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LOUISIANA
ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



No. 40

Natchitoches, La.

March 10, 1966

REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT

The beginning of a new year of LOS activities is a good time to pause and assess where the society is going. Some changes have crept in during the past year or two. An early spring meeting has become established, at least with some of the members, and a Hodges Gardens meeting attracted additional participants. These meetings plus the two regular outings at Cameron still involved less than half of the membership, however.

Two conflicting views have emerged in the club leadership: one favoring limited activities and informal relationships with little or no involvement by the society in state or national conservation programs; the other desiring the expansion of activities to include not only more meetings but an interest in sanctuaries, youth education, publication, and conservation in general.

When I arrived in the state $3\frac{1}{2}$ years ago and joined the Society, I wrote a few suggestions for the expansion of activities in a letter which appeared in the October, 1963 NEWS. I rather naively supposed at the time that no one really opposed an increase in activities, that it was merely a matter of finding capable people with the time and interest. However, in later discussions, both in and out of our regular meetings, I came to know some members who were opposed to change, which stalemated any action at that time. The major result of my letter

was that I was placed on the treadmill leading to some official position in the club.

Last fall, like an empty coke bottle following the others down the line, I reached the place where I became president. It occurs to me, therefore, that before the lid is slapped on and the bottle is dropped in a rack, I should do a little spouting.

By all counts Louisiana has a very poor record in conservation activities. We have let the last of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker habitat fall to the chain saw without a murmur, though we have known of the problem for 30 years or more. Probably the best sample of the magnificent virgin hardwood that once covered most of the Mississippi flood plain is not in Louisiana but is preserved as a park in southern Missouri. The state bird, the Brown Pelican, has been extirpated from the state. Perhaps there would have been no way of saving these birds but the crime is that the Society did not even mark their passing. Other problems include the fact that the estuarine waters, the major wildlife resource of the state, are being drained into the Gulf by endless waterways and canal systems. We are sitting on the lower end of the biggest sewer system in the world, the Mississippi River, and watching our poisoned fish float out to sea. Our youth uniformly think of the out-of-doors as a place to seek a moving target. The Coyote, Red Wolf, and Great Horned Owl

are vermin to be shot or trapped. I can not help but wonder if we should feel any responsibility for these events and attitudes. Should we be content to go on listing birds at Cameron and doing nothing else?

Though I don't view becoming president as any mandate to impliment the activities I suggested in 1963, I do feel compelled to suggest some of these activities again. The yearly schedule that follows includes some of these ideas, and others can be found elsewhere in this NEWS. Their success or failure depends upon the response of each member. The first items on the schedule designates April as "Write a Letter Month". If you would like to express your views on the philosophy of the society -or- if you have made interesting trips or outings -or- seen some good birds, let us know.

Hugh C. Land

Fall Meeting, 1965, Cameron, La.

Despite late announcements and various conflicts, the fall meeting was well attended and many pounds of shrimp, red snapper, flounder and other delicacies from Fred's Restaurant were consumed.

Mr. Randolph Bazet of Houma presented the program. For the past few years Mr. Bazet has spent many productive hours behind a variety of lenses obtaining some of the best photographs available of Louisiana birds. His commentary on the slides gave us some hint of his enjoyment of photography and of his ingenuity in solving lighting and camera placement problems. I am sure everyone enjoyed the program.

The business meeting brought out that the Club was financially in good shape. A rather shaky president was installed, backed up by a good slate looking something like this:

President and Editor-Hugh C. Land, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Northwestern State College, Natchitoches, La.
Vice President-Marshall Eyster, Professor of Biology, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, La.

Sect-Treas-Mrs. Ralph Bodman, 9555 Jeff. Highway, Baton Rouge, La.

Directors-Sidney A. Gauthreaux, Jr., Museum of Zoology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La.

Robert LaVal, 110 Willow, Homer, La. 71040
 Gayle Strickland, 1744 Brocade Dr., Baton Rouge, La.

Sid Gauthreaux tallied the birds for the day as usual. No records were set but a good 144 were recorded.

List Builders Note

Many members customarily keep track of their bird observations and build a life and a yearly list. As a new year starts it occurs to me that if we pooled our efforts we might be able to build an impressive LOS list. I propose to do this in three categories: a Louisiana list, a U. S. list to include all states, and a world list to include all birds seen. The U.S. list will include the Louisiana birds.

