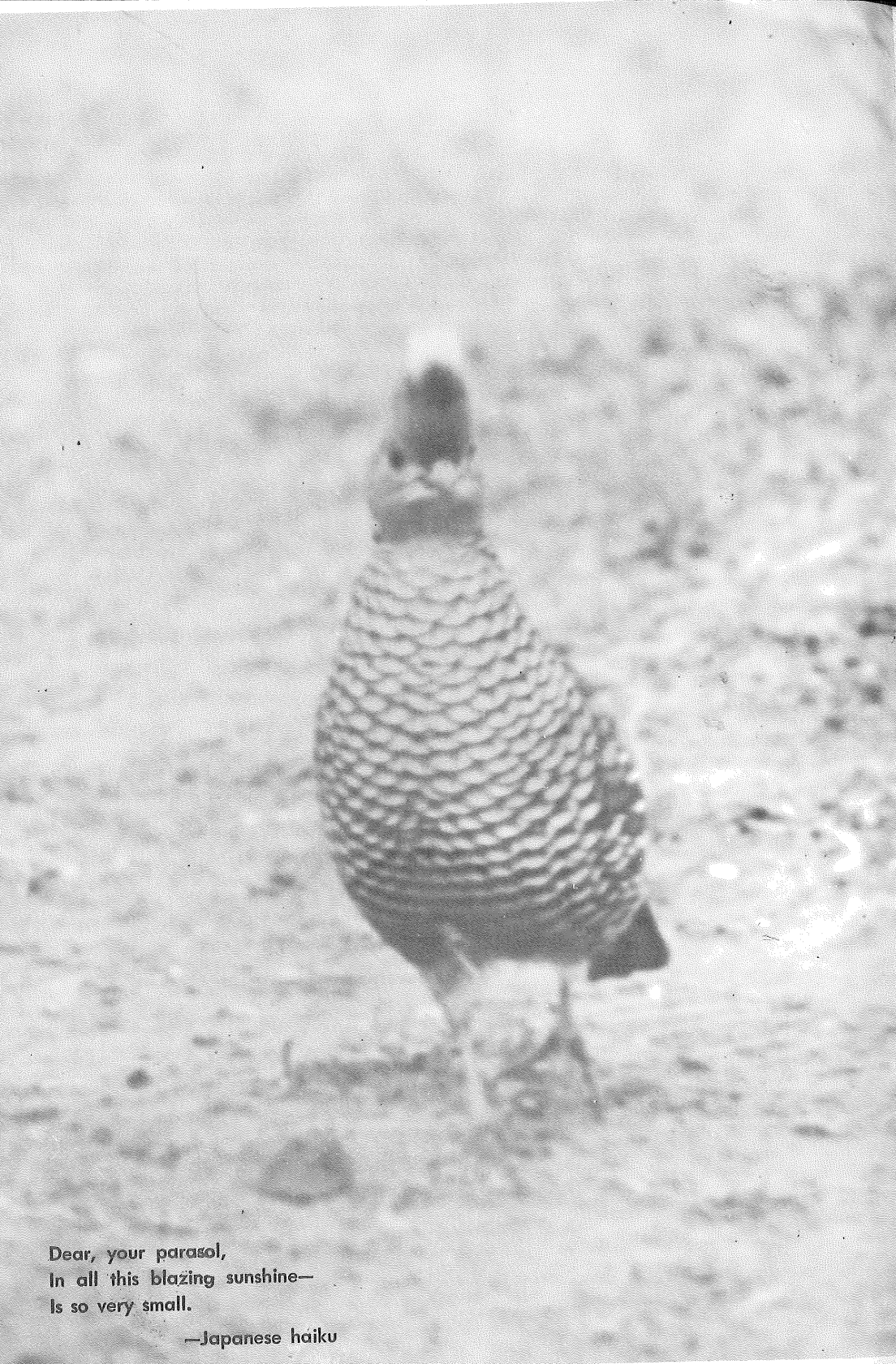
BULLETIN OF THE TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1
April 1967



Dear, your parasol,
In all this blazing sunshine—
Is so very small.

—Japanese haiku

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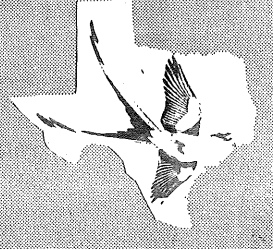
CONTENTS

THE BULLETIN OF THE TOS is mailed to all members of the Texas Ornithological Society not in arrears for dues. Annual dues for active members is $3.00, for sustaining members, $5.00. Inquiries regarding membership should be addressed to W. Russell Weil, Treasurer, Texas Ornithological Society, 3429 Lovers Lane, Dallas, Texas 75225. The BULLETIN is issued ten times a year. Individual issues may be purchased for fifty cents a copy. Original articles, reports and news of interest to TOS members are solicited for inclusion in the BULLETIN. All articles and letters for publication should be submitted to the Editor, Department of Biology, Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas 79409. Editorials are by invitation, but the Editor welcomes correspondence and suggestions regarding subject matter. Sight records and regional news should be sent to the appropriate Regional Director for forwarding to the Editor.



