

THE PELICAN

Information Bulletin

Halifax River Audubon Society

Daytona Beach, Florida

Volume 11, Number 4

January 1966

A hearty welcome to you and a wish for a fine New Year in Florida. Fortunately, our weather in the sub-tropics is conducive to a variety of healthful activity in the out-of-doors. We can enjoy every kind of nature study amid wholesome, attractive surroundings. Our companionship with the birds can be even further enhanced by the thoughtful use of bird baths and bird feeders. Participation in the regular meetings of the society, in the weekly field observation trips, and in other club activities will prove to be an enriching experience.

May you and your friends in nature have a happy, rewarding winter.

F. Beacom Rich, President

Our paid-up H.R.A.S. membership reached 200 in December, and 207 as of January 3, 1966. New Members:

Mr. and Mrs. Angus Reynolds, Flagler Beach, Florida
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Gillette, Dearborn, Michigan
Mrs. H. C. Battey, 710 Butler Blvd., Daytona Beach, Florida
Mrs. Helen Roberts, 710 Butler Blvd., Daytona Beach, Florida
Mrs. H. B. Woods - Please inform Membership Chairman if you know this member's address.

Monthly meeting, January 17: Our two films this month were secured by Henry Dearborn from Association Films, Inc., of Dallas, Texas. The film "AMERICA'S NATURAL WONDERS #2", includes three superb examples of our National Parks:- "BIG BEND" in south central Texas where eroded mountain peaks stand in towering contrast to a strange, stark desert whose flowers might have bloomed in a garden of Eden; "CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE", a long stretch of shoreline where man can study the winds, the tides, the shifting sands, a sanctuary for fisherman and artist; and "POINT LOBOS" southwest of Monterey, with rugged coastal splendor of surpassing beauty, rarely photographed. Our second film "WATER BIRDS", is a spectacular "Walt Disney True Life Adventure" film. It is a picture of rare beauty, alive with excitement and rare glimpses into the behavior of seaside and marshland feathered creatures - climaxed by a striking musical bird ballet of the air. Some of us remember this last part from Disney's "Fantasia". For this January meeting Ethel Monroe has consented to tell us of some highlights of a three-weeks birding journey last September, in place of the slide program at 7:00 P.M. See more about this on last pages of this "PELICAN".

FIELD TRIPS ahead: Mark your new calendar for half-day trips, all on Friday, on January 7, 21, 28 also February 4, half-day and February 11, all-day. The only Saturday planned, before we next remind you about dates, is all-day to Silver Glen Springs on January 15.

December Field Trips and Christmas Count
by George S. Murray, Field-trip Director

A half-day trip on December 4 to the Johnsons' lovely home on Spruce Creek by way of Tomoka Farms road and Pioneer Trail produced 77 different species observed by 18 people. Our group, while listening to the notes of a flock of Goldfinches, was surprised to see a good sized buck deer crossing the pasture lands in the distance. At the Johnsons' home we were treated to the sight of a Pileated Woodpecker teaching her youngsters how to get a drink of water from a water faucet. Another

attraction was the orchid house, where Fred Vickert named 6 or 7 varieties of orchids in full bloom. Phalaenopsis or Moth Orchid, Dendrobiums, Brassavolanodosa or Lady of the Night, and the beautiful Cattleyas were some of the showier ones. This day was a mixture of Aves, Flora and Fauna.

An all-day trip to the Welaka Fish Hatcheries on December 11 was quite successful. One hundred people-watchers were observed by 35 bird-watchers. On the Dupont Road we saw two very large groups of Tree Swallows skimming over the meadows and pine trees. At the Hatcheries many Pipits, and three female Bufflehead ducks swimming behind the chief of the harem made a beautiful picture. A solitary Sandpiper, Dunlins, Rusty Blackbirds, and Snipe were added to our day's list. On a side trip, Roy and Jean Hudson reported seeing a Broad-winged Hawk. Fenn Holden reported a Junco in his backyard - this was a welcome addition to our season's list.

December 18 gave the highest count for any half-day trip to date; the total was 98 species. One group south to McDonald's Farm and the Inlet, the other group to the Marl Pits and Ike's road northward. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Snipe and White Ibis were seen at McDonald's Farm, and at the Inlet at low tide we saw a few Dunlins, Willets and two Marbled Godwits. The other group saw many smaller species and spotted the first Hermit Thrush of the year. Twenty-seven people took part in this trip. Only three cars together made the southward half-day trip on December 31. Lovely weather, 77 species, but full-day trip had been changed, anticipating small turnout on this date.

Our 1965 Christmas Bird Count on December 28th

Total of Species 122 - One less than our total of December 1964

Six groups of birders covered areas in the North, South, West and East, from a central point on Nova Road. A group in the Southern portion near the Inlet turned in an estimated 5,000 Black Skimmers. Some birders on the beach were watching all the gulls go by, 1,912 were counted. Twenty-one Black-crowned Night Herons seems to be a new high in numbers. Seven hundred Lesser Scaups, 100 Ring-necked Ducks, and 5 Bufflehead Ducks were observed. Tremendous flights of Herons and Egrets were seen at earliest light passing over the Seabreeze Bridge, flying North along the Halifax to the day's feeding grounds.

Of the land birds the Robins were the most numerous, with a count of 2,250. Starlings came in second with a count of 1,020. The Bluebird has shown an increase over last year, the count being 125. Out of a possible 11 species of Sparrows that can be seen in this section, one group leader saw 8 species. Other species identified were the Short-billed Marsh Wren and the Golden-crowned Kinglet. Twenty Cedar-Waxwings were seen this year compared to 2 last year. A total of 405 Goldfinches were observed. One Junco, 1 Green-winged Teal and 1 Turkey were added to the day's list.

At the end of the count at 5:00 P.M., the total number of species seen was 122, and the total number of birds 18,475, by 19 people who participated. These details and more are to be carefully reported to the National Audubon Society, and included in the tremendous combined bird census for all of North America, published in the April number of Audubon Field Notes.

December 28, 1965
Evening, and home again.

Dear Friends. Your editor, all this long day, had a share in the Christmas count for our area, being assigned to comb an "in-back" section which most of you will probably never examine, so here are notes upon same. Three of us managed to find fifty species and count well over a thousand individual birds there, but numbers mostly due to flocks of gulls and of fish crows, and robins and starlings flying over us. It is a tract where only a few decades ago there were large orange groves, miles of evergreens, and few people. We were in the rich lands back from the river in Holly Hill, which, when a tiny town, got its name from the wealth of various shining holly leaves and berries growing there, along with live oaks and magnolias. The fields where "the strawberry man" of our childhood grew delicious fruit, and cane for making syrup and moonshine (bringing him to grief) were not, then covered with buildings and trailers, pavements and shopping centers. The canals which drained that swampy back country, as for many more such miles along the Halifax, were for long years a part of the lush scenery, and a setting for birds galore, not for the thick scum, rubbish and tin cans adorning them today. Save for some clean, neat pig yards, which no doubt must soon be banished, along with many surviving negro cabins with small yards crowded with cherished shrubs and small trees, block after block is being closely filled with housing. Black and white; government and not, schools, apartments, houses larger and smaller, noisy machines are crowding them in, along with pavements and sewers. No trees and shrubs spared, and no parks for play, so, three days after Christmas streets were alive with vacationing children busy with new bikes, skates and balls. Any small copse, still unscalped, with paths however rubbish-strewn, was their play-place, too. We dutifully instructed one ignorant blond urchin with a Christmas rifle in one hand and a beautiful male towhee dangling from the other.

In the section we are picturing for you few nooks and crannies are left for the wildlife. However, the big barrow pit behind the airport provides still unpolluted fresh water for hundreds of ducks and coots, unfrightened by frequent loud roars so close by. The steep slope which is the back of the race track made a weedy feeding ground for dozens of fluttering goldfinches. Near there, the road circling the former garbage dump, though closed to cars, still makes a rather good, long birding walk. Do not expect, any longer, to find the worm-eating warbler or yellow-crowned night heron by the canal along there. Running alongside a sanitary fill, though a defunct one, that forlorn canal is naturally the outlet for sewage from the fast-growing trailer park, just down the highway. Returning, this evening of the count, to the space and quiet of river and ocean, we breathed sighs of release.

SOME BIRDING EXPERIENCES IN WESTERN EUROPE

by

Ethel Monroe

There was an autumn chill in the air as the Florida Audubon Society party of 29 stepped off the jet at Prestwick, Scotland, in the early morning of September 7, 1965, after an overnight flight from New York. A chartered bus was waiting, and the group was off on a three-week tour of Britain, The Netherlands and Belgium - purpose: to enjoy the bird and plant life of these countries. Adherence to this purpose

was to become rather difficult as the tour progressed through country rich in history and celebrated in song and story, and many a sigh was heard as old castles, ruined abbeys and various other national monuments had to be passed up in order to keep on schedule.

