

October, 1984

The October meeting will be held Monday night, October 16, at 7:30 P.M. at the Amarillo Garden Center. Richard Howard from the Science Department of Amarillo College will be telling the why's and how's and wherefore's of the collections at the new Natural History Museum. Richard will be introduced by our very first President, Adele Barnes. Please come and give a good welcome to these two interesting people.

The September 22nd field trip to Palo Duro State Park was most interesting. Dr. Cepeda showed and told up many nice things. You should have been there.

FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE

October 7 (Sunday)	McBride Canyon, Lake Meredith Meet at Canyon Entrance at 8:30 AM Fall Migrants should be moving.
October 20 (Sunday)	Hidden Falls Church Camp - Armstrong County near Wayside off FMR 285 Meet at entrance at 2:00 PM

NEW MEMBERS

A. Heavin - 7107 Elmhurst, Amarillo, TX 79106 - Transfer

Gary Holurch - 3210 Kusk, Amarillo, TX 79109

Kristin A. Rauch - 1212 S. Travis, Amarillo, TX 79102

We are on the Wood Buffalo Whooping Crane migration route, please be alert for any migrating whoopers. Be sure you are looking at a whooper not a Sandhill or a White Pelican or a Snow Goose. Make careful notations of where, how high, how many, what direction and carefully note sequence of colored bands on both legs. Old birds won't have them. Those born from 1977 on will. Relay information to Kenneth Seyffert or Peggy Acord.

The Great Sage Grouse, Ptarmigan, Three Toed Woodpecker Quest.

Since I had such a good year's list going and I was in Northern Colorado, I decided to try to add these three rather elusive birds to that list. Ha! Let's take the Sage Grouse first. It seems that if one is on a certain gravel road very early and is the first person to drive down said road after daylight, one might see a grouse run across the road. We didn't! Nor did we have luck in the "mature" sage flats of Moffat County. We saw many nice birds and animals but no grouse.

Ptarmigan - These small chicken-like birds can be found on any of the 40 thousand or so square miles of tundra in Colorado. A hunter acquaintance says "Only on the top of the mountain". Yes, but how does a partly middle-age lady get to the top of the mountain? - Drive? OK - we tried Loveland Pass (12,000' elevation) - 3 times, no luck. Guanella Pass - good in winter - sure - the wind blows 90 miles an hour and snow to your armpits. The birds leave in late April and now its June. So, on to Mt. Evans. The road up mt. Evans is challenging by any standards. Of course Big Horn Sheep and mountain Goats along the way and fabulous scenery help. The last 6 miles are closed yet but Jim Lane says go 1/4 mile above the chain and walk up the hill to the right. Have you ever seen the hill to the right? "NO WAY!" So much for Mt. Evans. Now Trail Ridge Drive in Rocky Mountain National Park is always good. So the road has 22 miles of heavy construction. Reportedly, there are a couple of hundred Ptarmigan on the tundra on top. The old quarry road is closed but you have a good chance of seeing Ptarmigan from the tundra nature trail - Oh Yea - Two round trips to this area, that is four times across the construction area and gues what? No Ptarmigan.

Now there's always Buffalo Mountain or Mt. Uneva - Good Night - that's 2,000 feet straight up. Oh well, I didn't want a Ptarmigan this year. Next Year? Well, the way I see it I'll just have to hire a helicopter to fly me up, and after thrashing around on the mountain top, try to get down without falling into the avalanche shoot or sliding down a ski slope, nothing to it.

Now the Three Toed Woodpeckers are less hazardous to find. You just have to be stuck in a snow drift. (No, I didn't see a bear while daughter walked out for help), and wind your way thru the logged over areas. Say - that funny looking woodpecker that just flew over - well maybe. Oh heck - there's always next year.