BLUE QUAIL (*Callipepla squamata*)
Photographed by KENNETH JOHNSON

The Classification of Birds: Current Ideas, Approaches

JAMES CREEN

IT MAY COME AS A SLIGHT SURPRISE to some that there is nothing sacred about the sequence in which birds are listed in our checklists and bird identification guides. Presumably this sequence tells us, by implying evolutionary tendencies, which birds are most closely related to each other. But when we see, by glancing at bird books published throughout the world, that the French arrange the birds in one order, the Germans in another, the British in another, and the Americans in still another, our faith in the A.O.U. Checklist sequence (which is adopted by virtually all American authors) is slightly shaken. Actually, the A.O.U. Checklist, compiled by a committee of competent ornithologists, is in many ways arbitrary. Even the most knowledgeable ornithologists in this country disagree on many points, such as, for instance, whether the Ruddy Turnstone should be placed in the same family as the sandpipers or the plovers. Regardless of how knowledgeable an ornithologist is, the fact remains that his opinion regarding the phylogenetic (evolutionary) relationships between species must be based to some degree on his intuition. It will never be possible to base our concepts on objective knowledge alone. There will always be a subjective element, and the order in which we find the birds listed in our checklists and identification guides will continue to reflect in part the a priori evaluations of a limited number of prestigious ornithologists. Fortunately, however, our theories concerning the evolution of birds are becoming more refined because of the rapid accumulation of anatomical, physiological and behavioral data which are being gathered by ornithologists. These ornithologists often use elegant and sophisticated approaches to the subject, among which may be cited the following.

By studying in detail the musculature of the Roadrunner, Cuckoo and Ani, Berger (1954) presented convincing arguments that the roadrunner evolved from an arboreal ancestor. Likewise, several thorough studies of the bones and feathers of ostriches and their allies strongly suggest that these large, flightless birds evolved from flying ancestors. Not too many years ago ornithologists believed that certain flightless birds at one time during their history developed the capacity to fly and that evolution proceeded in just the opposite direction—from flightless birds to flying birds.

An aspect of ornithology only recently appreciated by many ornithologists is the interpretation of avian behavior patterns in terms of their evolution. An example of such an approach is illustrated by an interesting interpretation of the pre-copulatory be-

havior of certain parrots (Dilger, 1962). The male scratches his head with his foot before mounting the female, and this ritual evidently excites the female. By studying the behavior in related parrots, Dilger explained the head scratching behavior in the following way. The parrots' ancestors routinely raised one leg in order to mount the female. It is possible that whenever the female rejected the male at this time, he displaced his sexual urge by using this leg to scratch his head. (Displacement reactions are irrelevant movements occurring when an animal is prevented from expressing a powerful urge in an appropriate manner; compare the behavior of a bird which for one reason or another is prevented from fighting and immediately "uses up" the potential urge for fighting by preening.) Presumably the head-scratching displacement reaction had a stimulatory effect on the female who subsequently allowed copulation, and conceivably this displacement reaction became incorporated into the courtship and pre-copulatory behavior of these birds because it happened to excite the female.

Biochemists have contributed to our understanding of avian evolution by analyzing and comparing the proteins found in various tissues, notably the blood and egg-white. Although the exact function of these proteins is for the most part unknown, it is probable that most closely-related species of birds have more similar proteins than distantly-related species.

Suppose we took a group of birds such as the tanagers and attempted, by using objective techniques such as those mentioned above, to determine if these birds were more closely related to the blackbirds than to the finches. When this has in fact been done, it has very frequently resulted in an array of conflicting data. For instance, the relationships of these birds have been deduced one way by studying the bill shape, another way by studying the bones, still other ways by analyzing the blood proteins, egg white proteins, vocal apparatus and serology. To complicate matters even more, the results of these studies often can be interpreted quite legitimately in several ways. Who is to say if the study of bones rather than behavior is more appropriate for interpreting the relationships of a particular group of birds? Which is more important in determining the evolution of birds—musculature or blood proteins? Obviously, the ornithologist who attempts to propose a classification must evaluate one way or another a large number of conflicting empirical data before committing himself to a theory. In fact, it is rather remarkable, considering the many possible interpretations of data at hand, that only a handful of classifications are currently employed to any extent.

LITERATURE CITED

Dilger, W. C., 1962, Methods and objectives of ethology. *LIVING BIRD*, 1:83-92.

Berger, Andrew J., 1952, The comparative functional morphology of the pelvic appendage in three genera of cookoos. *AMER. MIDL. NAT.*, 47:513-605.