The bird list started off with the unromantic and commonplace rook. As the bus meandered southward through the beautiful and incredibly green Scottish countryside huge white patches of gulls - turning out to be mainly mew, lesser black-backed and black-headed - were busily feeding in meadows among the sheep. Farther along great flocks of iridescent black and white lapwings stood motionless in bare fields. Jackdaws and magpies, stock doves and wood pigeons appeared. Singing in roadside hedges and woods were the charming little European robin and the chaffinch, and playing hide-and-seek among the leaves were the blue tit, the great tit and the coal tit. Mute swans floated on quiet ponds and streams as the road wove through the Bobby Burns country, along "Sweet Afton" and by the Brig O'Doon.

Mr. Mason sought to avoid the larger cities as much as possible and overnight stops in small towns were made at old English inns with names such as The Blue Boar, The Green Dragon, and The Great White Horse. Country villages were a delight to the eye. Centuried-old thatched stone cottages, immaculately kept, were surrounded by well-clipped lawns and neat gardens which were a riot of gorgeous bloom.

Four days were pleasantly spent observing and identifying the typical English birds of the roadsides; the shores of the Irish Sea; and the shores of Windermere and Derwentwater and other lakes in the storied Lake District. Progressing through western England and eastern Wales, we came to Hereford, the starting point for visits to five bird sanctuaries.

The British are zealous conservationists and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds plays its part in maintaining fourteen reserves in England, five in Scotland and two in Wales. In addition, The Wild Fowl Trust has its Severn Reserve, directed by Peter Scott, at Slimbridge.

The tour first took us to Slimbridge. Here is the largest collection of ducks, geese and swans in the world - over 2000 birds of 100 different species and races. Most are pinioned and unable to fly, but about 200 are full-winged and look incomparably beautiful when they choose to take off and circle the grounds. Wild ducks by the hundreds, such as mallards, pintails, teal and widgeon, and also Bewick swans and Canada geese are also attracted to the area, and many live and breed there. So numerous are the birds at the reserve that it has been found necessary to warn visitors not to step on them.

Editor's note: Our September tour with Mrs. Monroe and the group of Florida Audubon members and leaders will be concluded in the February "PELICAN."

Please write or phone the Editor with news items, protests, or comments. Mrs. R. M. Branch, 711 N. Halifax, Daytona Beach, Florida, 32018. Phone 253-0384.

Volume 11, Number 5

February 1966

February 21, monthly meeting, usual place, usual time. For our program, Henry W. Dearborn has ordered films from the New Zealand Embassy, Washington, D.C. They show some of the strange aspects of New Zealand -- spectacular contrasts of cities, sub-alpine and tropical flowers, hot lakes among snowfields; unusual waterfalls and lakes. Excellent views of New Zealand's birds, description of the bush country, and the story of Maori legends are all included in these films. LARGE WATERBIRDS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW, by Roy Hudson, will be the subject of the opening instruction period at this meeting, at 7:00 P.M. Pictures from the Holden Slide Collection will illustrate the program. The period will be far more helpful if every member will do a little "home work" and read the guides on cormorants, ibis, pelicans, egrets, herons, terns and gulls.

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY: March 21, being also our Annual Meeting, will be a dinner-meeting and, as last March, at The Castaway; 2075 S. Atlantic Ave., Daytona Beach, at 6:00 P.M. Tickets are \$2.50, and when buying them please see that your preference is noted - baked ham or half of baked chicken. They will be available at February 21 meeting, also Willard S. Whiteman, 222 N. Hollywood, Daytona Beach, has consented to handle mail orders to be received no later than March 14. Please enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. The 135 members present last March enjoyed the dinner and meeting from all reports. This year our guest speaker will be William (Bill) Dyer of Union City, Michigan, at present resident naturalist at Florida's Babson Park Nature Center, not far from the Bok Singing Tower. An expert photographer of wildlife, he especially delights in the difficult finding and recording of rarest-est warblers and their activities all over Michigan. His fine film for us, "The Secret Spring", will show some of these. The annual meeting is in March when we can count on fullest attendance. Plenty of room at The Castaway. Let's all meet there.

Attendance of around 1300 at each of our first three Nature Theater programs at Peabody. (Remember our whole scattered membership is 233). Putting some of these so close together is not our choice, but National Audubon handles a difficult job, scheduling speakers so much in demand all over Florida. Our last two will be March 12 and 19, and are both sure to be excellent.

Membership at the present time is 233. The following new members have joined since the last issue of the Pelican:

Mr. Arthur R. Adams, 2050 John Anderson Drive, Ormond Beach
 Miss Ilse Frank, 71 Brooks Drive, Ormond Beach
 Dr. J. E. Fraser, 1803 S. Atlantic Avenue, Beacon Motel, Daytona Beach
 Mr. and Mrs. Morris L. Heath, Middleburg, New York
 Mr. and Mrs. Worrell Holby, 510 Collins Street, Ormond Beach
 Mr. and Mrs. George R. Single, 10 Silk Oaks Drive, Ormond Beach
 Mrs. Arvilla Titterington, Ormond Hotel, Ormond Beach

FIELD TRIPS AHEAD: February 18, full-day, inland; February 26, full-day, up St. Augustine way; March 5, full-day, Southward; March 11, half-day. Recent field trips have been chilly indeed. Next Pelican will give details of special finds and of interesting species we may expect to be seeing soon.

FLORIDA AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING
January 13-15, 1966

Serious illness cancelled one car, but the other took the long road to Lehigh Acres, a remarkable and flourishing development east of Fort Myers, to represent HRAS, giving annual check and report for President F. Beacom Rich. About 300 registered for the very interesting meeting. (There are now 5,000 members, but many of those not even in the U.S.A., much less Florida). Very glad to tell you all that Al Pratt has safely recovered from an emergency operation on New Year's Eve. We support the State organization with a voluntary check, while resisting loss of independence through becoming one of its chapters, though many HRAS members belong also to State and National Audubon, as individuals. The keynote of the whole series of programs was "Fight! Work and fight to save Florida beauty and wildlife - and especially waterways of the state and country from pollution and the bulldozer." Excellent food and lodging, speakers and films and exhibits, and management. Highlight for this reporter was an all-day field trip on Friday, three charter bus loads, with expert guides for each, and stops at Fort Myers Beach and Corkscrew Swamp. Lunch, spread in the open, on a fine day, was at Estero, a settlement and gardens still closed to the public, in private ownership but being evolved into a State Park, like Washington Oaks, south of St. Augustine.

* * *

Alan Cruickshank kept the lead in the Christmas Count at Cocoa, with 197 species. Two rivals were very close: Freeport, Texas, 193; San Diego, California, 192.

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SOME BIRDING EXPERIENCES IN WESTERN EUROPE
by Ethel Monroe

(Severn Reserve, Slimbridge, England, continued) As explained to us by our guide, Mr. Shakespeare, the Trust was formed to foster the conservation of the ducks, geese and swans of the world which, as a group, are especially threatened by the spread of civilization, and the aim is to raise public interest in them by education and by researching to their modes of life and their requirements. The nene, or Hawaiian goose, is one of the species that the Trust has helped save. This species had been reduced to the low point of 30 in 1951, and now, bred in captivity at Slimbridge and in Hawaii the population has been raised to about 400. (Incidentally, the nene wandering around the grounds were so tame that they were almost a nuisance, demanding to be fed and leaping up and grabbing anything we had in our hands). The pinioned birds were segregated in watery pens by continent of origin, but the full-winged species (about 34) could be found in any pen. A point of special interest was the area where the ducklings and gosling were reared. This is done under foster mothers - hens and bantams - because many ducks and geese are rather poor mothers in captivity.

Cambridge was our next destination, and the route took us through the Cotswold Hills and Oxford, where we stopped for lunch, and to The Lodge at Sandy, headquarters of the Royal Society. We were welcomed to the sanctuary by Mr. Peter Conder, the Director, who had opened the place on this Sunday afternoon for our benefit. We were divided into two groups to bird along the trails of the 102-acre reserve. The attractive area consisted of hilly woodland, heaths, open glades and a pond. Here we found a variety of birds, among them the green woodpecker, the chiffchaff, the green finch and the redpoll. On the lawn and in

the gardens surrounding The Lodge were the amusing wagtail, the now familiar robin, and the rarely-seen gold crest and song thrush.

