

PROGRAM FOR JANUARY:

The monthly meeting of the TPAS will be held at 7:30 p.m., January 19, at the Garden Center. Joe Krai, fisheries biologist with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, will present a program on the various projects the Department is currently engaged in.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS:

What was most noteworthy were the ideal weather conditions. The Buffalo Lake count may have been a little breezy but, lordy, nothing in comparison with some we have had. This is the second year in a row for good weather and I am afraid we are getting spoiled.

Amarillo (Palo Duro Canyon) - the Merlin is not often recorded on our counts and the two here were most unusual. The Common Moorhen downstream from the dam at Tanglewood represents only the second sighting for the count as does the Carolina Chickadee in the State Park. Northern Cardinals have rarely been found in such profusion and the 98 House Finches, 53 all in a row, are the most ever for the count. The rare Winter Wren and Fox Sparrow are always nice ones to find. Most glaringly absent were the turkeys!

Buffalo Lake NWR - the only noteworthy sighting here was the American Bittern, only the second one ever recorded on the count. Most obviously absent was a wider variety of ducks - the water was there behind Stewart Dike but not the ducks. Also scarce were the longspurs. The count will not post the high count in the nation for McCown's this year.

Lake Meredith(west) - without question the species of the count was the two Lark Sparrows, only the third winter sighting ever for the Panhandle, and the first for so far north. The 29 Western Bluebirds were unusual in themselves and certainly so for outnumbering the Easterns and Mountains by such a margin. Again, the cardinals were in very good numbers and the turkeys and Bald Eagles made a good showing. This count also had its Winter Wren.

Quitaque (Caprock Canyons) - new for the Park and the county was the Red-bellied Woodpecker (photos taken by Joel Reese). Most gratifying for such large numbers were the Canvasbacks (105) and the Mountain Bluebirds (341) - you can never see too many Mountain Bluebirds. Here again we had the rare Winter Wren, three this time, and more Fox Sparrows.

Lake Meredith(east) - a count of superlatives in the form of 3,000,000 blackbirds, and one Turkey Vulture! The TV represents only the second winter sighting on record for the Panhandle, the first for January (the Askins, Cain, Stallwitz party had the honours). Other very good birds were the Eared Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Sora (identified by sound), Northern Shrike, and Swamp Sparrow.

BIRD NOTES:

Dec. 2: Green-tailed Towhee - one at the Scott residence in southwest Amarillo (RS) that appears to have set up there for the winter - a rare winter sighting.

Dec. 6: Oldsquaw - still present on the Triangle Ponds along the Claude highway east of Lake Tanglewood (DA, CB, DM), and last seen 12/14 (KS). An American Bittern was found at Stewart Dike, Buffalo Lake NWR (DA, CB, DM) for one of the very few winter records, and it was seen again on 12/14 (KS). Both an adult and immature Northern Shrike were found at Buffalo Lake (DA, CB, DM), and an immature again on 12/14 (KS).

Dec. 11: Sandhill Crane - large numbers were reported between Pampa and Amarillo, particularly in Carson Co. (FE & JE), along with Snow Geese.

Dec. 14: Wilson's Phalarope - two bobbing and spinning on the sewage ponds (Elysian Fields) - the only winter record on file (KS). Our latest date was 10/28. Also seen were two Yellow-headed Blackbirds later in the day (DM).

Dec. 26: White Pelican - one at Lake Mackenzie, Briscoe Co (JR) - only our fifth Panhandle winter sighting.

Dec. 28: 80-100 Chihuahuan Ravens were seen in Dallam Co. along with 14 Common Ravens (FC, DM). The swing through the northern Panhandle also produced two Merlins, many Rough-legged Hawks, and three White-fronted Geese and some 900 Snow Geese at Etter Pond in Moore Co.

Jan. 4-5: Hooded Merganser - three males and two females on Thompson Park Lake, Amarillo (PA, DW).

In addition, two Black-crested Titmice appear to have taken up residence in Hereford, the first time the species has been reported in Deaf Smith Co. (TR), and an Inca Dove was reported in Panhandle, Carson Co., in December (fide PA).

PA - Peggy Acord  
DA - Don Alexander  
CB - Charles Bender  
JR - Joel Reese  
TR - Tommy Rosson

FC - Fern Cain  
FE & JE - Fred & Jan  
Elston  
DM - Don Myers

RS - Rosemary Scott  
KS - Ken Seyffert  
CS - Carolyn Stallwitz  
DW - Doris Williamson

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1986/87

- 1. Amarillo (Palo Duro Canyon) - Dec. 20
- 2. Buffalo Lake NWP - Dec. 24
- 3. Lake Meredith(west) - Dec. 27
- 4. Quitaque (Caprock Canyons) - Jan. 1
- 5. Lake Meredith(east) - Jan. 3

