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LOUISIANA
ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



No. 32

New Orleans, La.

February 22, 1963

LOUISIANA CHRISTMAS COUNTS

CAMERON: The count of December 29 produced a total of 155 species of birds. Observers did well on ducks and other water birds, but because of a general scarcity of small land birds the count did not cross the 160 mark. The owling party, consisting of Sidney Gauthreaux, Bob Moore, and Gus Hanniball contributed some of the most exciting birds. They included a Saw-whet Owl and a Chuck-wills-widow at Hackberry, and once again, a Peregrine Falcon asleep on a utility pole. They also saw a Roseate Spoonbill feeding at night on the edge of a small pond. The owl was the second record for the state. The best find of the daylight hours was a Sage Thrasher spotted by Ava Tabor and Electa Levi.

Other birds listed included both Horned and Eared Grebes, Green Heron, Common Merganser, Purple Gallinule, American Woodcock, Marbled Godwit, Yellow-throated Warbler, Purple Finch and Fox Sparrow. It is interesting to note that over sixty species in addition to those recorded in this year's count have been identified in Cameron Parish during the winter months, most of these in or very near the count area. Even eliminating a number of rarities and vagrants, it should be possible to record a considerable higher total than we have achieved to date.

Participants in the count included Ralph and Hetty Andrews, Robert Bateman, Ralph

Cambre, Hubert Davis, Sid Gauthreaux, John Gee (compiler), Gus Hanniball, Bob and Nancy LaVal, Electa Levi, Mary Lewis, Bob Moore, Charles Payne, Ronald Stein, Ava Tabor, John Wall and John Walther.

NEW ORLEANS: On December 23 twelve observers in five parties recorded 15,729 individual birds of 119 species in a fifteen-mile diameter circle centered at the intersection of Florida and Gueregeh Canals north of Arabi. The number of species proved to be the highest ever recorded on a New Orleans count. This was made possible by the hard work of the observers, the welcome addition of a boat party, and reasonable weather.

Despite the early December freeze a number of interesting species were recorded that normally winter south of the United States. These were Barn Swallow (MW), Yellow-throated Vireo (RF, DH), two Black-and-White Warblers, a Yellow Warbler (RF, DH), and a Wilson's Warbler (RF, DH). In addition a Magnolia Warbler (ML, SAG) and a Black-throated Green Warbler (BJD, SAG) were recorded in the count area after December 23.

A Harlan's Hawk that had been in the area since late November was seen on count day (RJS, MM). The mid-December freeze initiated a major invasion of Eastern Bluebirds into Southern Louisiana. Ninety-two Bluebirds were recorded on the count, highest ever recorded in New Orleans at one time.

Three American Woodcock (MW, ML) and two Fox Sparrows (JPG, JH, BM) were also observed, and these, too, were undoubtedly forced into the count area by the icy winds in mid-December. Because of strong northerly winds and cold temperatures during the pre-dawn hours and after sunset, the owling trips produced only one Screech Owl. A Barred Owl was recorded during the day. Despite the recent scarcity of Redheads in the United States, nine males were seen in City Park (RF, DH).

Participants included Brian Donlan, Rose Feingold, Sidney Gauthreaux, Jr. (compiler), John P. Gee, John Holmes, Dorothy Howerton, Mary Lewis, Buford Myers, Mac Myers, Bill Palmisano, Ronald Stein, and Melvin Weber.

ST. FRANCISVILLE: On December 22 ten observers recorded 28,636 individual birds of 97 species on the St. Francisville count. Overcast skies, 48-56 degree temperatures and a northeast wind at five miles per hour hindered the observers to some extent. Despite the weather conditions, several unusual records resulted.

This year several species were recorded for the fourth time since the count began eighteen years ago. These were an American Bittern (TBP, GTS), a Greater Scaup (AT), a Hooded Merganser (TBP, GTS), and a Virginia Rail (TBP, GTS). Twenty-seven Common Gallinules (TBP, GTS, AT, Evans) and Vermilion Flycatcher (AT, Evans) were third records for the count. Three Boat-tailed Grackles and one Sharp-tailed Sparrow (AT) were the second count records since the start of the St. Francisville count. Four Catbirds, 2349 American Robins, and 2004 Brown-headed Cowbirds were the highest number ever for these species.