Next, to Cley Marshes Reserve on the North Sea, where we could bird from "hides", or permanent blinds, placed at strategic points in the marsh. These are weathered frame buildings, equipped with benches, and with openings at eye-level through which to observe the birds. Some of these blinds in various sanctuaries were large enough to accommodate our entire group of 28 persons - the two-story job at Minsmere, for instance. This marsh was alive with ducks, waders, shorebirds and gulls. Parasitic jaegers, their Arctic skua, patrolled the sea just beyond the beach. Feeding in marsh reeds were the rare bearded tits, which would rise from the reeds and disappear among them again in a flash. Skylarks made their first appearance, along with whinchats, wheatears and seed warblers.

Havergate Island Reserve, reached by boat from Orford, is a low-lying island surrounded by seawalls which enclose several large lagoons and has the only colony of avocets in Britain - 48 pairs rearing 52 young in 1964. This colony is the one that was shown on the film that Mr. Dearborn presented at one of the monthly meetings last year. Along with the avocets, the greenshanks, the redshanks, the stints, the knots and the ruffs were there in great numbers. Five widely-spaced hides on the island provided superb birding. Besides, they gave the weary slogger a chance to catch his breath.

Minsmere Reserve, visited another day, is a wonderful area of 1500 acres, also on the North Sea. It comprises four different types of habitat: heathland, holding stonechats, wheatears and stone curlews; extensive oak woods, with all three species of woodpecker, most of the warblers, nightingales, yellowhammers and the common songbirds; seashore with migratory seabirds; and a vast reed marsh. Seventy-nine species observed at Minsmere made it the best birding day of the tour.

After two days of sightseeing and shopping in London, the party flew to Holland for four days' birding on Texel Island, during migration one of the outstanding birding spots in that country. We were met at the airport by Mr. M. J. Tekke, Secretary of the Netherlands Ornithological Union, who was to be our guide and started off for Texel in a chartered bus. This Sunday afternoon drive gave us a glimpse of Hollanders at leisure. Bicycling seemed to be a popular form of recreation and families were out in force, husbands and wives often on tandems, with the baby in an attached basket, and tots able to navigate on their own on bikes suitable to their size. A rare sight was a rider pedalling along in wooden shoes. This parade presented no traffic hazard as paved paths are provided for bicycling, paralleling highways and city streets.

A part of the highway to the ferry was atop the 21-mile dike, constructed since the war, which holds back the North Sea and has converted the former Zuider Zee into what they term a "dead lake". Thousands of acres of "polder", farmland dredged out of the sea, is one of the results of this miracle of engineering.

Birding on Texel Island exceeded all expectations. It was there we saw the most spectacular sight of the tour - 50,000 oystercatchers. This was Mr. Tekke's estimate of the flock resting on the beach and later taking to the air in a huge black cloud. Spoonbills were sighted, as well as eight species of ducks, three of geese and most of the shorebirds and waders.

A visit was made to a duck-banding station on the island, where from a hide hundreds of ducks were observed in an enclosed fresh-water pond. This, we were given to understand, was a very special privilege, and we went in small silent groups to the hide, preceded by a guide bearing smouldering punk to keep the ducks from being scared off by human scent. Intriguing were the little yellow "duck dogs" which help lure wild ducks from a larger pond through a channel into the decoy pond. It was explained that the ducks' curiosity cause them to follow the dogs.

Next by bus to Belgium through the dairylands and flower farms of The Netherlands. Count Leon Lippens, a noted ornithologist, was our host at Knokke, Belgium, a small modern resort city on the North Sea, near the Dutch border. As mayor of the town he had planned a civic reception at the Town Hall for the party on the evening of our arrival. On this occasion he honored Mr. Mason with a plaque in recognition of his achievements in the fields of conservation and ornithology.

"The Zwin", the bird sanctuary we visited during our stay, is Count Lippens' own personal property. It is a salt marsh of about 300 acres and its bird and plant life are unique in Belgium. Breeding birds of the area include shelducks, oystercatchers, avocets, waders of all sorts, lapwings, gulls, larks, stockdoves, etc. A colony of white storks makes its home here. In large aviaries and ponds in the gardens of the sanctuary Tea Room are assembled more than 500 birds of a hundred different species to enable visitors, and especially field ornithologists, to get better acquainted with the local birds.

At the end of the day's tour of "The Zwin", Countess Lippens served tea at her home to the bedraggled group of marsh-mushers, and from vantage points on the lawn we had the pleasure of observing in a pond below myriads of wild geese and ducks, attracted to the pond by daily feedings.

The remainder of the visit to Belgium included a tour of the quaint and lovely medieval city of Bruges, with Countess Lippens as our guide. Like Venice the old city was built on canals, and a boat trip on the winding waterways revealed the beauty and stability of the ancient architecture.

An overnight stay in Brussels, with a drive through the Forêt de Soignes, one of the largest beech forests in Europe, ended the Natural History Tour. From Brussels the group flew to Paris, the departure point for home. My own trip continued for another month, through France, Spain and Portugal - but that's another story.

Volume 11, Number 6

March 1966

Our February meeting had capacity attendance, and an especially good program; first Roy Hudson's excellent selection and showing of water-bird slides, and then the two remarkable color and sound films of New Zealand. The whole entranced audience must have been longing to go and see that country and its odd, attractive birds.

This is to remind you that the March meeting will be at 6:00 P.M. on the 21st at The Castaway on S. Atlantic. Dinner tickets \$2.50 and space will not be limited, but by the 14th we must know and specify the number of diners and their choices, of chicken or ham. Willard Whiteman will have tickets in the Peabody lobby at the Underwater Screen Tour, Saturday the 12th. In spite of two conflicts on the 21st, our crowd will probably be around one hundred, though missing a few choice members with other obligations. Election of officers after dinner, and feature color film, "The Secret Spring" by William Dyer of Michigan Audubon Society, pictures made way up North, there, before he began photographing Florida birds.

Two days earlier, Saturday March 19, don't miss our fifth and final Nature Theater film for this season, "Delta of the Orinoco", which promises to be excellent. You remember Robert Hermes.

FIELD TRIPS AHEAD: George Murray, trip director, gives notice that after the half-day trip on March 11, there will be a whole series of full-day trips, all on Fridays. Please correct your April calendar (printed last Summer) as we have had to make changes. Saturdays mean heavier traffic, and more families and fishermen at our picnic spots, and Silver Glen Springs is off our list. Plans are for all-day trips, all on Fridays: March 25 to Welaka, April 1 to Osteen Marshes and Per-simmon Hammock, April 8 full-day, toward Orlando, April 15 to Rock Springs, April 22 to Juniper Springs, and April 29 to Vilano Marsh.

We have lost many favorite birding places, for example: Bethune Point (pools all filled in), Reed Canal pond (filled in), Tomoka Farm Road near the dairy farm (ditches all choked, no more snipe), our once secluded Pine Ridge Cemetery cleared, bare and birdless, recently. But to turn to the brighter side, about now, right around home, we should begin to see Martins soaring over their waiting houses, hear the "wheep!" of the crested flycatcher, and some night, both chuck-will's-widow and whip-poor-will calling, when they pause, going through. Besides the few warblers we have found, by careful searching all winter, new warblers, starting with Parulas, will be showing up, and more vireos, and various tanagers, and orioles and buntings and flycatchers, also our hummingbird, one species only, the ruby-throated. Norma will; all excited, stop the lead car when she hears the first summer tanager, before anyone sees him. Just so, she usually halts the procession, rolling slowly past likely pine territory, when she catches the sound, so clear to her, of Brown-headed nuthatch or Pine warbler. Then we all quietly climb out and gather to hear and watch such busy and hard to find little specials.

Right here, your editor, as much as anyone, needs a stern reminder about knowing when to keep quiet. Old-timers as well as newcomers should realize that quick moves and raised voices will startle birds into flight or hiding just as our leader, Connie Ekdahl, is closing in

on a likely sighting, or gently calling birds to us. Some of the curious small things, like chickadees, kinglets, yellowthroats and cat-birds, will come very close to him for us all to watch. It is a great temptation, on any beautiful morning, when cars draw aside and stop, for us to take a side jaunt, afoot on path and roadside, to enjoy a good visit, forgetting to lag to the rear to chat - or stay back by the cars. Some prefer that, anyway, being there for sociability as much as for birds. A battery of field glasses turned in one direction is a silent signal to approach slowly, no talk but a whisper. But an aimed spotting-scope is far away enough from the object to make voices unimportant, and right then we certainly prove it.