—Box 4118, Tech Station, Lubbock, Texas, 79409

TOS Annual Meeting At Texas A&M

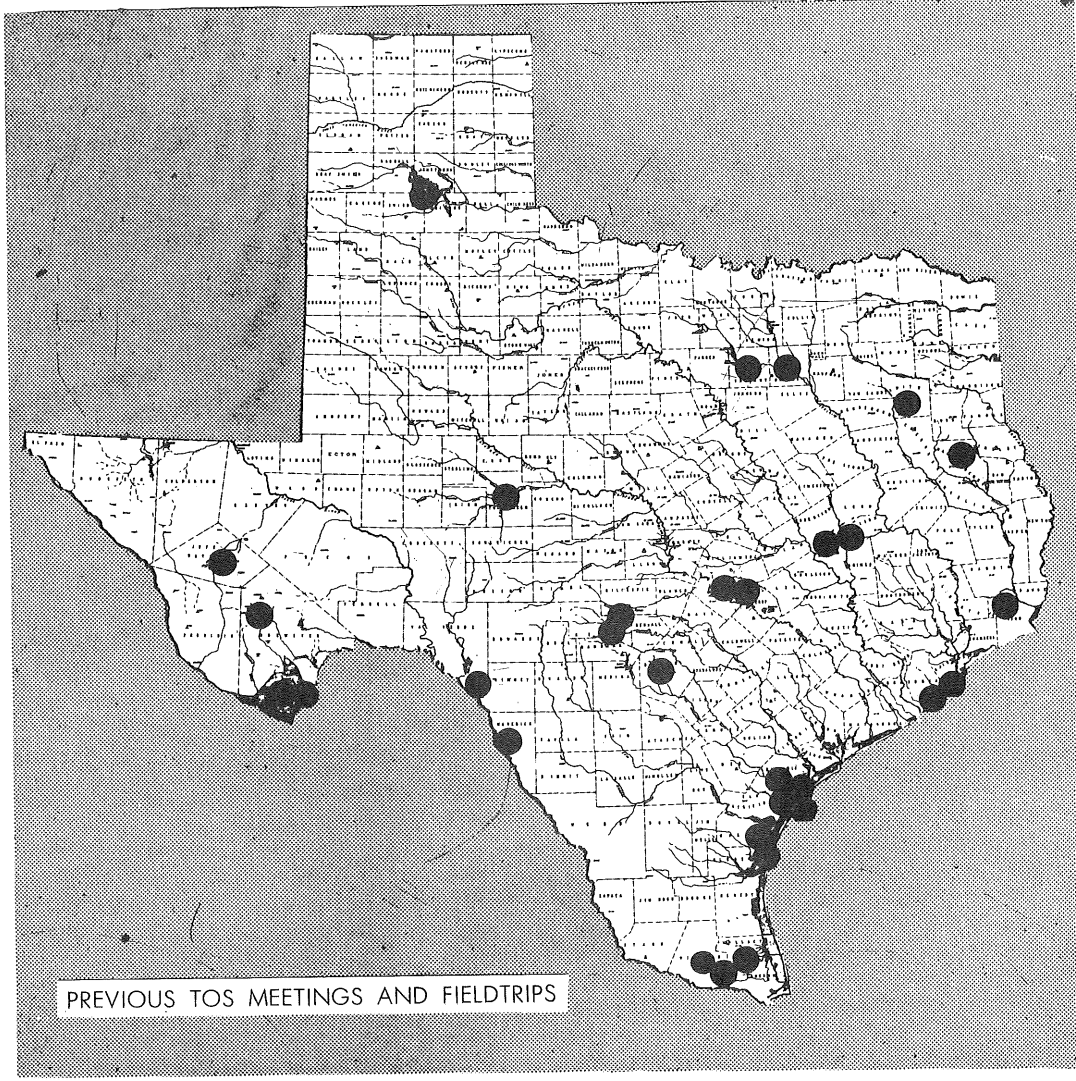
Two of the most impressive things about a TOS meeting are first, the enthusiasm, and second, the diversity of personalities who come together to exchange ideas and share experiences about birds. As guests of the Brazos County Ornithological Society, 68 TOS members enthusiastically participated in the 1967 Annual Meeting at College Station, a meeting held jointly with a meeting of the Texas Academy of Science. Every meeting has its highlights, and the highlights this weekend included an address by Dr. George H. Lowery, Jr. on nocturnal migration of birds; field trips to local areas; the installation of the new officers; a lecture and demonstration by Dr. Keith Arnold; and a well-conceived but rather unproductive nocturnal search for owls of the vicinity.* Dr. Lowery's lecture, which was illustrated with slides and a short film, presented his conviction that many species migrate in large numbers across the Gulf of Mexico between the Peninsula of Yucatan and the Gulf Coast states, such as Louisiana. His data include observations of migrating birds made throughout the U.S. and Mexico by participants who recorded the direction of nocturnal migrants as the birds passed between the observer and the moon. Some of Dr. Lowery's more recent studies employ radar as a means of determining the path of migrating birds.

At the Saturday night banquet, after duly recognizing the accomplishments of his officers, outgoing-president Jerry Strickling introduced the newly-elected TOS officers: Dr. W.J. Graber, III, president; Mrs. Cleve Bachman, secretary; Mr. Charles F. Crabtree, Jr., vice-president; Mr. W. Russel Weil, treasurer; Dr. Michael Kent Rylander, editor; and these directors: Mr. Marcus Mullings, Region I; Mr. Bruce Mack, Region II, Mr. L.G. Huey, Region III; Mr. Walter L. Ammon, Region IV; Mr. E.B. Kinsey, Region V; Mr. A.F. Bennett, Region VI; Dr. A.W. O'Neil, Region VII; Mr. R. B. Moore, Region VIII.