So, if you are a list keeper at all, send your data to the editor. I will handle the compilations and publish the first list in the May NEWS. Even if you don't get out often send in any unusual records you have. The name of the observer will appear next to any species that has been reported only once. Please mark non-Louisiana records with a "U. S." or "W". The validity of records will not be questioned, so please make your observations very carefully. Collectively we should be able to top 300 in Louisiana and 500 in the U. S. There is no limit on a world basis since over 8000 species are available. The leaders and runner up in each category will be published if I receive enough entries to make a real contest.

Just to start you off I have a list of 87 in Louisiana and 135 in the U. S. so far this year. I know many of you can beat that so send in your list.

Wilderness Areas in Louisiana

When we think of wilderness we generally think of snow-capped mountains, tractless swamps, virgin forests, Moose, and Black Bear. However, there are many areas in the south that could be classed as wilderness and yet have few of these characteristics. A half million acres east of the Mississippi are already in the National Wilderness Preservation System and three and a half million acres more of eastern and southern back country can be given this protection, says the Wilderness Society's Assistant Executive Director, H. Rupert Cutler.

As far as I know the Delta Refuge is the only Louisiana area in the state currently in the system. There are certainly other remnants of our original wilderness that are worth preserving. For a "Handbook on the Wilderness Act" write to the:

Wilderness Society
729 15th Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20005

If you have any specific recommendations for wilderness areas in the state contact me and maybe we can get the backing of the society as a whole. If new areas are to be added to those being considered now action must come from local conservationists.

Nest-Card Program

Since January, 1965, the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University has operated a nest-record card program on a continent wide basis encouraging the assistance of everyone. The aim of the program which is similar to one used in Britain (see Mayer-Gross, 1962, Bird Study 9:252-258), is to collect specific data on bird reproduction in a form convenient for statistical analysis.

For this to be a success they need the cooperation of all bird observers in all parts of the continent, particularly the United States and Canada. They also need, because they are certain that regional centers can handle the distribution of data

cards and their return to the Laboratory better than individuals, the cooperation of all bird clubs and other societies whose members make field observations of birds.

The Laboratory will provide the regional center with cards. The observers will record the contents of each nest found on a separate card and make dated notations on the same card for each subsequent visit to the nest. Each card will then contain all the data from a single nesting. While one observation of a nest will be valuable, additional observations over a period of days or weeks will increase the worth of the record. Their goal is to have hundreds, possibly thousands, of cards containing data on each species from all parts of its range. They add:

"We are well aware that there are other local nest-record card programs in this country and in Canada (see Peakall, 1964, Audubon Field Notes, 18(1):35-38), and, naturally, we do not intend to infringe on them in any way. We only hope that they will cooperate with us and help broaden the scope of the whole endeavor. The net result should be the accumulation of far more data on every species than heretofore and the centralization of these data for comprehensive and intensive study, much as is true of the bird-banding program of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. All of the information from our program will, of course, be available to anyone who is interested."

The editor of LOS NEWS has volunteered to act as the coordinator for this program in Louisiana, so if you expect to do any nest watching this spring, even an observation or two of a Mockingbird, send for an instruction sheet and one or more cards now. I have 200 to give away and can get hundreds more. It would be wise to get this material now so you will know what to look for as the nesting season begins.

Bluebird Trail

Probably the most successful Bluebird nesting project in the country is being conducted by the Pulaski County Audubon Society in Little Rock, Arkansas. During

the 1965 season 50 of 50 boxes were occupied at least once with a total of 113 clutches laid. Of 514 eggs laid 366 bluebirds were fledged. This truly is a remarkable record.

The Natchitoches Audubon Society began a Bluebird nesting project last year but the results certainly were not comparable. Many of our boxes were prepared after nesting had started and were placed rather hastily in improbable localities. This year we hope to bring up our average.

Going - Going - Going

More than three-fourth's of continental America's two billion acres was originally in Federal ownership, as compared with less than a fourth of that original holding (352 million acres) in Federal ownership today.

Welcome, New Members

LIFE MEMBERS

Miss Annette Duchain
P.O. Box 431, Shartanburg, S. Carolina

REGULAR MEMBERS

Mrs. Frank Cernicek
4541 Avron Blvd., Metairie, La. 70002
Dr. Ross Partridge
621 Tuthill Lane, Mobile, Alabama
Mr. and Mrs. Crawford Best
3212 Roberta St., New Orleans, Louisiana
Mrs. Judith Solberg
Homewood Farm, Kentwood, Louisiana
Miss Louise Poillon
2233 St. Charles St., Apt. 211-N.O., La.
Mr. C. Louis Debetaz
313 Cedar Crest, Lafayette, Louisiana
Dr. and Mrs. John Melton
7455 Richards Dr., Baton Rouge, La.
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Heully
3585 Ozark St., Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Mrs. J. B. Bernard
301 Beall St., Lenoir, N. Carolina 28645
Mrs. Grace L. Eyster
226 Montaigne Dr., Lafayette, La. 70501
Mr. Vernon E. Robinson
11721 Pamela Dr., Broadview Station,
Baton Rouge, La. 70815