Contributed item:- Overheard as two birders, listening for birds, walked by a group of others who were talking loudly together: #1 - I hear a people! #2 - I can't hear a peep!

Membership is 240 as of March 9. New members welcomed into the Association since the last issue of the Pelican:

Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Holmes, 4210 S. Atlantic Ave., Daytona Beach (Don Mills, Ontario)

Mr. and Mrs. B. G. Hubbard, P.O. Box 5021, Daytona Beach,
Mrs. Marguerite Lawson, 7 Ocean Shore Boulevard, Ormond Beach

FIELD NOTES

By

Margaret Branch

Winter weather never stopped us. A group of cars set forth every week, though cold, rain, wind and grayness made some turn back or cut trips short. Though not too perfect, every trip yielded some rewards, and now the most difficult season is over, we hope. Picnics have again come up, the last four in a row, for this Pelican to report. George Murray hands us the hard, bony structure of statistics. Terse, and in no mood for expanding, this time, George is.

February 11, 39 observers in 14 cars. Route 4 to Kissimmee. Species total 101. This was new territory for our group. Ira Weigley, field trip leader for Florida Audubon Society in the whole state, kindly met us there and led us to many birds. The outstanding ones were Red-cockaded woodpeckers, numbers of common gallinule, and caracara. We missed the sandhill cranes all hoped to find there, a beautiful day, but very windy, over 200 miles round trip and picnic facilities not up to demands of our large, pampered H.R.A.S. caravans.

February 18, 38 observers in 10 cars. Starting Bellvue Avenue and Route 92 to Lake Woodruff Wildlife Refuge and Alexander Springs. Species total 99. This, too, was new territory for all of us, when Kent Myers, manager of the Refuge, was our leader there and ferried all timorous walkers over the wettest, muddiest parts of the mile-long narrow road leading to ducks. His station wagon also took non-walkers all the way, or fatigued ones on the return. By lunch time fine rain was more than threatening. The few cars that went on to Alexander Springs had good shelter for the picnic, but little birding except for tufted titmice and yellow-throated warblers coming for crumbs close to our tables, as well as numerous small white-bellied "cat" squirrels to amuse us. Unusual birds: Limpkin, a King Rail, green-winged teal. Connie Ekdahl spotted the Rail.

February 26, 32 observers in 8 cars. AlA, Washington Oaks, Matanzas Park, Anastasia Park, the lighthouse. Total species 104, including, most unusual, European widgeon, first spotted by Dorothy Dearborn. These statistics must have been difficult to collect. The whole route today was like a weaving pattern, start to finish, with some cars going on, some turning back, some stopping, and losing the rest. Most of us decided that planned Anastasia Park would be too exposed to the strong North wind and tarried for lunch at picnic tables in pretty, sheltered, new Washington Oaks park. Tour leaders have extra problems when our route lies Northward and many members quite sensibly wish to shorten it greatly by falling in at Ormond or even Flagler Beach. But fitting people into car-lots at the starting point is difficult enough and to spare. "Tag, when we pass the Happy Whale, about 8 A.M.", should answer any phone call from these north-end dwellers (says your hard-hearted editor, not your soft-hearted tour director). Outstanding species: Sharp tailed sparrow (1). One party saw white pelicans far in the distance from Crescent Beach bridge. Two oystercatchers made a noisy and dramatic close-up appearance for a few who were scanning distant shores for them with a 'scope at the lighthouse beach. Driving the long beach North of Matanzas Inlet, one carload watched seven willets striding along in a line where waves flattened on the sands.

March 5, 30 observers in 7 cars. Titusville marshes and ponds. Total species 90. Ninety were too few for such promising time and territory, but poor birding weather. Sprinkles of rain as we started South at 7:30 A.M. soon gave way to sun and wind, strong wind, from North and West. Most of the ducks we had hoped to see were never even glimpsed. Probably they had started their Spring migration on those recent warm winds from the South. Some could have been there in hiding as many smaller birds surely were. One thrilling sight was a wheeling cloud of 50 to 60 Fulvous tree ducks which had been quite hidden back of the reeds and bushes until we startled them out. The scopes clearly brought up American widgeon and Blue-winged teal, and as in our Halifax River, there were scaup and mergansers. The lucky ones who can spy and hear these elusive and faintly calling warblers were elated to spot first Parulas, where there were fragrant orange blossoms and dozens of various flitting and hard-to-see little birds back in the trees and tall grasses out of the wind. Other special finds were Soaring eagle, white pelican, Black-necked stilt and American bittern. As on one other trip to that territory, observation of a certain Eagle's nest called for fighting off mosquitoes. Largely due to the strong wind they were little bother up to then, but at that Eagle spot most of us who started to pile out hastily retreated and closed car doors and windows as mosquitoes were waiting to attack in swarms. Our picnic spot at Titusville was swept by the wind; it kept some in the cars for lunch. One car-load investigated and drove on New Smyrna Beach on the return trip. Before that, nearly blown off their feet, they found that we are not even allowed to glimpse the Coast Guard beach, now fenced away from fisherman and all "unauthorized persons". The South Causeway at the mainland end was all big machinery and to be blocked for some time with a "Bridge Out" sign of large letters. No New Smyrna birds were braving the wind except the larger gulls, brown pelicans, and a few turnstones. Yes, every new try brings its own rewards, but so seldom the time and the place and the right birds all together!

Please report sightings of unusual birds, to be noted in the April Pelican, to Margaret Branch, editor, phone 253-0384.

Note: If interested in Mexican tours ask Thelma Acosta who has detailed information on several.

COMMENTS ON TWO RECENT BOOKS AT THE LIBRARY, by Roy Hudson.

This is not a conventional book-review of the subject matter of these two recent publications. Space here would not permit that.

WANDERING THROUGH WINTER by Edwin Way Teale will instruct and delight winter residents and visitors in the south, as most of the 20,000 mile journey was made below the snow line. Otherwise, there would not have been much to write about. I believe that we have read about everything that Edwin Way Teale has produced, and it is all well done, entertaining, and packed with incidents and narratives with a basis in a knowledge of nature. Endowed with consuming curiosity, usually diligently and very successfully followed, Teale leads his readers through mountains, swamps, deserts, beaches, forests and prairies, travelling by foot, on snowshoe, by canoe, automobile, airplane, mud boat, snow weasel, by any means that will enable him to get and prove his story. In this, which is the fourth of his books on the seasons, he picks up and reviews many items from the other trips, totalling some 100,000 miles up and down and across America, over the past twenty years. During the same time, we have covered much the same mileage, and have been to practically all of the places covered in his books - even where he finally ends up in the snow-and-blizzards of the north. And, as we have done, Edwin and Nellie Teale avoided the super-highways and took to the dirt roads. Especially interesting was their "detour" to one choice spot in southern Arizona, near Patagonia, where they lingered in a stream bed lined with high cottonwoods, and with abundant bird life. There they met our friend, young Bill Harrison, and they also tell of spending time with the legendary birder, now nearing 80, Connie Eagar of Rockport, Texas. The whole book is delightful reading.

HOME IS THE DESERT by Ann Woodin, is not a travel book, but is based on a single location near the mountains outside Tucson, Arizona. Her husband has a full-time job as Director of the famous Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, and she has a full-time job managing a home which includes him, their four sons, a German shepherd, a black-and-white cat, a procession of bobcats, an occasional wolf or coyote, peccary or raven, an owl or two, many snakes, lizards, tarantulas, ground squirrels, and one alligator. Ann Woodin writes of all of these, and the flora and fauna of the countryside, knowledgeably, wittily and poetically. The book is well illustrated. While Edwin Teale is a master of narrative, he leaves you to do your own philosophizing and to draw your own conclusions. Ann Woodin, equally good at telling a story, also delves into an interpretation of some aspects of life based on her experience in the desert. In substance she says: "We stepped across the line from animal innocence to recognition of self a long time ago. And we accept as natural the flight of an animal we surprise, unaware that this is the root of our unbearable loneliness. Then when a bobcat rushes up to you from behind, purring loudly, and rubs against your legs, you feel an enormous elation, as if you had suddenly been reprieved. Together you sit on the hill, watching the sunset and in the beat of both your hearts is the beat of all life since the beginning. If we can feel part of this natural world, of the cycle of life, surely we will feel less isolated. To some, nature is unessential, as only in man's world can they feel sentient and alive. And to others, nature is a fearsome thing; to respect animals is to deny man's dignity. But unless a man respects other life, he cannot respect human life, not even his own. Here in the desert, calm and composed, I can alleviate the unscratchable itch brought on by current events and the social scene". Different as day and night, both of these books are revealing of what can be attained in a continued search for both pleasure and meaning in life.

