

PRAIRIE HORNED LARK

May 1984

vol. XI, No. 5

Meeting May 21, 1984 - 7:30 Garden Center

The program for May will be a film on the National Park Service brought to us by a member of the Lake Meredith National Recreation Area Staff. Come join us for this last meeting until fall.

Dr. Joseph Cededa will hold a board meeting at the Garden Center at 7:30 p. m., May 21. There are several matters needing discussion before the summer break.

Big Day. Thirteen people took part in our Big Day Count on Sat., May 12. One-hundred-fifty species were seen. This is about as many as we've had in the past. Numbers were not impressive, but many good migrants were seen. It was foggy in the morning and hot in the afternoon.

NEW MEMBERS:

Opal Maddux
1607 - 6th Ave.
Canyon, Tx. 79015

Clara Nelms
3453 Amherst
Amarillo, Tx. 79106

Dr. Chris Brady
2815 S. Georgia
Amarillo, Tx. 79109

Ellen Sparks
5112 Oregon Trail
(Former Member)
Amarillo, Tx. 79109

Dr. Thomas L. Johnson
3516 Rutson
Amarillo, Tx. 79109

This year is the 50th Anniversary of the Duck Stamp. Revenues from the sale of Duck Stamps purchase acreage for wildlife refuges. Many nature lovers already purchase Duck Stamps, but we urge others to do so. They are collectibles and handsome and a good deed. Hunters say they support the refuges and so have the say so on how they are used. Lets close the gap and benefit the refuge systems - by Duck Stamps.

The latest issue of Audubon action has a very good article on the Rio Grande Valley and the fine job the Frontera Audubon Society is doing, helping the refuges along the river. We hope you will all read this article.

A number of people have asked for a special field trip this summer so August 4, 1984 Cuchara, Colo. There are camping facilities and motels in Cuchara, LaVeta and nearby Walsenburg. We will meet at the entrance to the National Forest Camp Ground at 8:00 a. m., Sunday, August 4th for a field trip to Blue Lake or Apishapa Pass for birds and flowers and whatever.

Dennis the Menace says the only thing he knows about birds and bees is one sings and one stings.

Mary Moyer has been busy with the outdoor classroom program this spring. This is a worthwhile endeavor and we hope some of you who have helped before will help next spring.

The Maricopa Audubon Society has renamed its newsletter. It is now known as "The Cactus Wren-Dition".

BIRD NOTES:

Spring is always the most exciting time of the year for birders and this spring is proving no exception, as can be seen from the following reports that have come in:

April 7: Leo Galloway, a former TPAS member who now lives in St. Joseph, Mo. spent the week-end with Kenneth Seyffert and they birded in several of the good birding spots in Randall County. Firsts for the year were Ash-throated Flycatchers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in the Palo Duro Canyon. Six

