

THE PRAIRIE HORNED LARK  
Newsletter of the Texas Panhandle Audubon Society

December, 1981 2206 Lipscomb, Amarillo, TX 79109 Vol. XIII, No. 9  
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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS:

- Dec. 20 (Sunday) - Amarillo (Palo Duro Canyon) - meet at SP entrance at 8:00 A.M.
- Dec. 24 (Thursday) - Buffalo Lake NWR - meet at headquarters at 8:00 A.M.
- Dec. 27 (Sunday) - Lake Meredith(west) - meet at Nat'l Parks HQ in Fritch 7:30 A.M.
- Dec. 30 (Wednesday) - Arnett, OK - meet at Circle C Motel at 7:00 A.M.
- Jan. 1 (Friday) - Quitaque (Caprock Canyons SP) - meet at Lake Theo at 8:00 A.M.
- Jan. 3 (Sunday) - Lake Meredith(east) - meet at Nat'l Parks HQ in Fritch 7:30 A.M.

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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT:

It was indeed unfortunate that every one of the 109 members of the TEXAS PANHANDLE AUDUBON SOCIETY was not at the November meeting when we heard the tapes from our National Office concerning "The Pressures on the Land". To hear the alarming and inaccurate statements from Under-Secretary of Agriculture John B. Crowell, along with the strident words of the intentions of this department concerning our forests and soil, made ones skin chill. If you were concerned about the future of this land, you listened with pride as Charles Callison and Russell Peterson blistered the remarks of the Lumber Company Lawyer and set the record straight as to the importance of land protection and the general environmental cause. The tapes are available if anyone would like to check them out to hear.

Since the meeting, all of you have probably received the mailing telling about what is expected to be brought up to Congress after the first of the year. As you can imagine, it is going to take concerted effort from all of us to protect the land. If you would like to be on a "hot line" to receive notification of pending legislation and how you can respond, we have some Citizen Mobilization Campaign signup sheets on which you can place your mailing address. We would hope that each member of the Audubon Society who is really interested in our environment will be an active participant in this campaign.

We all know that Audubon has always been a fighter for the habitat of wildlife, but the National Office feels it is even more important to be concerned about the habitat of Homo sapiens - and that means YOU. It is our own habitat that is being destroyed right before our eyes, and if we hope to have a place to live, it might be a good idea to do something before it is all gone. YOU can write your Congressmen, Department and Cabinet members, or the President, direct to voice your concern. So begin to watch the papers for information, which you hope will be correct for your reaction. If you know someone outside of Audubon who would like to be on this hot line (this mobilization is for all citizens), let us know and we will get the information to them..... Mary Moyer.....

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AUDUBON ARK:

The Audubon Ark, which the TPAS is sponsoring, will be at the Wester Plaza Mall on January 13-16, 1982. It is a professionally prepared exhibit on the Endangered Species and is sponsored and paid for by the Celanese Corp. of America. Information we have received from others states that the show is excellant, and we want to pass the word around to encourage people to go out and see it.

As you would expect, since our Chapter is hosting the local showing, we need to have members helping to work the exhibit. We have set up a schedule of three hour shifts begining at 9:00 A.M. and ending at 9:30 P.M. each day - we do need "takers". Part of the schedule is filled, but Rena Ross will be glad to hear from you as to the time you can help. Please save her a lot of calling time by your calling her instead. Let us all take our friends out so they too can learn of the need of protection for much of our wildlife.

JANUARY MEETING:

The January meeting will come on the

18th and will be the time for the election of new officers for the coming year. Marguerite Empie (355-6256) is Chairman of the Nominating Committee, and Martha Meadors (352-5167) and Harold Read (352-8750) as members; so, notify them of the place in which you feel you can serve. Save them a call.

FESTIVAL OF TREES:

We wish to thank all those who helped in any way with the TPAS's part in the Festival of Trees at the Garden Center. Peggy Acord was chairman of our TREES - we had two this year - and did the major part of the work in getting them ready, but she was assisted by Mary Donelson, Thelma Fox, Virginia Wood, Rosemary Scott, Mary Griffith, and Ginger Holliday from Corpus Christi.

Those who helped during the Festival were Rosemary Scott, Mary Donelson, Charles Meadors, Mary Moyer, Vera Deason, Armon Mays, Mary Glenn, Peggy Acord, and thos who brought food for the kitchen and cake sale were Rena Ross, Fern Cain, Johnnye Shea, Esther Waddill, and Thelma

Fox, as well as many of the others above.

We do not have all the details at this time, but the Center thinks they made about \$10,000, which is a great help on their yearly budget.

The them has been chosen for next year and our Committee is already at work on our decorations.