Participants in the count were Mr. and Mrs. H.A.J. Evans, Dr. and Mrs. George H. Lowery, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. R.B. Moore, Thomas B. Pugh IV, Gayle T. Strickland, Ava Tabor, and Ellen Taylor.

SHREVEPORT: On December 22 the century mark was broken for the 3rd time on the Shreveport count as 12 observers in seven parties tallied exactly 100 species and some 23,433 individuals. Weather conditions were excellent, for the birders at least. Two first records for the count were a female

Bufflehead seen by James Stewart and a female or immature Wilson's Warbler observed by Abner Cook and Pat and Gus Lieber. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, also seen by Cook and the Liebers, was only the third local count record. A count of 33 Eastern Phoebes was more than double the previous high count. Equally interesting was the total absence of the Red-headed Woodpecker, a species reported by seven of the eight parties last year. Tallying was done at the Stewart's, where the counters were joined by Horace J. Jeter, in town for the Christmas holidays but minus all birding equipment.

Participants in the count included Abner Cook, Will Fullilove, Dale Hamilton, Katherine Hearne, Ethel Jones, Bobby Lance, Bob and Nancy LaVal (from Natchitoches), John Lennie, the Liebers, and Jim Stewart.

Welcome, New Members

SUSTAINING MEMBER

Mrs. John C. Ohrt
621 Southfield Road
Shreveport, La.

REGULAR MEMBERS

Mr. C. W. Blank
526 Madison Street
New Orleans 16, La.

Mr. Frank Costley
208 Stella Street
Metairie, La.

Master Scott Gee
6120 Carlisle Court
New Orleans 14, La.

Miss Joan Landry
708 Ursuline Street
New Orleans 16, La.

Mr. and Mrs. G. R. Lieber, Jr.
P.O. Box 1525
Shreveport, La.

Mrs. N. W. Marler
3228 Plymouth Place
New Orleans 14, La.

Mr. J. R. McDermott
307 East Livingston Place
Metairie, La.

Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Orgain
130 Ridgeland Avenue
Beaumont, Texas

Dr. J. H. Sims
4120 Haring Road
Metairie, La.

L. O. S.

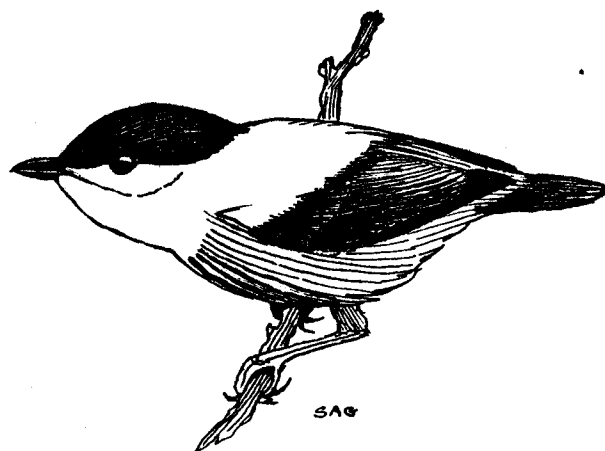
FALL MEETING

1963

On December 1st and 2d LOS members gathered at Cameron for their fall meeting. The weather was fine and 153 species of birds were recorded during the Saturday field trips. The members attended the regular supper at Fred's Restaurant Saturday night, and afterwards enjoyed an excellent film by Dr. Hugh C. Land on his last trip to Guatemala. The one-hour film was titled "Sights and Sounds of the Carribean Lowlands." It showed fifty species of tropical birds including the courtship dance of the White-collared Manakin. He narrated the film that contained a tape recorded sound track that filled in the synchronized bird sounds. He has also shown this film to the Linnaean Society, the Explorers Club in New York, the Florida Audubon Society, the Oklahoma Ornithological Society, plus many showings in his home state of West Virginia. We extend our thanks to Dr. Land for a very enjoyable hour.