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Strickling
5118 West Bellfort Blvd., Houston, Texas
77035
Mrs. Mayer Mayer
4929 Moore Drive, New Orleans, La. 70122
Mr. and Mrs. Louis T. Adams
807 Rio Grande, Austin, Texas
Eldrid Wayne Tillay
P.O. Box 20112, L.S.U., Baton Rouge, La.
Mrs. Anna Suberbielle
4217 Orleans Avenue, New Orleans, La.
Robert G. Jernigan
1111 Cambonne St., New Orleans, La.

Christmas Bird Counts

Several counts were conducted in the state this year including a new one in the Monroe area.

MONROE

A count was conducted for the first time in the Monroe area. Dr. David T. Kee organized the census which was held on December 31. Accompanied by A. Williams and R. Pfrimmer he recorded 67 species.

Some of the highlights of his list were: Snow Goose (3), Black Vulture (15), Red-tailed Hawk (6), Red-shouldered Hawk (1), Com. Snipe (Many), Least Sandpiper (Many), Red-breasted Nuthatch (1), Rusty Blackbird (Many), Brewers Blackbird (Many) Henslow's Sparrow (Many), Bachman's Sparrow (2).

NATCHITOCHEs

92 species and 35,021 individuals were recorded in the second annual Natchitoches count. As usual the day started in a downpour, but since the rains had ended by 10 a. m. the previous year everyone assumed they would again, and fortunately the assumption was correct. A group of local birders was supplemented by the capable eyes and ears of Bob LaVal from Homer and Jim Stewart from Shreveport. The total of 92 was ten above the previous year and is by no means the limit to be found in the area.

Some of the more exciting finds were: Common Loon (6), Horned Grebe (20), Little

Blue Heron (28), Cooper's Hawk (1), American Coot (11,000), Vermillion Flycatcher (1), House Wren (1), Bewick's Wren (1), Sprague's Pipit (4), Yellow-throated Warbler (2), Le Conte's Sparrow (9), Vesper Sparrow (3), Harris' Sparrow (5), White-Crowned Sparrow (7), Lincoln's Sparrow (4).

SHREVEPORT

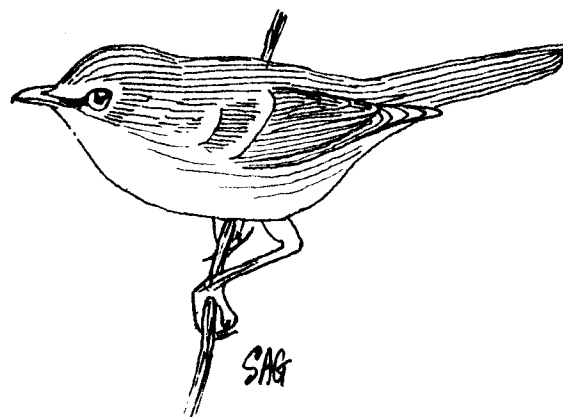
The editor has no report from the Shreveport group, but since he took part in the census he can recollect a detail or two. The total of 94 was below expectations though the group worked hard. This total is not as frustrating as the 99 plus one hybrid recorded the year before. Also last year boat trouble stranded Jim Stewart and Abner Cook in the middle of Cross Lake with only a boat hook for a paddle, and another birder ran off the road while looking at a flock of birds on the telephone wire. The right-of-way was beautified by the removal of one road sign. The count this year produced similar troubles: the boat would not even start.

Shreveport still holds the state record for consecutive counts and their consistent totals of near 100 would be hard to beat anywhere but on the coast. Last year the editor misplaced the good account of their census prepared by Ab Cook (from which the above notes are lifted) until the NEWS went to press. I hope I have not repeated this trick and mislaid their report again.