At the board meeting it was suggested that the TOS establish liason with a university press regarding a series of TOS-sponsored monographs. These publications would be similar to monographs issued by the Cooper Ornithological Society and the American Ornithologists Union. Other suggestions included the consideration of publishing an up-to-date book on bird finding in Texas and a re-evaluation of the boundaries of the Texas regions.

At the regular business meeting, Edward C. Fritz, chairman of the Conservation Committee, suggested that TOS members support House Bill 220 which would create a Texas Board for the preservation of scientific areas.

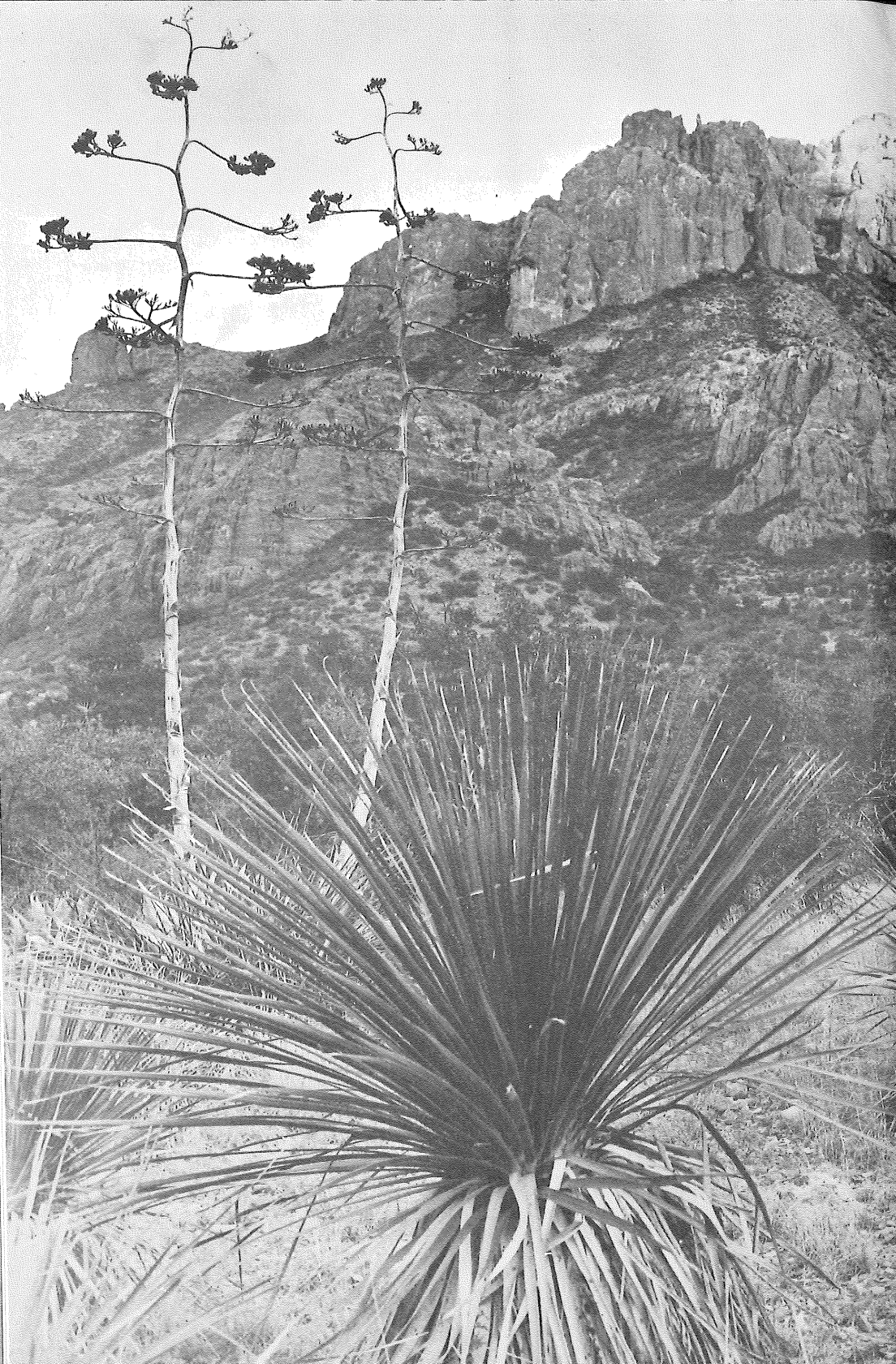
**Although the group heard a few distant owl calls, the owls themselves, by remaining quiet, were rewarded with a two hour performance of hoots, screeches, twitters and squawks by competent birdcallers in the group, as the twenty-five or so TOS members tramped noisily up the road that night. The most discernible effect of these imitative efforts was the arousal of neighborhood dogs, but several TOS owlcallers were so convincing that at one point in the evening they succeeded in unwittingly answering each other.—Ed.*



The only misfortune of the week-end occurred when former-president Richard O. Albert made a side trip to Freeport Saturday afternoon. Dr. Albert was bitten by a rattlesnake while stalking birds in the sand dunes, but fortunately his discomfort did not prevent him from attending the banquet that night, flying his plane home the next day, and performing surgery Monday morning.