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- Sage Thrashers at Buffalo Lake, some singing, and an Eastern Phoebe and Rough-winged Swallows at Ceta Glen.
- April 8: On this date KS had nine white-fronted geese at Hollywood Road Sewage Disposal Lake, better known as Elysian Fields, along with an adult Peregrine Falcon. The Falcon was standing near the shoreline near a coot partially devoured and the observer watched it for some thirty minutes from a near distance before it flew off.
- April 9: Rosemary Scott reported an unusual observation in Vega, Oldham Co: She found a "Great-tailed Grackle holding a foot-long snake down with one claw. It seemed to be playing with it. The snake was still alive. From time to time it would peck chunks out of its body and eat them. This went on for about thirty minutes. Then the Grackle left and came back with a fresh snake and went through the same procedure."
- April 11: A very early Mississippi Kite was seen by KS as it flew over I-40 and Washington. This was two weeks or more early for this species.
- April 15: The TPAS field trip to McClellan Lake in Gray Co., attended by Kenneth Seyffert, Rosemary Scott, Mary Moyer and Ed and Sandy Williamson of Pampa, had a very profitable and enjoyable day. The best bird was an adult Little Blue Heron. We get very few Little Blues in our area, and rarely an adult, and this bird represents the earliest observation on record. Other firsts for the year were four Double-Crested Cormorants, a Black-crowned Night-Heron, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and two Field Sparrows.
- April 16: Kingston Smith reported the first Cliff Swallows, near Sunday Canyon. Twenty to thirty were flying around the road culvert where they nest every year at the turnoff into Sunday Canyon. The next day a couple of hundred were there. A very rare Ross's Goose was found at the Medical Park Lake by Marguerite Empie. It was seen the next day by Peggy Acord and KS, and again on April 22 by KS. It has been a number of years since this species has been reported in our area.
- April 20: Rosemary Scott had another fruitful day in Vega, finding a number of firsts for the year: Western Kingbird, Yellow headed Blackbird, White-faced Ibis, Say's Phoebe, and Chipping Sparrow.
- April 22: Firsts for the year by Kenneth Seyffert at Buffalo Lake: Cooper's Hawk, Orange-crowned Warbler, a male Townsend's Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Grasshopper Sparrow. In Randall Co. were an OSprey, Least Sandpipers, Wilson's Phalaropes, a Solitary Sandpiper, and eleven late Sandhill Cranes.
- April 25: Peggy Acord reported an adult Barn Owl with a half-grown young in Memorial Park Cemetery, along with Clay-colored Sparrows. At Elysian Fields were a Willet, a Semi-palmated Plover, Ten Forster's Terns, and a Cassin's Kingbird. Rosemary Scott reported the first Green-tailed Towhee in town. Also, in town, per KS, were House Wrens, a Chimney Swift, and a Bank Swallow.
- April 26: Kingston Smith reported the first Indigo Bunting coming to his feeder at Sunday Canyon.
- April 27: A memorable day at Buffalo Lake for Peggy Acord and Fern Cain for they found only the third Scott's Oriole, a male, ever reported in the Texas Panhandle. Also, seen was a Northern Parula and an Empidonax Flycatcher.
- April 28: The TPAS field trip to the Christian Church Camp in Ceta Glen was not to be outdone by the previous day's birders. Fern Cain, Joe Cepeda and Kenneth Seyffert also had their day of joy when they observed another mail Scott's Oriole!

Also seen: Black-headed Grosbeak, four Brewer's Sparrows and a pair of Carolina Chickadees. In Borger, Maurinne Forbus reported the first ever Black-throated Sparrow for Hutchinson Co., in her yard, no less.

April 29: After a perfect night of storm, KS was enjoying a day at Buffalo Lake, where birds were popping up all over the place, before he was driven away by rain, hail, sleet, snow, and what have you, but not before seeing: Swainson's Thrush, a Virginia's Warbler, a sing male Northern Parula, two male Common Yellowthroats, a male Rose-brested Grosbeak, three male Blue Grosbeaks, a Bell's Vireo and a Nashville Warbler, among other things. If only the storm had held off!

May 3: The first Lazuli Bunting was reported in Amarillo, and at the Palo Duro Club, Rena Ross and Esther Waddill had a male Scarlet Tanager and ten Spotted Sandpipers. Rena received a call from a young lady reporting an Jacana (that's right, a Jacana!) that had been recovered at a cattle feedlot east of Hereford in Deaf Smith County about three weeks ago, and given to her for nursing. She referred the call to Kenneth Seyffert who went out to the young ladies apartment to see what had actually turned up. Well, don't get your hopes up. It turned out to be a Moorhen, identified by the veterinarian she had taken the bird to as a Jacana. The Moorhen had apparently fully recovered from its injury and plans were to release it in Memorial Park Cemetery.

Insert under April 28:

Prior to the field trip, KS found the first Snowy Plover and lesser yellowlegs, and eleven Willets, all at the Triangle Ponds east of Lake Tanglewood. On her way home from the field trip, Fern Cain had a Marlin and a Mac Gillivray's warbler.

May 5: The first Solitary Vireo and Yellow Warbler, both singing Amarillo (KS)

May 10: Peggy - More Bird Notes

May 5: At Hollywood Road waste disposal lake: Whimbrel - 4 Bonaparts Gull - 4, Sanderling - 1, Stilt Sandpiper

May 5: At Amarillo - Yellow Warbler

May 6: At Buffalo Lake NWR: Broad-winged Hawk - 1, Upland Sandpiper - 2, Com. Nighthawk - 2, E. Kingbird - 6, Warbling Vireo - 1, Blackpoll Warbler - 2 Ovenbird - 1, Summer Tanager - 1, Baird's Sparrow - 1, Orchard - 6. (KS)

Bring your aluminum so maybe next year we can send someone to the Audubon Camp of the West.

This is our last newsletter until September.