VENICE

On the 28 December 1965 twelve observers cooperated in the Venice Christmas Count. Three land parties and one boat party managed to beat the bushes and compile a list of 128 species in the hurricane-torn area. Many of the trees in the count area had put out new leaves, but many of the trees were ruined. Last year in the thick vegetation along the levee below Venice, a land party found "dense woodlands with thick underbrush loaded with birds." This year while working the same area I found that most of the large trees had been downed by the hurricane and salt water had

killed most of the underbrush. The northern areas in the count had more vegetation and better birds. Some of the more interesting finds of the count included: Broad-winged Hawk, White-winged Dove, Chuck-wills-widow, Whip-poor-will, Pileated Woodpecker, Wied's Crested Flycatcher (collected by Melvin Weber), Empidonax (sp.), Parula Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Wilson's Warbler, American Redstart, Bullock's Oriole, Scarlet Tanager.—Sidney A. Gauthreaux, Jr.



LAST MINUTE ARRIVALS

REGULARS

Mrs. James W. Bing, Jr.
300 Broadmoor Boulevard
Lafayette, Louisiana 70501

Mr. S. L. Davis
340 Louisiana Street
Port Allen, Louisiana 70767

Mr. E. P. Floyd
880 Chevelle Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

Mr. Martin Floyd
880 Chevelle Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806

Mr. James Steinke
746W Roosevelt Street, Baton Rouge, La.

SEE YOU IN CAMERON

1966 LOS Program

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
April	"Write a letter" month	send to: Hugh C. Land Northwestern State College Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457
*April 1-3	Lake Bistineau State Park meeting, early migrants	Doyline, Louisiana
April 29- May 1	Spring Meeting - the big list	Cameron
**May 27- June 5	Guatemalan tour - a look at the tropics	New Orleans to Guatemala and return
***June 3-5	Offshore trip - breeding birds	To be announced
***August 5-7	Offshore trip - oceanic migrants	To be announced
September 23-25	Hodges Gardens - fall migrants	Hodges Gardens, Many
November 18-20	Fall Meeting	Cameron
December	Christmas Censuses	To be announced

* Lake Bistineau State Park is in Webster Parish in the northwestern part of Louisiana near Shreveport. The area is attractive and with the lake, hardwood and upland pine habitats available a great variety of birds should occur. Early migrants will be present in good numbers if the season is right. In addition the pine woods specialties, the Brown-headed Nuthatch, Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Pine-woods Sparrow, should be available in the area. This is a new location for the LOS as far as I know, and should appeal to birders from all over the state.

We have reserved the group camp for Friday and Saturday nights. Conditions are somewhat rustic and informality is the keynote. Conducted bird walks will be available Saturday. The program Saturday night will emphasize conservation and will be topped off by one of the best conservation films ever produced, "Bulldozed America". A game session will follow the film in a style that the Hodges Garden participants will remember. If you wish to be part of what we hope will be a very enjoyable meeting then fill out and return the form on the next page.

** At a recent meeting of the Oklahoma Ornithological Society I was inveigled by some of the members to lead a trip to Guatemala in early June. I suggested that some of the members of the LOS might also be interested, especially since the Oklahomans might not be able to form a sufficient group alone. We envision 10 to 15 participants, though no number has been set.

The trip would include 7 or 8 days of birding in the Highlands, Arid Interior, and Humid Lowlands of Guatemala. We should be able to list close to 300 species, most of which would be new to U.S. birders. I would make the arrangements and lead the field trips. The cost of the trip would probably be under \$400 including air travel both ways, all meals, lodging, tips, and transportation within Guatemala.

Anyone who is interested let me know as part of your letter in April. I doubt if there will be an overflow of requests but you might write early in case. I have not heard from Oklahoma. Their efforts at getting up a group may fail as in fact may ours. At any rate let me know if you are interested.

*** We are making plans for two offshore trips. In the LOS NEWS in May we will include a form giving more information and asking for a response from interested members. Both these trips will be new for the Society and our planning may break down on one or both. We will let you know.

RESERVATION BLANK - BISTINEAU MEETING

Mail to: Hugh C. Land
 Dept. of Biological Sciences
 Northwestern State College
 Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457

By: March 25

Your Name _____

Address _____

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total Cost
	(indicate number of people)			
*LODGING (\$1.00 per person per night, 60¢ age 18 or under)	()	()		\$ _____
MEALS Breakfast 50¢		()	()	\$ _____
Lunch 75¢		()	()	\$ _____
Supper 1.00	()	()		\$ _____
TOTAL (payable on arrival at camp)				\$ _____

* In rustic cabins, campers must bring their own bed linens, pillows and towels. For those desiring better accommodations modern, well-equipped cabins, which accommodate six, are available on the park grounds at \$8.00 per night. Write directly to: Cabin Custodian
 Lake Bistineau State Park
 Doyline, Louisiana