FALL MEETING, RIO GRANDE VALLEY, NOV. 24TH AND 25TH

SPRING MEETING, MAY 4TH AND 5TH, 1968
McKITTRICK CANYON, GUADALUPE MT. NAT. PARK



Winter and Early Spring Birds In Big Bend

ROLAND H. WAUER

The Colima Warbler is to Big Bend's Chisos Mountain like the Kirkland's is to north-central Michigan and the Golden-cheeked is to the Edward's Plateau region of Texas. Hundreds of people search these haunts each summer to see them and chalk up another bird on their list.

But visitors to Big Bend in early spring can find a variety of birds worth looking for, too. Although the Colima Warbler, Lucifer Hummingbird, Black-capped Vireo and Hepatic Tanager are still south, there are others that make a spring trip worthwhile.

Accommodations at the Chisos Mountain Lodge need to be reserved, but campers have a wide choice of localities from the Basin at 5400 feet to below 2000 feet along the Rio Grande at Santa Elena Canyon and Rio Grande Village. All three areas should be on your agenda on a bird trip to Big Bend National Park.

The desert in winter and early spring is usually delightful. Except during a "norther," temperatures in mid-day may reach 70° from December through April. A morning's stroll through the creosote bushes and lechuguilla in the vicinity of Panther Junction can easily produce twenty-five species of birds. In addition to common species such as the Scaled Quail, Mourning Dove, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Say's Phoebe, Rock Wren, Cactus Wren, Mockingbird, Pyrrhuloxia, and White-crowned Sparrow, watch for the White-winged Dove, Curve-billed Thrasher, Sage Thrasher, Green-tailed Towhee, and Cassin's Sparrow.

Green Gulch is the main canyon en route to the Basin. The variety of sparrows there in winter and early spring is surprising. Below the coniferous woodland, Vesper, Savannah, Black-throated and White-crowned Sparrows are numerous, while it is usually not too difficult to find a Grasshopper or Lincoln's Sparrow in the grassy patches. Rufous-crowned and Chipping Sparrows are present in numbers at the lower edges of the woodland; Black-chinned Sparrows should be looked for in open bushy places.

Once the woodland is reached, listen for the Mexican Jay. This loudmouth is usually heard before it is seen and is common throughout the Chisos. Here, also, can be found the Red-shafted Flicker, Black-crested Titmouse, Common and Black-eared Bushtits, Bewick's and Cañon Wrens, Crissal Thrasher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Rufous-sided Towhee.

Excellent trails lead from the Basin area: Lost Mine from Panther Pass, Window from the lower Basin, and the South Rim Trail from the Basin proper. Fourteen miles round-trip, the South Rim Trail offers grand views, many habitats, and an even larger

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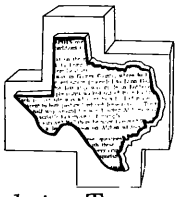
NEWS...



"By 1982, the 2.25 million children now enrolled in Texas schools will make up about half the qualified voters in the state. A pioneering effort to educate these students to the needs for conservation of natural resources was begun in Fort Worth. A one-day workshop was sponsored Feb. 5 by the Texas Education Agency, the Fort Worth Conservation Council, the Audubon Society and the Sportsman Club.

"Attending were more than 200 public schools teachers, who were given the background, current conditions and forecasts for state supplies of water, minerals, wildlife, forests, soils, and the state's expanding population."—Fort Worth Press.

Regional ACTIVITIES this spring: a program by GALE MONSON, co-author of the BIRDS OF ARIZONA (University of Dallas and Tarrant County Audubon Society, Apr. 11); natural history class by WARREN PULICH at the Y.M.C.A. in Dallas; a visit to the Texas legislature on Feb. 14 by NED MUDGE and NED FRITZ to support 6 conservation bills; the formation of a SPEAKER'S BUREAU by the Lubbock Audubon Society to supply speakers on natural history to various groups in the region.

Regional FIELD TRIPS this spring: Eagle Lake and the BIG THICKET (Dallas County Audubon Society, Mar. 31-Apr. 2); HEARD WILDLIFE SANCTUARY at McKinney (D.C.A.S., Apr. 15); TYLER area, Apr. 28, 29, 30 (contact L.G. Huey, 1500 Ridgeview Dr., Tyler); FORREST RANCH, Slaton, Texas (Lubbock Audubon Society, Feb. 25); GEORGE WEST, Texas (Houston Outdoor Nature Club, April 1, 2); PALO DURO CANYON (Leo Galloway, Amarillo, leader, April 15); MIDLAND and vicinity (Midland Naturalists, April 2); PALMETTO STATE PARK (Travis Audubon Society, April 1); FT. WORTH and vicinity (Ft. Worth Audubon Society, April 1); ARANSAS WILDLIFE REFUGE (San Antonio Audubon Society, Mar. 26); GLEN ROSE Area (Ft. Worth Audubon Society, April 16); Houston Annual SPRING ROUNDUP (Houston Outdoor Nature Club, April 29).

