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department found them nesting on a playa lake about 12 miles south and 3 miles west of Dimmitt, Castro Co. At that time he found 1 nest with 3 eggs and 2 nests with 2 eggs each. On May 20 he and Ken Seyffert revisited the site and found 8 nests with 4 eggs each plus many without eggs. On June KS checked the site again and found 2 nests with 1 egg each, 1 nest with 3 young (eyes not open), 2 nests with 3 eggs each, 2 nest with 2 egg and 2 recently hatched young, and 1 nest with 4 eggs. Another check on July 2 found adults feeding fledged young. This is a significant find and confirms area birders' beliefs that the species does nest in the Panhandle. On June 6 KS found 4 singing males that appeared to be on territory in the cattails on a playa near Sunray, Moore Co. A thorough search was made by wading the marsh but no nests were found.

Black-necked Stilt: For the second year in a row, this species was found nesting in the Panhandle. Last year's nesting at Buffalo Lake NWR was the first on record, and a pair nested there again this year. It was on July 30 that Ken Seyffert began suspecting a nest was around when an adult persistently harassed him. On Aug. 27 there were 2 unfledged young with 2 adults in the area, and on Sept. 3 the young were flying.

Another pair possibly nested on a playa southwest of Amarillo in Randall Co. Pogy Acord, Rena Ross and KS observed from 2 to 4 adults there throughout the summer and one pair gave every indication of nesting. No one reported seeing young, however. At one time in mid-August, Pogy reported as many as 10 adults on the playa, an unusually large number to be seen at one time in this area.

Virginia Rail: This is another species area birders believe nests in the Panhandle but have not been able to prove. It winters in the cattail marsh below the dam at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., and has been heard calling there in the summer. On June 6 KS spent the morning wading the marsh and flushed one rail, but he was unsuccessful in locating a nest.

Long-billed Curlew: KS found a nest with 4 eggs near Texline, Dallam Co., on June 10. Oberholser, in the Bird Life of Texas, says the last nesting record for the county was in July, 1936. This curlew is quite a large bird and stands out conspicuously against the skyline, which makes one wonder how this observer did not detect the presence of the bird until it erupted from the nest built in very short grass prairie a few yards from where he was walking.

American Avocet: KS found a nest with 4 eggs 3 miles east of Nazareth, Castro Co. on July 2. There was a pair with 2 half-grown young at Buffalo Lake NWR, Randall Co. on July 30.

Pied-billed Grebe and American Coot: Good nesting of both species on the Buffalo Lake NWR.

Ruddy Duck: KS found one female with 2 feathered young and another with 1 chick on a playa southwest of Dimmitt, Castro Co. on July 2. Oberholser says this species nests from sea level to 700' in Texas, and then principally a little inland from the coast in south Texas. "Other summer records throughout state more likely represent lingerers than breeders." Max Trawoek has other records of the species nesting in the Panhandle.

Yellowthroat: KS found a nest with 4 eggs in a cattail marsh near Sunray, Moore Co. on June 6.

Ferruginous Hawk: KS found a nest with 3 young in Dallam Co., June 10.

LATE SUMMER AND EARLY FALL MIGRATION:

Black-crowned Night Heron: E. B. Ellis reported 50+ on a playa southeast of Kingsmill, Gray Co. on July 15. The birds were still there when revisited with KS on July 23. There were many immature birds in the group. The species began moving into the Buffalo Lake NWR in early August and by the end of the month there were 50+ there; this group also contained many young birds. This "Blue List" species should be monitored closely and any possible nesting sites reported.

Little Blue Heron: One immature on a playa southeast of Kingsmill, Gray Co. on July 15 (E. B. Ellis) and again on July 23 (EBE and KS), and Aug. 6 (EBE). Two immatures on Buffalo Lake NWR July 30, and 4 on Aug. 13 (KS).

Cattlo Egret: One at Buffalo Lake NWR Aug 13, 10 on Aug. 27, 15 on Sept. 3 and 17 on Sept. 4 (KS).

Townsend's Warbler: 4 in one group at Buffalo Lake NWR by KS on Aug. 27. This is an early date.

Hummingbirds: Rena Ross reported a good migration of Black-chins, Rufous and Broad-tails from the third week in August thru early September. Both she and Peggy Acord saw what they believed to have been a Callipe in Rena's yard.

Mississippi Kite: The kites usually begin to move through in large numbers with the passing of the first cold front in early September. This year, however, Peggy Acord detected the first movement on Aug. 24 when she observed the passage of 40+ birds in a short length of time as they moved over Penney's in town. On Sept. 3 there were 21 in one tree on the Hugh Currie Ranch, Randall Co, and on Sept. 4 24 were seen flying around the American National Bank building in downtown Amarillo (KS).

Tree Swallow: Very large migration, beginning in late July. By Sept. 3 numbers had built up to 1000+ at Buffalo Lake NWR (KS).

Swainson's Hawk: Both Max Trawoek and KS observed a good movement through the area in late August. On Sept. 3 there were at least 20 on the Buffalo Lake NWR, many of them young birds (KS).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Both Peggy Acord (Amarillo) and KS (Buffalo Lake NWR) reported the first birds of the season on Sept. 4.

PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER:

The Texas Panhandle Audubon Society will open its fall meeting in Canyon on Monday night, Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m. in Room 103 of the Science Center of West Texas University. The Science Center is in the SE corner of the campus; parking will be available off 4th Street north of the Nursing and Agriculture Building, which is immediately west of the Science Center.

In keeping with the fall season and its migratory birds, the program will be given by Mr. Max Trawoek who is a Biologist III with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. and Assistant Program Leader with the statewide Water Fowl Program. Mr. Trawoek has made a thorough study of the waterfowl in the Panhandle and he maintains up-to-date information concerning their needs. His program will center principally on the ducks and geese.

Mr. D. L. Brooks of the West Texas State Biology Department and a member of the Audubon Program Committee, will introduce Mr. Trawoek. Mrs. Winnie Wester of Canyon will be the hostess for the fellowship following the meeting.

Since the Society has not met during the summer, there are some very important items of business to be considered during the business session. President, Mrs. Joe Deason, will preside.

It is very important that we have a large turnout of the Amarillo members to give the Canyon members a real boost. The Amarillo members may want to pool cars; so, call your friends and fill your car. Those members planning to help with the serving pieces for the Garden Center please turn in your money at the meeting. We have the coupons.

FIELD TRIPS:

Duncan Ranch - Sunday, Sept. 24 at 2:30 p.m. - this trip is set up on a tentative basis as we have not been able to complete our plans. Please contact Peggy Acord or Esther Waddill for further information.

Buffalo Lake NWR - Sunday, Oct. 8, 2:30 p.m. - let's have a big turnout to show there are some who do care and to toll the old girl goodbye!

Wheeler County - Sunday, Oct. 22, 2:30 p.m. - meet at the Courthouse Square in Wheeler. Dick DeArment will be the group leader. Don't miss this one!