With Buford Myers presiding, the following business was transacted at the meeting. Mrs. H. A. J. Evans gave the treasurer's report as of December 1, 1962:

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| Balance on hand April 28, 1962 | | \$404.97 |
| Receipts | | |
| Sale of Check-list | \$9.89 | |
| Membership dues | 58.00 | 67.89 |
| Total | | 472.86 |
| Disbursements | | |
| Ptg. of Check-list | 25.71 | |
| Newsletter Expenses | 28.61 | |
| Bank Charges | 3.28 | |
| New Stamps | 3.68 | 61.28 |
| Balance on hand December 1, 1962 | | 411.58 |
| Special Fund | | 941.09 |
| Total on hand December 1, 1962 | | \$1352.67 |



The slate of officers recommended by the Nominating Committee was unanimously approved. It is as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| President | Miss Mary Lewis |
| Vice-President | Dr. Stephen Russell |
| Secy.-Treasurer | Mrs. H. A. J. Evans |
| Directors | Mr. Randolph A. Bazet Mr. Gayle Strickland Mrs. John Walther |

The President noted that we had again built up a small surplus in the treasury and should consider some worthwhile use of the money. A motion was passed with these provisions: that the Society appropriate from its funds on hand the sum of three hundred dollars to be used for one or more grants for research in specific ornithological projects; award of the grants would be made by a committee composed of George H. Lowery, Jr., Stephen M. Russell, and the President of the Society as chairman. The President noted that this was a new undertaking for the Society, and urged that the project be evaluated at the end of one year. He expressed his belief that it would be a worthwhile undertaking and that the Society would be glad to continue the appropriations in future years.

An overwhelming majority voted to return to Cameron for the spring meeting.

NOTES ON LOUISIANA BIRDS

by
Sidney Gauthreaux

This column will give members information on birding conditions throughout the state. THE OBSERVATIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN AS OFFICIAL RECORDS SINCE THEIR AUTHENTICITY WAS NOT VALIDATED PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

Since the Christmas counts, Reserve has been one of the most productive areas for birds in the state. Ronald Stein on January 11, 1963 saw a Bell's Vireo that was singing. This is the fourth winter observation for this species in the state, and the 2nd time one has been reported from the Reserve area. The first winter record for Reserve was a bird collected by Ralph Cambre January 17, 1959.

A female Black-headed Grosbeak was seen by Ralph Cambre and Ronald Stein on January 9th and 12th. A bird at the feeder of M.H. Hobbs in Mandeville during the beginning of January was reported as a possible male Black-headed Grosbeak. Two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks have been showing up at the same feeder!

On January 6th, Ronald Stein collected a Whip-poor-will, a species that very rarely winters in Louisiana. A Yellow-breasted Chat was seen by Ronald Stein on December 31, in the Bonnet Carre Spillway near Reserve. Another chat was seen by Sid Gauthreaux on the Cameron count. Wilson's Warblers were virtually all over the state this winter. Two were seen by Ronald Stein in Reserve on January 9th. Two were recorded in the lower Mississippi River Delta by S. Gauthreaux on January 28th and 29th, and one was in the yard of Katherine Hearne of Shreveport from November 20 to December 26. Wilson's Warblers were recorded on the Cameron, New Orleans, and Shreveport Christmas counts.

An Ovenbird was collected in Reserve by R. Stein on January 30th, and Gauthreaux reported the species in the Lower Mississippi Delta on January 28th. A Louisiana Waterthrush was seen by Ava Tabor in Thibodaux on the 27th of January, the first January observation reported for the state.

An immature Bullock's Oriole was seen on January 27th by Michael Cadwell, Ava's nephew, at a feeder in the same yard in Thibodaux where Ava bagged this species for the state list over twenty years ago. Two more were reported from Pilottown by Gauthreaux on January 29th. A female or immature Summer Tanager has been appearing regularly at the feeder of Edmund Conger in Shreveport since January 4th.