In the lavishly illustrated TEXAS OUTDOORS—A CHALLENGE . . . A PLAN OF ACTION, (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Reagan Building, Austin) Executive Director J. R. Singleton urges consideration of Governor Connally's proposed ten-year, seventy-five million dollar, self-supporting STATE PARK ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. He reports that, "in less than five years, visitation in the present Park System will reach its maximum capacity; park visitation in excess of this capacity will ultimately result in the destruction of our parks . . . severely limiting the opportunity for Texans to enjoy the out-of-doors."

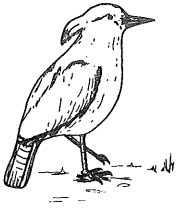
"Just thinking aloud: it seems that the Roadrunner brings to mind images of cactus, chaparral, rattlesnakes and coyotes. This is not exactly the image of Tyler. What could be more indigenous to East Texas than the pine, which the PINE WARBLER inhabits, and what more characteristic of the informal chatter this newsletter hopes to present than this bird's cheerful song?"—PINE WARBLER, Newsletter of the Tyler Audubon Society, and sequel to the ROADRUNNER.

The Patuxent, Md. Wildlife Research Center is studying five Andean condors, captured in Argentina, hoping to learn something about these birds that will help the CALIFORNIA CONDOR make a comeback.—N.Y. Times.

Those of you who have not kept up with the activities of the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY may be interested in a few facts gleaned from President Buchheister's "State of the Union" message (AUDUBON, January, 1967), to wit:

- Sanctuaries now encompass 44 areas, including some in Mid-America
- Acquisition of 613 acres of prime habitat for Key Deer in Fla.
- Completion of five-year Bald Eagle study
- Research support of wading birds, golden eagle, green turtle
- Total membership, 45,000 in the Society

The latest reports on the number of WHOOPING CRANES shows a net loss of one for the year as of December, 1966 (U.S. Dept. of Interior). Six adults disappeared during the year but five newly hatched cranes appeared in Arkansas. The loss is attributed to the bird's nesting habits rather than the perils of their annual 2,500-mile fall flight from the Great Slave Lake area to the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, where 43 wintered this year.



There are only 200 CAGOUS (Kagus) left in New Caledonia, the only place these birds are found. The chief destroyers are wild dogs, which have multiplied in recent years.—N.Y. Times.

A zoo at Brookfield, Illinois, recently announced a noteworthy achievement—a pair of ROADRUNNERS there nested and reared two young. This is believed to be the first time these birds, native to the Southwest, have been propagated in captivity.—Texas Parks and Wildlife.

GUEST EDITORIAL:

From Dams to Desalting

EDWARD C. FRITZ

This is the first of a two-part editorial on the current water development programs in Texas. "Ned" Fritz, an attorney in Dallas and one of the state's most dedicated conservationists, is Conservation Editor of the BULLETIN, and president of the Texas Nature Conservancy. He is most interested in communicating with TOS members who are interested in tangibly directing their efforts towards effecting a realistic conservation program in Texas. Likewise, noteworthy conservation news for possible inclusion in this BULLETIN should be submitted to Mr. Edward Fritz, Conservation Editor, Texas Ornithological Society, 909 Reliance Life Building, Dallas, Texas 75201.

Although dams and canals have performed useful functions in the growth of human population, we must now completely cease all large dam construction and channel destruction. Because of a technical and conceptual revolution now taking place, dams and canals are now outmoded.

If mankind does not stop building dams and canals, he is going to ruin his natural environment.

Yesterday, that axiom was true of Tigris-Euphrates civilization in which man over-irrigated and over-flood-controlled himself into destruction.

Today, that axiom is effective in all heavily populated areas of the earth, where man is disfiguring his rivers and streams, and destroying all natural areas.

Tomorrow, that axiom will place the entire globe in immediate jeopardy.

Ever since amphibians evolved from the sea, natural rivers have been an integral part of the entire chain of life. We are now engaged in cutting this chain into shreds.

Our rivers contain a food chain. This food chain starts a wider food chain stretching across the entire land. Our river basins contain the bulk of the remaining natural forests outside our mountain ranges. Our rivers supply the variable flow of pure, fresh water necessary to maintain the correct saline balance in our coastal marshes and estuaries, cradle of most of our marine food supply. The overflow and seep from our rivers supply most of the ponds where waterfowl breed. Our rivers are a vital link in life as we know it.

Yet almost every major river in the world has now been dammed, and is threatened with further damming and channeling, until its original character is destroyed, causing profound changes in the ecology of each area.

It is not necessary that we continue to dam and canalize these rivers. Man, with his superior creative power, has developed the process of desalting the oceans. THERE IS ENOUGH WATER IN THE OCEANS TO MEET ALL THE NEEDS OF ALL ANTICIPATED POPULATIONS OF MAN FOREVER.