THE PELICAN

Information Bulletin

Halifax River Audubon Society
Daytona Beach, Florida

Volume 11, Number 7

April 1966

SAYONARA from President Rich: We have now come to the official end of our active season as an association. The year has been another successful one because of the dedicated services of our capable officers and staff and the loyal support of our members. Monthly meetings and programs, skillfully arranged and guided field trips, and our largely attended Audubon Wildlife films have marked a fine accomplishment of the Halifax River Audubon Society.

National and state-wide conservation movements have been generously supported both morally and financially. The society was recently invited to take the lead in launching a new bird sanctuary at Ponce de Leon Inlet. Mr. and Mrs. John L. Johnson dedicated their four-acre estate, "Tanglewood", through the Florida Audubon Society, for a permanent wild-life sanctuary. The actual ceremony was a part of the regular monthly meeting of the Azalea Garden Club. Your president was guest speaker, and he had an opportunity to present news of conservation and of the purposes of the Audubon Society. Mrs. James W. Bozeman, chairman, arranged the program.

We hope the summer may be a happy one and rewarding in your nature study. Please return in the fall for another gratifying season of participation in the Halifax River Audubon Society.

Letter from an ex-president and founder:

March 14, 1966

Halifax River Audubon Society

Friends:

I do thank you for sending me THE PELICAN which I always read with interest, and which causes me to compare, in mind, what the old HRBC did in the Twenties. You are so far ahead of us then that comparison is hardly the word. But perhaps it may be said that we pioneered. As I remember, we averaged, in those pre-Columbian days, about 40 per meeting - 4 cars was a huge Saturday AM field trip. You do see things that we never saw! But there are more pairs of eyes at work. For instance, in all my years in that area, I did not hear a Whip-poor-will until I moved to Lake Winnemissett. And so on. Do keep me on the mailing list.

/s/ R. J. Longstreet

Address: Wesley Manor d-21, Jacksonville, Florida 32223

Program for Monthly Meeting, April 18: Henry Dearborn, generous to the last meeting, which he will be missing, tells us:- The program for our meeting includes three films from the National Audubon Society. "White Splendor" is an exciting story of the life of the Egrets. "Wings on the Wind" features many species of large birds gracefully flying in search of food, safety, and solitude. Slow-motion camera captures the dramatic movements of the Man O'War, Great White Heron, Reddish Egret, Flamingos and many others. "The Gooney Bird". The comical gooney bird or albatross, takes possession of runways at Midway Island base, to the frustration of the Air Force. (Editor's note: This one will make your sides ache from laughing, while you forget how really cruel U. S. invasion has been to these birds.)

The slides program at 7 P.M. on April 18:

PLUMAGE DIFFERENCES, due to Season, Age, Sex. By Roy Hudson.

Many of you who read the Pelican will have gone north before time for the April meeting, and will be seeing birds in mating plumage, rather than the often dull winter garb. Whether in the north, or watching some of the immigrants pass through Florida, it will be interesting to check your Peterson, or other, field guides and study these changes. One old bridge tender remarked of all birds overhead, "Them's seeguls". It isn't quite that simple - for many were terns. Check color of legs, bills, and note that practically all of the terns have full black on top of the head, though patterns differ. Especially noticeable are the changes in black-bellied plover and ruddy turnstone.

Of the land birds, the seasonal changes are especially obvious in the male warblers. Check the black-throated blue, myrtle, bay-breasted, Cape May, black-poll, palm and hooded. Sex differences are necessary to know in the very familiar, such as the cardinal, but also in the red-winged blackbird, brown-headed cowbird, boat-tailed grackle, the orioles, goldfinch, painted bunting, rufous-sided towhee, and the house sparrow.

Practically all birds brighten up or change radically during mating and nesting period. Note the starling! This is Spring, and the birds must be trying to outdo the flowers in celebrating.

FOUR FINAL FIELD TRIPS as per latest schedule, all full-day ones:

April 9, Saturday, to Meade Gardens, Orlando; April 15, Friday, Rock Springs; April 22, Friday, to Juniper Springs; April 29, Friday, to Vilano Marsh.

Trip director George Murray reports that our present total for our field trip days this season is about 195 species and likely to pass 200. (as last year) by April 30. We checked:

March 11, North and inland, only half-day, 12 observers in 3 cars, 77 species. March 18, South and inland, half-day, 20 observers in 6 cars, 98 species. March 25, Welaka picnic, 30 observers in 8 cars, 96 species. April 1, Osteen Marshes, 28 observers in 7 cars, 91 species.

Your new officers are already hard at work, and preparing for next Fall's activities of the H.R.A.S. You will be getting the calendar and the first Pelican about October, for, however scattered some workers are, certain others, to be thanked later, will see to carrying on at home.

The annual meeting and dinner at The Castaway Beach Motel on March 21 went off very well, though, as set up, a little slow and crowded for 133 diners. Bill Dyer's pictures were lovely and not to be missed.

FIELD NOTES
by Margaret Branch

Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they singe,
And see the fresshe floures how they springe.
Ful is myn herte of revel and solas.

(Chaucer)

"O wind, that howleth all night long", after all these weeks, why did you have to keep on blowing and intrude so strongly to shorten our lists for March 25 and April Fool's Day? The sun shone brightly, and Welaka and Mims were two beautiful trips, but the more ethereal observers were nearly blown away - not to mention picnic cloths and

paper cups. And 'scopes, set up, trembled to blur views across the marshes and lakes of 50 Caspian terns at rest together, a whole solid river bank of White pelicans, or the Black-necked stilts busily feeding. Most happily, Lopez Fish Camp had not only Eagle and Osprey, soaring above, but a wealth of waterbirds in its ponds along the road. Outstanding there, on April 1, were the Shovellers, swimming and feeding, and the 16 glossy Ibis at the edge of the mixed company, which someone, or the 'scopes too near, scared up. They circled up and around, all as one, to be counted, and then settled down once more, darkly prominent. "Now that April's here" (This is the Spring - recalling old familiar poems) the weekly birding trips start out and return in full daylight, even warm sun, and how can real birders bear to miss them, just to enjoy that extra morning hour in bed? Soon 6 A.M. to 10 A.M. will be their best of the day. Most exciting migrants are showing up right now, which the Branch car and the Dearborn one, two of the year's "regulars" out of six or seven, will be missing as they are migrating westward and northward all too early, and so will the dependable Scribner car soon be gone. Up! Up! Good drivers! To the bridge before 7:30 A.M.!

Morning of April 2 a Chuck-will's-widow startled from the ground near the Halifax River, swiftly flew to the North against strong wind, and Barn swallows were darting singly on their northward way over the beach.

Enroute to Welaka on March 25, seven cars paused on Dupont Road. The search for the Red-cockaded woodpeckers, where they were nesting a year or two ago, was finally rewarded. A pair were most obliging about being observed by all. Our new National Geographic book of birds says that they use the same nest cavity each year until the dying pine stops exuding resin. Strange how they must have their doorway surrounded by the sticky stuff - and to learn that the red-breasted nuthatch always carefully decorate theirs with the same, brought bit by bit in the tip of the bill, all around the opening, in a dead stub or a post or even a birdbox.

Lucile Norton's camp on the bank of the St. John's was where we were invited for our picnic on the Osteen Marshes trip. She is librarian of the small public library in Geneva where her home is. Anyone having spare copies of natural history books, especially on birds, could send them to Geneva Library, Geneva, Florida, and know that they are badly needed and most welcome.

* * *

The present membership is 245. New members since the last issue of The Pelican are:

Mrs. Frederick Bullwinkel, 1224 S. Peninsula Drive, Daytona Beach
Miss Carolyn Block, Richmond, Virginia
Mr. Gordon W. Block, Big Rapids, Michigan

Other departures planned besides those mentioned in "Field Notes" are: After mid-April, Richs and Hudsons. After mid-May, Ekdahls and Holdens and Bergers (for Europe) and Monroe for the West and Hawaii; June, Acosta and Walker (Europe and farther, joined for Montreal sailing by Shields from New York City). Mid-August (and how sensible not to miss the lovely months here, meantime) Murray and McCormick (for Europe and beyond.) These and other adventurers are counted upon to return safe and sound, and to report some colorful details via The Pelican which says farewell, with this April number, until Fall.

Margaret Branch, Editor

In order to more precisely define the classes of membership and the membership year, the Executive Committee proposes the following changes in Section III of the By-Laws. Please study these changes and be prepared to discuss and vote upon them at the regular April meeting of the Society (Last monthly meeting until next Fall).