Notes on L. O. S. Members

G. Dale Hamilton, long time Shreveport birder, retired from the U.S. Bureau of Internal Revenue on December 20, 1962 and intends to devote much more time to birding and other outdoor activities. Katherine Hearne, Ethel Jones, and new LOS members Gus and Pat Lieber of Shreveport attended the Corpus Christi Audubon Society Convention in November, 1962.

Horace H. Jeter reports from San Francisco, "So far no lifers this year and it will take some doing to equal the two dozen I got in 1962. Plan to try again soon for the Spotted Owl. I know the place to go but getting the bird to cooperate is another matter."

Rita Walther writes from Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, "I'd certainly planned to make the Cameron meeting, but an unexpected early engagement with another bird took precedence and our two youngest (Dorothy and David) joined the Walther Bird Watcher Society on that date. Charter member, Margaret (now 2½ years old), and 1961 member, Catherine (now 17 months) make up the rest of the "Society." Both John and I are happy to be back in Cameron Parish and to become somewhat active members in the LOS again." Congratulations, Rita and John. Welcome back!

Of special interest to LOS members since Dr. Hugh C. Land's film presentation at the last LOS meeting in Cameron is his recently published paper on the birds of Guatemala in the January 1963 issue of the Condor. He reports on his study of the birds of the humid lowlands of eastern Guatemala where he recorded 288 resident and 71 transient species.

Audubon Meeting Highlight
Texas Trip
 by
 Ava Tabor

Electa Levi and I left Thibodaux on the 4th of November to attend the meeting of the National Audubon Society to be held at Corpus Christi, Texas, November 10-14. When we arrived at the Refuge we were told that the Cranes had been seen from the Tower the day before, so to the Tower we went. Electa stated she was not going to climb the Tower as she has an aversion to heights. Half way up I let out a whoop for there were three Cranes feeding. I came down for the scope and when I started up Electa was half way up the Tower looking at the Cranes. We set up the scope to watch them, and saw a man in a boat put a small dog ashore. The dog came towards the Cranes and they started to whoop and spread out their wings and jump about like ballet dancers. It was truly a wonderful sight. The dog turned and the Cranes quieted down. We saw many ducks, hawks, and shore birds on the Refuge. Total species were sixty-six.

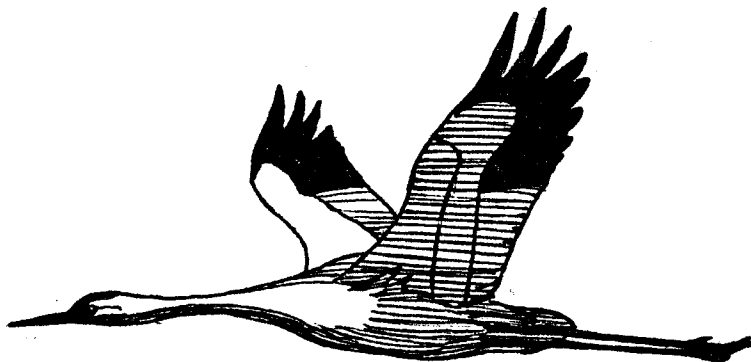
On our way in to Rockport we saw 200 plus Long-billed Curlews on the Air Base, a pair of Caracaras, and several flocks of Sand hill Cranes (1000 plus).

At Rockport we learned that Connie Hager had closed her Rockport Cottages since the death of her husband, so went to the Surf-side Motel. The birding along the Beach was wonderful; ducks and shorebirds abounded and a Hutchin's Goose was spotted ten feet from the car. When we stopped it swam to a sand spit about 25 feet from the car and just stood there.

On November 7th we went to Aransas Pass, Port Aransas, Mustang Island, Corpus Christi, and saw many ducks, shore birds and Sandhill Cranes. On November 8 we went to the Welder Wildlife Refuge. (On Thursdays at 2:00 P.M. there is a guided tour). We saw Turkeys Golden-fronted Woodpeckers, Say's Phoebes, Vermilion Flycatchers and Lark Sparrows in flocks. There were many deer and javelinas. The Refuge is well worth a visit. As we came in that afternoon we met Dr. D. O. and Harriet Wright of Birmingham, Alabama. She is past president of the A.O.S. They were on their way to the valley.