With desalting so well developed, it is absurd for us to permit some agencies, headed by the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the U.S.

Bureau of Reclamation, to go on promoting dams and canals.

Luna B. Leopold and Seymour Tilson say:[1]

> "Most of the water on earth, about 97% of all there is, lies in the world ocean. Desalination can become an economic reality as soon as people choose to pay its cost in preference to the costs, ethetic and economic, of conventional sources. Until then, we must use the water that is tied umbilically to its oceanic source by a thin skein of water vapor—amounting on the average to perhaps 1/10,000 of the one per cent of all the water on earth—which is always present in the atmosphere. Through this tenuous conduit, all fresh water eventually must pass.

Vice President Hubert Humphrey predicted in a speech in Fort Worth in July that, as sure as he was standing there, Americans would be drinking and using desalted water from the oceans on a large scale within ten years.

Although man in the past has relied almost exclusively upon the fragile rivers and streams for his water supply, he can now refrain from further damages to these essential links in his environment. He can now turn to the oceans for his water supply.

Most of the remaining natural forests of the United States, outside our mountain chains, lie in the bottomlands of those rivers which have not yet been dammed or canalized. These forests are becoming increasingly valuable for recreation purposes, as well as for lumber. Damming, ditching and straightening destroys the natural forests forever.

There is no reason for man to ruin a single additional natural area through the outmoded syndrome of dams and canals.

Under federal guidelines, with hopes of federal matching funds, the states are now making plans for their water use and development for the next fifty years. Such long-range plans could be used to auger in the new era of desalting. But instead, there is a genuine danger that the dam and ditch engineers will merely project their outmoded river-development plans for fifty years into the future. In some instances, at least, this projection would prevent the institution of desalting until it was too late to save the rivers.

[1]THE WATER RESOURCE, International Science and Technology, July, 1966, pp. 24-25.

REPORTS...

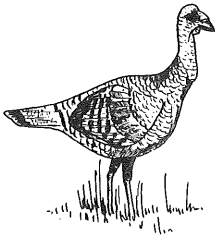
MOSAICISM is a rather rare genetic condition in which a plant or animal's normal coloration is distorted by a blotchy distribution of pigments. In Amarillo, Peggy Acord observed a Robin exhibiting this condition; the bird had white blotches and spots on the tail, wings, and body.—Prairie Horned Lark.

GREATER YELLOW-LEGS were observed regularly DIPPING CRICKETS into water prior to eating them, even though this required running 20 feet to the edge of the water.—Blue Jay 23:25. 1965.

Eric G. Bolen at Texas Tech and Billy J. Forsyth at the University of Arkansas have completed a study of the foods of the BLACK-BELLIED TREE DUCK in South Texas. They found that 92% of the foods were plant foods (mostly sorghum and bermudagrass) and 8% animal food (mostly insects and mollusks, particularly a snail, PHYSA ANATINA).—Wlison Bull. 79:43.

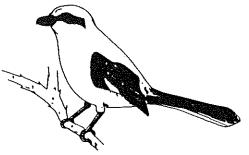
"The GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER has usually been blamed for utility pole and fence post damage in south Texas." John V. Dennis suggests that "the Golden-fronted rarely initiates attack —its role is one of appropriating and enlarging holes already made by the smaller Ladder-backed Woodpecker. Lack of suitable trees for roosting and nesting sites appears to be a highly important factor in making utility poles and fence posts more subject to attack. Attack is also influenced by resonancy factors. Poles and posts exhibiting metalic resonancy or internal hollowness are selected over ones without such features."—Wilson Bull. 79:86.

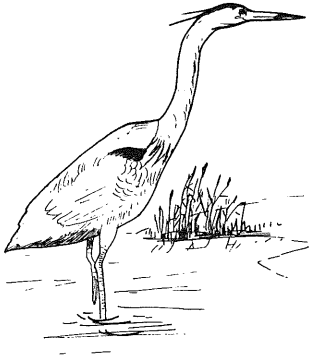
The most recent detailed study of BOBWHITE BEHAVIOR was published by Allen Stokes, who describes the behavior of the adult quail and discusses the cause, function, and derivation of this bird's behavior, including interpretations of the various calls. Auk. 84:1. 1967.



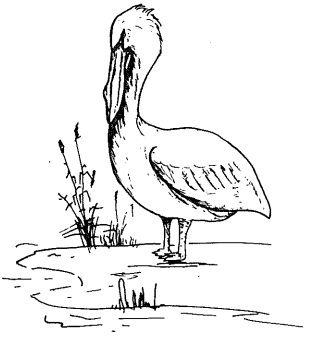
Winter concentrations of the RIO GRANDE TURKEY ranged from one bird per 8.2 acres to one per 17.9 acres in three areas on the Edwards Plateau in Texas. Banding showed that birds dispersed over 400,000 acres in spring. Individuals were faithful to particular wintering areas.—Auk. 83:704, 1966.