#### ANNOUNCING A NEW BOOK:

To those who have not heard about it, or to those who heard but not seen it yet, we urge you to take a look at a new book on the market called WINDOW ON THE PRAIRIE: An Artist's Perspective, with illustrations by Carolyn Stallwitz and text by Georgia Tyler. Once seen you will want to own it. The book contains fifty-three full color paintings and sixteen black-and-white drawings of wildlife on the High Plains, each depicted in its natural surroundings. Carolyn's day-by-day familiarity with these creatures has enabled her to portray them with great naturalness and they are guaranteed to reawaken the memory of your own past encounters with them. My own favorites are the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and Lark Sparrow. The former is perched on the topmost limb of a mesquite tree, facing into the wind and alert to the passing of any chance insect. It is a fine portrayal and the coloring is superb. The Lark Sparrow is a reminder of J.J. Audubon who often utilized the flora of a species' habitat and gave the plant and bird equal emphasis in his compositions. This Lark Sparrow in the embrace of a Devil's Claw seedpod is a delight.

The book can be ordered from: Feather Press - Box 1225 - Dumas, TX 79029. Cost: \$24.95 (Texas residents add 5% sales tax) plus \$1.50 for postage and handling.

#### BIRD NOTES:

COMMON LOON - one at Bugbee, Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., 12/6 (KS).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT - two at Greenbelt Lake, Donley Co., 11/27 (KS); one at Bugbee, Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., 12/6 (KS).

AMERICAN BITTERN - one in the cattail march downstream from the dam at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., 11/16 (WG) and 12/6 (KS).

SNOW GOOSE - a flock of 75 east of Vega, Oldham Co., 12/1 (RS) and 12/5 (KS) - the flock included one "Blue" Goose.

CINNAMON TEAL - a male downriver from the dam at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., 12/6 (KS) - a late sighting.

HOODED MERGANSER - a pair at Greenbelt Lake, Donley Co., 11/27 (KS).

FERRUGINOUS HAWK - sixteen seen on a swing through Randall and Castro Cos., 11/15 (PA,KS) - unusually common this fall.

BALD EAGLE - an adult at Greenbel Lake, Donley Co., 11/27 (KS).

PRAIRIE FALCON - one east of Vega, Oldham Co., 12/15 (KS).

WHOOPING CRANE - four flying west high above the dam at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., 11/9 (KK); three flying with a flock of about 100 Sandhill Cranes over Alibates, Lake Meredith, Potter Co., 11/11 (WP) -

this is the second year in which Whooping Cranes have been seen in the Lake Meredith area in the fall.

VIRGINIA RAIL - at least seven calling in the cattail marsh at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co., 12/6 (KS).

COMMON GALLINULE - three in the cattail marsh at Lake Meredith dam, Hutchinson Co., 11/16 (WG); one on 12/6 (KS) - this species appears to have become established as a permanent resident in this marsh for it is now being reported there the year around. As far as is know, this is the only location in the Panhandle in which it has become established.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW - one flock of 400 and another of 200 in Castro Co. 11/15 (PA,KS) - the latter flock in a field on the outskirts of Hart.

HOUSE WREN - three in the Palo Duro Canyon SP, Randall Co., 11/29 (KS) - late birds.

LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN - twenty-two in the cattail marsh at Lake Meredith dam, Hutchinson Co., 12/6 (KS) - along a hundred yard stretch of path alongside the marsh.

FYRRHULOXIA - one in west Amarillo 11/7 (GE,ME).

VESPER SPARROW - one at Greenbelt Lake, Donley Co., 11/27 (KS); one in southeastern Oldham Co. 12/5 (KS) - late sightings.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW - thirty-two in the Palo Duro Canyon SP, Randall Co., 11/29 (KS) - an extraordinarily high number of a species usually reported in ones and twos - there were fourteen in one flock - only thirty White-crowned Sparrows were seen in the same area.

FOX SPARROW - three in the Sunflower Campground, Palo Duro Canyon SP, Randall Co., 11/29 (KS).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW - thirty-five in the Palo Duro Canyon SP, Randall Co., 11/29 (KS) - they seemed to be everywhere - this number compares to thirty-three Song Sparrows seen in the same area - have never seen so many Lincolns before.

PA - Peggy Acord

GE - Gus Empie

ME - Marguerite Empie

WG - Waymond Gill

KK - Ken Keller

WP - Wes Phillips

RS - Rosemary Scott

KS - Kenneth Seyffert

#### AUGUSON REGIONAL MEETING:

1982 will be the year for another Regional Meeting. You will be hearing more about it, but it is scheduled for one week, April 14-21, at Rockport, TX. The business portion of the meeting will be on the weekend, to assure a high attendance, and the field trips will be on the days before and after. Some interesting things are being planned; so, block this time on your calendar and plan to attend.