Species	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Pied-billed Grebe	7			4	3
EARED GREBE					1
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT					1
AMERICAN BITTERN		1			
Great Blue Heron	10		13	7	16
Snow Goose				15	
Canada Goose	530	818	149	200	289
Green-winged Teal	7			20	27
Mallard	96	230	12	1000	53
N. Pintail	5	50		500	
N. Shoveler	1	62		75	
Gadwall	13			5	9
Am. Wigeon	12	10			17
Canvasback		2		105	
Redhead				38	
Ring-necked Duck	8		40	1	
Lesser Scaup	2	30		10	
Common Goldeneye			1		40
Bufflehead				32	
Common Merganser	5		300	2	270
TURKEY VULTURE					1
Pald Eagle	2	1	12		
N. Harrier	3	8	10	10	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk				1	1
Cooper's Hawk	2				
Red-tailed Hawk	5	8	18	10	15
Ferruginous Hawk	4	5		1	3
Rough-legged Hawk		1			
Golden Eagle	2	1		1	
Am. Kestrel	23	18	23	30	24
Merlin	2				
Prairie Falcon	1	1			
Ring-necked Pheasant	2	3	1	5	5
Wild Turkey			182		
N. Bobwhite	19	12	36	77	13
Scaled Quail	38		16	18	12
Virginia Rail					6
SORA					1
Common Moorhen	1				2
Am. Coot	66			100	80
Sandhill Crane	700			30	
Killdeer			1	1	1
Ping-billed Gull	2	31	60		148
Rock Dove	11	17		24	4
Mourning Dove			143	5	
Greater Roadrunner	5		4	12	14
Great Horned Owl		4	6		2
Belted Kingfisher				2	
Golden-fronted Woodpecker	22			9	
Red-bellied Woodpecker			1	1	
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	4	4	13	7	7
Downy Woodpecker			7		3
Hairy Woodpecker			3		3
N. Flicker	24	4	54	11	32
Horned Lark	211	920		16	33
Blue Jay	3		29	1	
Scrub Jay	9			8	
Am. Crow	7		27	22	5
Chihuahuan Raven			2		
Carolina Chickadee	1		22		2
Black-crested Titmouse	13			3	
Pushtit	46			25	
Brown Creeper	2		2		
Rock Wren	1		1	5	3
Canyon Wren	2			2	

Species	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Bewick's Wren	6	1	12	16	9
Winter Wren	1		2	3	
Marsh Wren		2		4	12
Golden-crowned Kinglet	7		3	6	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3		6	6	2
Eastern Bluebird			41	10	
Western Bluebird			29		
Mountain Bluebird	19		4	341	
Townsend's Solitaire	16	2	19	16	6
Hermit Thrush	1			2	
Am. Robin	208	4	311	239	3
N. Mockingbird	10		1	11	
Brown Thrasher			1	2	
Curve-billed Thrasher	3		3		
Cedar Waxwing	49		10		
NORTHERN SHRIKE					1
Loggerhead Shrike	6	3	21	6	33
E. Starling	786	43	1646	143	500
Yellow-rumped Warbler				1	
N. Cardinal	66	1	68	17	8
Rufous-sided Towhee	17	1	22	11	7
LARK SPARROW			2		
Rufous-crowned Sparrow			1		
Am. Tree Sparrow	8	6	69	5	25
Field Sparrow				8	
Fox Sparrow	1			3	
Song Sparrow	11	3	32	51	11
Swamp Sparrow					3
Lincoln's Sparrow	3		2	1	
White-throated Sparrow				1	
White-crowned Sparrow	30	50	435	64	36
Harris' Sparrow			4		12
Dark-eyed Junco	363	67	279	111	252
McCown's Longspur	30	90			
Red-winged Blackbird	1175	600	1500	530	2,000,000
Eastern Meadowlark					1
Western Meadowlark	180	142	193	215	57
Brewer's Blackbird		60	225		
Common Grackle					18
Brown-headed Cowbird	18		1	1	2
House Finch	98		30		19
Pine Siskin	9	20	20	8	11
Am. Goldfinch	45	13	40	32	103
House Sparrow	110	230	27	83	69
Total	72	43	63	74	63

PARTICIPANTS (number of counts participated in):

Peggy Acord (2) - Amarillo	Joel Reese (3) - Kress
Bob & Jerry Askins (4) - Dumas	Casey Reese (1) - Kress
Fern Cain (4) - Borger	Kay Reese (1) - Kress
Taylor Carlisle (1) - Metairie, LA	Tommy Rosson (1) - Hereford
Ed Elliott (1) - Amarillo	Lacy Reynolds (1) - Amarillo
Nancy Elliott (4) - Amarillo	Lea Reynolds (3) - Amarillo
E. B. Ellis (1) - Austin	Rosemary Scott (2) - Amarillo
Marguerite Empie (5) - Amarillo	Roberta Seastrand (1) - Amarillo
Hap Hamous (2) - Amarillo	Ken Seyffert (5) - Amarillo
Tom Johnson (2) - Lake Tanglewood	Frank Smith (2) - Borger
Coby Muckelroy (1) - Amarillo	Robert Smith (3) - Amarillo
Tom Patterson (1) - Amarillo	Carolyn Stallwitz (1) - Dumas
	Doris Williamson (2) - Borger