The present By-laws read as follows:

Article I - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES.

Section 1 - The society's membership shall be classified and shall pay annual dues as follows:

- a - MEMBERS - (\$1.00) Those who because of location, or reasons cannot or do not wish to take a very active part in the society's activities.
- b - ACTIVE MEMBERS - (\$2.00) Those who do plan to take an active part in the society's activities.
- c - CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS - Those, regardless of their degree of activity, who wish to contribute \$5.00 or more toward the cost of carrying on the society's work.
- d - HONORARY MEMBERS - Those who shall be elected by the society in recognition of outstanding service in the promotion of the society's objectives. Their membership shall be continuous from time of election and there shall be no annual dues for them.

Section 2 - To remain as it is

Section 3 - The Membership year shall run from October 1 to the next September 30. Application for new membership and payments of dues before March 1 shall be credited to the year ending with the next September 30. Dues paid after March 1 shall be credited to both the society year just ending and to the following full membership year.

Proposed changes would have the by-laws read:

Section 1 - The society's membership shall be classified and shall pay annual dues as follows:

- a - MEMBERS - (\$2.00) Those who plan to take part in the society's activities, such as monthly meetings, and/or field trips, and to receive "The Pelican".
- b - CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS (this item is simply renumbered)
- c - HONORARY MEMBERS (this item is simply renumbered)
- d - PELICAN SUBSCRIBERS (\$1.00) Those who because of location, or other reasons cannot or do not wish to take part in the society's activities, but who wish to keep in touch through the Pelican.

Section 2 - To read as at present time

Section 3 - The Membership year shall run from October 1 to the next September 30.

THE PELICAN

Information Bulletin

Halifax River Audubon Society

Daytona Beach, Florida

Volume 12, Number 1

October 1966

→ "If you would know the song of the land
You must look and listen and understand."

Don Blanding

Warm greetings from your Vice-President to all 245 members of Halifax River Audubon Society. As many of you know, our President, Beacom Rich, is ill in New York, and I have been asked to take over his duties until the regular election of officers. As I already have the responsibility of the Screen Tours, and it would be too much for one person to do both jobs, I will ask different ones to take over my duties in connection with the latter. If the work is spread around it will not be a burden to anyone.

Conrad Ekdahl, Vice President

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS: You will recall that the By-laws were changed last Spring to redefine the types of membership as follows: Members (\$2.00) - those who plan to take part in the Society's activities, such as monthly meetings, and/or field trips; Pelican Subscribers (\$1.00) - those who because of location, or other reasons, cannot or do not wish to take part in the Society's activities, but who wish to keep in touch through The Pelican. New Membership Application Cards have been printed, defining briefly these types of membership as well as Contributing Membership. Please, every one, fill out the enclosed card completely, including your Zip Code, clearly indicating the type of membership you wish, and mail it promptly to the Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 5474, Daytona Beach, Florida, 32020.

During the Summer we have enrolled two new members: Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Amberg, Ormond Beach; and have lost through death the following five members: Mr. Glen Dicker, Dr. Harvey W. Funk, Miss J. Bernette Hallowell, Mrs. Angus Reynolds and Mr. Arthur Kennedy. We lost our friend in Tangerine in June - Ray Moody - who arranged our Zellwood and Duda trips. We shall miss her.

Mrs. Alvin R. Pratt, Membership Secretary

As you will note on your program, the first meeting is Monday, November 21, at 7 P.M. Roy Hudson will give his usual half hour of bird identification. After the short business meeting we shall see three films: "Bulldozed America", "Sea Turtles of Florida", and "Feathered Aristocrats". Later in the season Hazel Walker stands ready to show pictures and tell of her fabulous trip this Summer with the International Audubon Society on a troop ship in and about the islands north of England. Our season is late in starting because 30-12 members are attending the ^{Florida Audubon Society} State Leaders Conference on Grand Bahama, October 19 to 24. The first trip is November 4. During the Summer Chet Childs and George Williams produced this lovely program, though neither was supposed to work, they volunteered. Members please do volunteer to your interim president if you can help on Screen Tours, bird trips or at meetings. Help is needed badly!!

SUMMER BIRD NEWS. There have been so very many Willets on the beach - among the bathers - in late August and September. Twenty-seven were seen between Granada and Seabreeze in one day. The High Bridge Loop drive has been interesting with 27 Phoebes on one wire in August, and in the mud flats just beyond the bridge one King Rail. Three Virginias and various Clappers were seen daily. There was one dead tree where 6 Anhingas held daily council, and another with 4 Little Green Herons. Nearby were 2 Wood Ibis and 19 White Ibis. One evening a Barn Owl flew into a palm tree on the east side of High Bridge. On another a Barred Owl was seen near Folkes Pond. Four Sandhill Cranes were seen west of Port Orange on the Tomoka Farm Road.

Gary Moore wrote that Flamingos have been seen in the mangrove flats near Oak Hill, the part that will be in National Seashore Park some day. We wonder. Has anyone any comments? There have not been the long lines of darling Brown Pelicans riding the thermals along the beach this Summer. Instead of 40 to 60 in a line, there has only been an occasional 7 or 8. So Marjorie Woehr has prepared the following survey for us:

According to a report in the August, 1966, Florida Naturalist, the Brown Pelican has been declining in numbers along the shores of Florida and adjoining states. It is almost unknown now along the coast of Louisiana where it is the state bird. A decrease in the size of Pelican groups flying over the beach has been noticed this year. So, on September 11, Keith and Nancy Whitehouse took me around Pelican Island (just south of the Port Orange Bridge) to study the nesting colony there. The island is about one acre in size, and was covered with families of Pelicans. The young, as large as the adults by now, still have the dark head. We watched as the immature ones fed on pre-digested fish regurgitated by the parent from its crop into its pouch. The adults open their great beaks, and the young stick their heads in to help themselves. The larger they grow, the farther and farther in they go for their meals until their heads and necks are pushed far within the parents' capacious maws. A passing boat flushed literally hundreds of them, adult and immature, to circling above the island. Being sociable, the Pelicans also allowed colonies of Herons, Cormorants, and Egrets to build nests on the island. We saw young and adult Common Egrets, Snowy Egrets, Cattle Egrets, and Cormorants. There were also two Great Blue Herons, one Louisiana Heron, and one Black-Crowned Night Heron (which we had seen there last year). There were no Little Blue Herons, Green Herons, Yellow-Crowned Night Herons, or White Ibis on the island; although I have seen both adult and immature of all these along the river near my home, which is one mile South of the rookery, all Summer. Has anyone else any Brown Pelican reports?

Marjorie Woehr

Good birding, you all.

Elizabeth McCandless
for
Margaret Branch

Volume 12, Number 2

November 1966

And which strikes did you run up against this Summer? Now that nearly all of us are safely back in our Halifax area, the unexpected difficulties are fading in memory, but there were plenty of them for so many who were determined, by air or by sea, to travel afar. Those who drove, however, found highways ever broader, smoother and faster, all over the U.S.A., higher into the Western mountains, and even extending over the Inter-American Highway into other countries "below the border."

The fame of that Summer week's boat trip taken by Acosta, Shields and Walker along the coast of Scotland, has spread all over this country and many others. Imagine! Nine hundred birders, including dozens of distinguished foreign and U. S. ornithologists on that ship, and making exploring trips ashore! At a monthly meeting, perhaps in January, we are to see pictures and hear tales of that experience and the travels that followed in Ireland and Scandinavia. Also, the PELICAN hopes to print some account of all this and to relate how the Vicherts carried their 'scope, even by air, to see Western birds, and how Ethel Monroe was wafted clear to the West Coast and the northward length of California by friends, and then by air to a whole month in Hawaii. Our friend Rae Moody saw Ethel safely off by plane to the start of that long motor trip at Dallas, and drove back to Tangerine to be stricken, within a week, by a rare and always fatal meningitis. The two families, side by side, had dwindled to one owner in each home. Surrounded by bird feeders and a small citrus grove, Rae sold her crop on the trees and devoted most of her days to her Mother who is now nearly one hundred years of age. When several carloads go to Duda Farms on an upcoming field trip, and lack her generous and expert guidance there, this deserves a thought by all.

* * *

Several of ours who had counted on Grand Bahama, and had reserved months ago, were obliged to cancel, but four carloads drove to West Palm Beach and next morning made part of two plane loads for the short flight to the island.