BIRD NOTES: August-September

Double-crested Cormorant: One at Buffalo Lake NWR 8/5, 8/19, and three on 9/22 (KS)

Cattle Egret: Two at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/3 (KS)

Black Crowned Night Heron: An impressive build-up of numbers at Buffalo Lake NWR from 50+ on 8/5 to 200+ on 9/3 and thereafter (KS)

Yellow Crowned Night Heron: One adult and one immature at Buffalo Lake NWR 8/5 (KS)

Canada Goose: The first of the season, a lone bird flying over the prairies of Randall Co. on 9/22 (KS)

Osprey: One on an isolated pond near River Road waste water Reclamation plant north of Amarillo, Potter Co. 9/17 (JJ, KS)

Cooper's Hawk: An immature bird being harrassed by Mississippi Kites in the Palo Duro Canyon SP on the early date of 8/21 (KS)

Broad Winged Hawk: One at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/22 (KS)

Swainson's Hawk: Good numbers found across the area in late summer, 30+ in the Texline, Dallam County area on 8/27, including two fledged juveniles still occupying their nest (KS), and 32 on a drive across Armstrong County (KS)

Sora: One at Fryer Lake, Ochiltree County 9/20 (KS)

Black Necked Stilt: This species slipped up on us and nested on Tradewind's playa lake, Randall County. Adults had been seen on the playa earlier but it was not until 9/8 before three half-grown young were seen with the adults (KS). This is only the second reported nesting of the species in the Panhandle.

Solitary Sandpiper: This species is normally found as its name proclaims - solitary. However, on 9/2 eleven were found along Tierra Blanca Creek at Buffalo Lake NWR in about a hundred yard stretch of it (KS). It has also been found more plentiful than usual in other areas.

Red Knot: Three were seen on the Celanese Chemical playa lake near Kingsmill, Gray County, on 8/26 (KS). The birds were in winter plumage and one was banded on the right leg just above the ankle.

Red-Necked Phalarope: Three on the Hollywood Road waste water treatment lake (Elysian Fields), Randall County on 9/8 and eight on 9/13 (KS)

Common Poor-Will: One at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/22 (KS)

Great Crested Flycatcher: One in Amarillo, Randall County 9/3-4 (RR). As an illustration of what a cool front can bring, the following were other species seen in the Ross' yard on these two days: Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, Black-Chinned Hummingbird (3), Yellow-shafted flicker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Western Wood Pewee, Empidonax flycatchers, Ash-throated flycatcher, Robin (Many), Mockingbird starling, Wilson's Warbler, Western Tanager, Cardinal, Black-head Grosbeak, House Finch, Com. Grackle, House Sparrow.

Red-Breasted Nuthatch: One on the early date of 8/27 near Texline, Dallam County (KS); Two in Ceta Glen, Randall County, 9/14 (KS); One at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/22 (KS) and 9/26 (KS)

Brown Creeper: One on the very early date of 9/16 (KS). The previous early date was 10/4.

House Wren: It isn't clear what is the nesting range of the House Wren in the Texas Panhandle but a juvenile was seen near Clarendon, Donly County 9/6 (KS).

Gray-Cheeked Thrush: One at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/22 (KS)

Black-Throated Blue Warbler: A female at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/9 (KS)

Townsend's Warbler: A phenomenal 10 at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/6 (KS), and one in town (TJ). During migration warblers can often be found feeding in a group with other species of small birds. These Townsend's Warblers at Buffalo Lake were seen in three different locations and the species composition of each group is interesting to note: Group #1 - Two male and one female Townsend's empidonax flycatcher(2), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1), Solitary Vireo (2), Warbling Vireo (1), Nashville Warbler (1), Audubon's Warbler (1), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (1). Group #2: Four female Townsend's Orange-Crowned Warbler (1), Wilson's Warbler (1). Group #3: Two female and one male Townsend's Empidonax Flycatcher (1), Red-breasted Nuthatch (1), Brown Creeper (1), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1), Solitary Vireo (1), Nashville Warbler (1), Audubon's Warbler (1), American Redstart (1), Wilson's warbler(1).

Black-an-white warbler: One male at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/22 (KS)

Yellow-Breasted Chat: One at Buffalo NWR 9/3 (KS)

Western Tanager: An above normal number have been reported throughout the period.

Green-tailed Towhee: One at Buffalo Lake NWR 9/22 (KS)

Lesser Goldfinch: A pair in the Palo Duro Canyon SP 8/21 (KS)

KS - Ken Seyffert
JJ - Jim Jordan
TJ - Tom Johnson
RR - Rena Ross