On November 9 we were joined by Christine Berry of Jackson, Mississippi and Boots and Jerry Evans of Baton Rouge. We birded at Goose Island, Rockport, and then went to Corpus Christi where we had the use of the lovely home of Robert Henderson, Christine's cousin, for the meeting. Miss Mary Henderson, ex-Mayor of Welder, Texas, came to be our lovely hostess.

Saturday, November 10th, registration and the opening session were held in the Grand Ball Room of the Robert Driscoll Hotel. Over 1200 persons were registered. Our old friend Alexander (Sandy) Sprunt IV was on the program explaining the Continental Bald Eagle Project. We met many AOU and Wilson Society friends. The annual banquet was the night of November 12th, and on Tuesday nineteen buses left for King Ranch where we had a king size barbecue. On the Ranch we saw Turkeys, White-tailed Hawk, Harris' Hawk, Burrowing Owl, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Curved-billed Thrasher, Pyrrhuloxia, Inca and Ground Doves. The Santa Gertrudis Cattle, Quarter and Thoroughbred horses were magnificent.



On Wednesday Electa and I said good-bye to our group at Corpus and joined Katherine Hearne and Ethel Jones, Shreveport, and Nell Cuthel of New Orleans for a trip to the Rio Grande valley. We arrived in Harlingen that afternoon, stayed at the Sun Valley Motor Hotel on US Route 77. The next morning packed a lunch and spent the day on the Laguna Atascosa Refuge. Our first lifer was Cactus Wren. Then in a field just off the highway we saw all four species of geese feeding together, Canadas, White-fronted, Blues and

Snows. The refuge manager told us that they were having the worst drought in history. Short birds were at every puddle. On the Laguna Atascosa we saw a concentration of 29,000 Redheads. I saw my first Kiskadee Flycatcher and Ethel got up a Green Jay, also saw Curved-billed Thrashers, Cassin's Sparrows and Bronzed Cowbirds.

On November 16 we registered at the Holiday Inn Motel at McAllen, Texas and went to the Santa Ana Refuge. At Mr. Fleetwood's home on the refuge, Green Jays were feeding at every feeder. We saw a Red-tailed Hawk in the dark phase; the hawk appeared inky black with a red tail. Chachalacas were everywhere. We saw many, many ducks in the lake, also Red-billed Pigeons, Inca Doves, White-fronted Doves, Roadrunners, and a Ferruginous Owl in a quaint old Cemetery on the refuge, Golden-fronted and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Tropical (Couch's) Kingbirds, Kiskadee Flycatchers, White-necked Ravens, Verdins, Bewick's, Cactus, and Long-billed Marsh Wrens, Long-billed and Curve-billed Thrashers, Yellow-green Vireos, Lichtenstein's Orioles (Alta Mira), Brown-headed and Bronzed Cowbirds, Pyrrhuloxia and many

others. We missed the Least Grebe at Santa Ana; several persons saw it on a small pond.

Jim Stewart had told us to look for the Least Grebe on the Caliche pits near Raymondville. We left McAllen Sunday, November 18 and found the first pit dry. Katherine Hearne and Nell Cuthel searched the second and found a female with two downy young. The young were streaked and their call was a perfect beep-beep-beep. We would like to know if this is unusual to have downy young on November 18th.

Meetings, Spring 1963

Louisiana Ornithological Society
Cameron, Louisiana
April 27-28, 1963

Cooper Ornithological Society
Austin, Texas
April 18-21, 1963

Wilson Ornithological Society
Charleston, South Carolina
May 2-5, 1963

NEWS?

Send news items and articles
to Mary Lewis, 941 St. Philip
Street, New Orleans 16, La.

NEWS?

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Send art suggestions, cartoons
and birding observations to
Sidney Gauthreaux, Jr., 5934
Peoples Avenue, New Orleans, La.

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