* * *

GRAND BAHAMA ISLAND CONFERENCE by Gretchen Farr

Nearly 150 members of the Florida Audubon Society met on Grand Bahama Island on October 20 for the Fall Conference and Workshop, four days of meetings and birding. From the Halifax River Audubon Society twelve attended, which was the second largest local group there. These were: Beatrice and Alvin Pratt, Hazel Walker, Velma Hayes, Nan Thompson, Thelma Acosta, Elizabeth McCandless, Fred and Dorothy Vichert, Lillian and Frank Crosby and myself.

The meetings were most interesting, some were serious and some had a lot of fun interjected into them, especially the membership awards and reports. Beatrice Pratt took over for Chester Childs, who unfortunately could not attend and whom we missed, and gave a splendid

report on our system and programs for field trips. There were many there who found it hard to believe that we had well-attended weekly trips for at least six straight months.

The birding was excellent due to a strong wind which blew many migrants off course and onto the Island. It had its sad moments, when we looked at 109 little dead birds, lying on a table, killed by crashing into a T.V. antenna. We also realized what a small number that was compared to the total that are lost in migration. Among those found were 39 Gray-cheeked Thrushes. In Massachusetts they are a rare bird but seven were reported there last Summer. They had bred on Mt. Greylock. Most breed in the Arctic and migrate to South America. One of us held one, still alive, in her hand for some time, its little eyes so bright, but unlike some in shock from hitting home windows, this one was not saved by such soothing warmth.

An immature Pied-billed Grebe gave us some laughs. It flew into a car, was stunned and when it came to was brought into the meeting, where it let anyone near it know by pecking at them, that it did not care for where it found itself. Of course, it was released.

For me, and others, seeing the Kirtland's Warbler for the first time was a highlight of the field trip to the "Pinelands". We also saw the Olive-capped Warbler there. In all, I added fourteen new species to my life list. Many added Sprague's Pipit, which I did not see.

There was a shipwreck, and Elizabeth McCandless had to be rescued by the Coast Guard. She, alone of our group, joined a very early morning shelling expedition on a Chinese junk, which went hard aground on a reef.

As his wife says, Alvin Pratt was "Papa" to the group, for which we thank him. We know that Chet would have been gladly, too.

And there was a lot of worry---worry about what the bathroom scales would tell us when we got home. The food at Grand Bahama Hotel was so good and there was so much of it, it was hard to use self restraint.

The landscaping and flowers around the grounds were lovely, the warblers so tame they came up on the porches as we sat there. I noticed a man with a telescopic camera having a very hard time getting far enough away from a Cuban Emerald Hummingbird to get its picture. The bird was so intrigued by the shiny camera it hovered a few feet in front of him. Swimmers, including two underwater ones, found time for the gorgeous salt water pool and the bay, and one carload visited Freeport at the far end of the island.

All in all it was a most pleasant meeting and it will be held at Grand Bahama Island again next year. Go if you can.

* * *

For this issue that conference is the most recent news. Our three officers attending were: Thelma Acosta, Recording Secretary; Beatrice Pratt, Membership Secretary; and Nan Thompson, Treasurer. Ask them for more details of the workshop part, won't you? They resisted the outside lures and kept minds on the business of all the meetings better than most. They bring us the message that we all should work hard as a group, and singly, for conservation of wildlife and its habitat, and to save and stop ruination and pollution of water resources, for the wild things and for our very own lives.

We only wish we could have as dynamic a young teacher as Mr. Tucker with opportunity and energy to enlist youth in this district as he has done in his.

At this time we have no further notice as to trips and programs than you already have received in your Calendar and the PELICAN mailed with it. So, we repeat, to remind you:

On that Monday evening come well before things start at seven; if you can, for the first monthly meeting, November 21. Slides first, shown by Roy Hudson, of things to be looked for fairly near home. Short business meeting and then two or three films which we listed before. "Bulldozed America" will show vividly our bounden duty to search for some ways to save the beauties of Florida (so fast being erased) in spite of the "majority rule" pushing "development", and all the politicians who yield.

Have you mailed in your dues and that made-out card? Please!

Saturday, November 12, will be an all-day field trip, starting at 7:30 A.M. from the parking and meeting place on the bridge near the City Library, to Titusville; the one on Friday, November 18, northward to Matanzas and Vilano Marsh. (Here's hoping that for St. Augustine the tides are favorable); Saturday, November 26, a half-day is scheduled, but Saturday, December 3, is a very long one again to Rock Springs and Duda Ranch inland; and on Friday, December 9, another long one clear to Cape Kennedy. To complete December, two more half-days and an all-day. The Christmas Count may fit in there somewhere with the Holidays. It was not so simple for Childs and Williams, in the hot Summer, making up the Calendar and getting it printed and ready for us all. They had help from Murray whose two and a half months' European trip did not begin until August, missing some of the hottest weather here, and those awful travel strikes; also, incidentally, finding ideal weather abroad, even in England.

The National Audubon Society's 62nd Convention and annual meeting is being held in Sacramento, California, this November 11-16. For most members this means only Saturday, November 12 - Tuesday, November 15, of which Sunday and Tuesday are all-day field trips. Two choice evening programs feature Pettingill's and Peterson's latest films of wildlife of, respectively, New Zealand and Galapagos (which we may hope to have here in a year or two). Notice the way that Florida Audubon's annual meeting now follows this pattern? Even to far out post-convention trips. National's will be to Hawaii, Florida's to Jamaica, following Miami meeting in January. The Jamaica trip can accept very limited number so return reservation slip and check promptly.

THE BEACH, These Days (Before the Cold Wave)

On Monday, October 31, George Murray and Ike Merrill spotted two Marbled Godwits around the bend at The Inlet (now called Ponce de Leon, used to be Mosquito). There were Dunlins and many small Semi-palmated Sandpipers there, too, where the mudflats and backwaters attract some birds from the main beach. Low tide in early afternoon, Sunday and Monday, made a ride on the wide, smooth sands, from the Inlet to the Silver Beach approach, away from the sun, just about perfect. Birds were busy all along the way, at the water's edge or out beyond, including some small Plovers, both Semi-palmated and Piping, as well as Black-bellied ones, 3 Snowy Egrets, lifting their yellow feet, and at least 50 Willets, mostly striding along through the shallow wavelets. Three Ospreys were diving successfully to fly off with fish, and some of the willets flying up to disclose sharp black and white pattern. Most numerous were Sanderlings and Turnstones, except at the Inlet where a great number of terns have arrived, and only a few gulls. A few days earlier we stopped the car to study a few Caspians and eight Sandwich Terns resting with many Royals. Pleasant to have them back, the beautiful, graceful terns, and all the others, of course, including numberless added Ring-billed Gulls, soon to arrive, but it means we see no more little Least Terns until these big things have gone back northward by April, and left the beach free for them. Then they may dart past, or even hover, within three yards as we swim. For that we already look forward to April.

* * *

Our Nature Theater series does not start until January at Peabody Auditorium. Fred Ackerman has already turned in over \$100 for series tickets he has sold. Connie Ekdahl reported at the end of last season that attendance on the five Saturday evenings averaged 1300. Satisfactory in all ways, the series profited even better than the preceding year, from fifty less season tickets sold, but 450 more single adult admissions at 80 cents. In spite of which, we love season-ticket buyers who all may bring children free. National Audubon has raised the charge to us considerably, but our price remains the same for each series ticket for five first-class moving pictures, with first-class lectures, not sound track, \$3.00 for each adult, half-price for students. We know of a certain High School Science class which trickled in last winter because it was an assignment (only perhaps for extra credit?). Some bought single student tickets, more than one night, after the program had begun, but so did many adults. Luckily, there are a goodly number who find H.R.A.S. doings preferable to all else, in spite of weather, and accordingly buy series tickets.

Margaret Branch
Editor

THE PELICAN

Information Bulletin

Halifax River Audubon Society

Daytona Beach, Florida

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DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING: On Monday evening, December 19, try to get to Seabreeze United Church (Tourist Church) before 7:00 P.M., not to miss Roy Hudson's half-hour slide program. Then, after a short business meeting, comes the motion picture which he secured for us after seeing it this Summer - A Naturalist in Williamsburg. The very early-American naturalist portrayed was Mark Catesby who lived in Williamsburg, Virginia, for many years. The nature photography is by Charles and Julie Hotchkiss. You may remember that first and excellent picture of our Nature Theater (Screen Tour) series last season which they made and presented, called "Teton Trails".

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS: Trip of December 9 (bring lunch) is to Cape Kennedy where there may or may not be any birding spots still spared by all the developments in that place. You will have found that it is, again, to Titusville for a picnic place at the little park just before the Causeway, because the park where we used to lunch at Cape Canaveral is no more. The remnant still left, for our last picnic there, was pitiful and also happened to be flooded at the time. December 16 and 30 being each a half-day will take routes depending on the weather, and on how many cars the weather and the holiday season combined bring forth. If you wish to start from the bridge meeting-place promptly at 7:30 A.M., you should call Connie Ekdahl the night before, between 7:00 and 8:00 P.M., to find out what route he plans. Ditto for January 13, half-day. Saturday, January 7, to Welaka Fish Hatcheries is too good to miss, and with a warm building for noon lunch if you like to sit inside. Drivers who wish route directions, to feel safe from getting lost, please call George Williams.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER: Membership fees are due in September of each year. Those of you who have not yet renewed your membership have been receiving monthly copies of THE PELICAN. This issue, however, will be the last one mailed to delinquent members. Please mail your renewal in today! Memberships paid to date number 183. New members who have joined since the Spring are:

Mrs. E. J. Aeschliman, Daytona Beach
Mrs. Fred Armstrong, Daytona Beach
Mrs. Isabelle P. Barbee, Daytona Beach
Miss Clara Bragdon, Daytona Beach
Mr. Kenneth Eggleston, Ormond Beach
Mrs. Mildred A. Maier, Daytona Beach
Mrs. George Riddler, Daytona Beach
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Schwab, Ormond Beach
Mrs. Warren C. Taylor, Daytona Beach
Miss Janet Toombs, Ormond Beach
Mrs. Grace M. Wright, Daytona Beach

FIRST FIELD TRIPS OF H.R.A.S. SEASON.

On November 4, 31 observers fitted into eleven cars (leaving behind several unused at the starting place on the South Bridge), and the day's combined total of bird species observed was 81. So, we begin working to beat last season's total of 199 species (as reported at

the final meeting on April 18, and counting only field-trip days). The first hundred are soon in, even 150; then slowly we add new birds, until March and April migrants appear.

This first trip was a full-day one to Mead Botanical Gardens, now property of the City of Winter Park. It reminds one of the new State Park, Washington Oaks Gardens, on our way to St. Augustine. Wild and planted trees and shrubs intermingled and overgrown, Mead is great for birding, while Washington Oaks is fast being trimmed and combed and planted to flower beds and, like the Johnson place at Matanzas, smoothed for the public - spoiled for the birds. Nevertheless, we would like to have all three places much closer and visit them often. Scouts please note? And tell us of other finds. Guano River looked rather like one, but it is pretty far to go, lacks facilities, and is full of fishermen. As of November it is also for hunters who reported 22 wild hogs shot there on opening day.

Trip 2, to Titusville on Saturday, November 12, had a rather hot day. Only 6 cars went, but 101 species of birds were listed. Eleven different ducks, some in great mixed numbers, were found in two separate locations, Glossy Ibis, an Eagle, Osprey, close-up of a handsome pair of Hooded Mergansers, best of all a flock of 40 White Pelicans. Following the white shell roads off main highways, and walking narrow weedy tracks, after leaving the cars behind, resulted in our long list of species of birds and some spectacular wild flowers of the season. The seaside goldenrod especially was like a fence of golden spikes along many ditches. And Connie Ekdahl was happy to find the last pretty lavender bloom, topping several already in seed, of a wild flower new to him and to all, the seaside gentian, which our flower-book says is only "of South Florida...chiefly near the coast".

VISIT TO CEDAR KEY By Elizabeth McCandless

Cedar Key is quite an experience for the Summer birder. By some good fortune, the National Wildlife Refuge claimed the islands off Cedar Key before the developers did. Entering it is like being transported backward to the 80's and 90's. There were 700 people as residents then. Today there are 750, but there is a modern motel for folks like us. Fishing is the only industry and there are fish in abundance as evidenced by the water birds. For birders, fishermen and artists, Cedar Key is heavenly. Those seeking other pleasures should stay away.

Both Black- and Yellow-crowned Night Herons were abundant in the saline shallows, and Sora, King and Virginia Rails kept them company. Dunlins were a dime a dozen. Boaz Wadley took us out in his covered fishing boat around Seahorse Island, Snake Island and Cedar Key. There were more Osprey nests than we could count on Seahorse Island. They were built rather low over the water with one parent always on guard and many babies' heads showing. Cormorants were everywhere perched on dead mangroves. Suddenly one had a white head and a crooked beak. We had come upon a young Frigate-bird, -- then there were many white-breasted females and the fierce males with their red pouches, but we

saw no nests. On one shallows, a Louisiana Heron was spreading its wings to make shade, then gobbling the small fish that sought safety in that shade.

Cedar Key was covered with White Ibis nests. All day long the parents fly back and forth in small V formations to gather food for the young. Late in the day we were at a small airport nearby and watched these Ibis returning home. Then they flew in larger formations of about 75. For two hours we watched the sky "twinkle" with a dozen of these formations continuously in sight and finally concluded that there must have been 10,000 birds. The undulations of their flight were poetry in motion. To us it looked like bird heaven.

* * *

TWO UNUSUAL BIRDS Noted by Margery Woehr

On Saturday, October 1, I sighted a strange-looking bird as I stood on our patio looking across our branch of the Halifax River to the island directly across the way. It looked like a usual Red-winged Blackbird, singing from a bare branch silhouetted against the sky, except that its head looked white. I quickly ran into the house for my binoculars. Through them I could clearly see his yellow epaulets. As Peterson's Field Guide says, he was "absolutely unmistakable. Often, when at rest, the scarlet is concealed, only the buffy or yellowish margin of the red patch being visible." I could also see his bill open when he sang his "konk-la-reee or o-ka-leeee" the last note high and quavering. But his head was definitely white. I simply could not believe my eyes nor ears, even while seeing and hearing him. He was suggestive of a miniature Osprey, without the black patch through the cheeks. In fact, as though for comparison, there perched an Osprey in a tree about 200 yards from him. Of course, the Osprey was much larger.

I watched the Red-winged Blackbird through my binoculars until he flew away, a full five minutes or more. I have not seen him since. I wonder if anyone else has seen this sort of mutation in this species?

Just one week later, on Saturday, October 8, as I was reading the morning paper, I heard the familiar loud, clear distinctive call note of a Robin from the island across the river from our house. Again, I quickly grabbed my binoculars and tore out onto the patio, scanning the trees in the area of the call. How frustrating it is to hear it so near, and yet not be able to spot it. But I thought, "I'll keep looking as long as I keep hearing it, because I know it's there, and I know it's a Robin." And again I was rewarded by perseverance---he came into view with his gorgeous red breast. There was nothing unusual about him, except the date. This is the earliest I have seen a Robin down here in the Fall, since we moved here 3 years ago. Other years I have seen only one or two around Thanksgiving at the earliest, and not in numbers until around Christmas or even after the first of the year. I wonder if anyone else has seen Robins this Fall?

* * *

Birds on Grand Bahama:

The combined bird list of that mid-October Grand Bahama stay was 139 species, including a fantastic number of Warblers (28), many of those only temporarily blown off course in migration and probably glimpsed by few of the crowd. Several mentioned the abundance and tameness of Palm Warblers, the numbers of Black-throated Blues, the little Black-faced Grassquits, and the Cuban Emerald Hummingbirds, also the curly-tailed lizards on the warm walk near the pool. Some birding was possible, with all the surrounding greenery, from a golf cart. Besides ones already mentioned, a few of the most unusual listed were: Zenaida Dove, White-winged Dove, Rufous Hummingbird, Red-legged Thrush, Thick-billed Vireo, Olive-capped Warbler, Kirtland's Warbler, Bananaquit, Stripe-headed Tanager and Greater Antillean Bullfinch.

NOTES:

Some good for conservation has come from industrial expansion. In Baytown, Texas, the Humble Oil Company created three large lagoons to aerate water. Hundreds of swamp birds moved in and Humble has now declared the area a bird sanctuary.

Hooded Warblers were seen about this area on April 5 due to alert by Thelma Acosta who found them in Pine Ridge Cemetery on that day with several other migrating species. The time of the Live-oak Catkins, Rose Block always reminds us, brings exciting migrants. Sometimes their stays are brief. Those early morning are lovely, too, for daily searching.

On the evening of November 11, someone watching the sunset over the river saw and heard 5 Black-crowned Night Herons, very noisy, first seen for some months past, where they roost in huge liveoaks by day.

On November 15 one observer who has been missing field trips reports that she was recovered, and enjoying a view of the sky without binocular, when a ragged V formation of Anhingas - estimated at 40 - flew past, so close that females' distinctive pattern was visible.

Mrs. Ralph M. Branch, Editor
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