SHRIKES apparently do not use their feet as talons but characteristically depend upon the bill for seizing and carrying prey. Larry D. Caldwell, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, reports encounters between Loggerhead Shrikes and Old-field Mice (PEROMYSCUS POLIONOTUS), whereby the shrike used its feet to capture and carry off mice.—Wilson Bull. 79:116.





Several HERONS (e.g., the Snowy Egret, Reddish Egret, Louisiana Heron, and Green Heron) sometimes lure fish by "foot-stirring". FOOT-STIRRING involves standing on one foot and stirring the water with the other foot, which is extended. Some herons also foot-stir on land while foraging for insects. Andrew J. Meyerriecks reports that one Snowy Egret foot-stirred in grass without Cattle Egrets or grazing animals of any kind in the pasture. It foot-stirred several times, made 42 strikes, and captured 34 grasshoppers.—Auk, 83:471, 1966.



Complementing Thompson's 1933 study of the breeding colonies of the WHITE PELICAN, Michael F. Lies and William H. Behle completed a study of this species' breeding conditions in 1964. With regard to Texas pelicans, they state that at that time the southernmost nesting sight was at BIRD ISLANDS, just off the coast in Laguna Madre Bay south of Corpus Christi. (Pelicans also nest irregularly at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.) Many adults seen in nesting colonies at the time of the breeding season do not seem to be nesting. This suggests that either the White Pelican takes several years to reach breeding age or that there are subtle psychological factors governing breeding. The authors point out that the pelican is somewhat adaptable to habitat change and can re-establish some abandoned colonies when conditions become favorable. Looking at the total population of White Pelicans in the United States, the authors report that these birds are more widely dispersed now than formerly and that there are fewer large concentrations of colonies. There has been no drastic decline in numbers, although there has been a definite long-range decline.—Condor, 68:279, 1966.

Mrs. Lena McBee in studying the birds of both El Paso and Midland finds that Region IV encompasses too many varied habitats to represent a logical region, and suggests that Midland be placed in the South Plains Region with Lubbock.—The Phalarope.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

The Texas Ornithological Society was organized in 1953 by a group of strictly amateur ornithologists, bird watchers, bird listers, etc., and for the most part its continued growth and prosperity has been based on more of the same. Fortunately, during this same period a number of professional ornithologists have been attracted to Texas and into active membership in the T.O.S. As time goes by, their role will no doubt increase in importance as the T.O.S. hopefully matures into one of the countries leading ornithological organizations. Witness the assumption of editorship of this publication by Kent Rylander, a professional biologist and teacher at Texas Technological College, and the recent service of Warren Pulich as chairman of the nominating committee.

But for now our wellbeing depends on active participation by us amateurs, watchers, listers, etc. in all our activities. And this is my call for your help. I would like for those of you with the time and the inclination to volunteer to contribute articles to this Bulletin, or book reviews, or editorials, or take it upon yourself to canvass your area for new members, or organize and lead field trips for your region, or volunteer to help with plans and programs for the T.O.S. meetings, or help with our conservation effort which is an exciting challenge to all of us. I know from my own observations there is a great deal of talent, knowledge, and ability among the T.O.S. members. From time to time many of you may be called upon to "volunteer" these assets and I hope you will respond favorably and willingly.

And I might add I have never been one to tell someone how to do something if he has the idea in the first place and is willing to do the work. So, if you have been nursing an idea for the T.O.S., please present it and be prepared to help get it off the ground and see it through to completion. If we will all pitch in and do our best for the T.O.S., we can indeed further our dedication to the observation, study, and conservation of birds in Texas.

William J. Graber, III, M.D.

PRESIDENT, T.O.S.

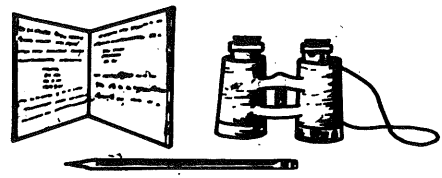
Con't. from page 7

number of bird species. Boot Spring is surrounded by more than 1100 species of plants, including the Arizona Cypress, Douglas Fir and Ponderosa Pine.

Known best as the only U. S. nesting place of the Colima Warbler, in winter one can find at Boot Spring the Acorn Woodpecker, Mexican Jay, Pygmy, Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Robin, Western Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hutton's Vireo, Audubon's and Townsend's Warblers, and Slate-colored, Oregon and Gray-headed Juncos. Soaring high overhead may be seen the White-throated Swift, Red-tailed Hawk and Golden Eagle.

—Chief Naturalist, Big Bend National Park, Texas, 79834

SIGHT RECORDS



The following assemblage of sight records was compiled from various letters, informal reports and newsletters, with little or no editing. Since to be useful field reports must be consistent to some extent with regard to importance, thoroughness and accuracy of observation, I am strongly urging that all noteworthy records be submitted to the regional directors for evaluation. A committee will handle final processing of the records and determine which reports will be most appropriately published in the BULLETIN.—Ed.

REGION I: RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, Feb. 12, Palo Duro Canyon (K. Seyffert); NORTHERN SHRIKE, Feb. 14, Amarillo (Peggy Acord); WINTER WREN, Feb. 17, Amarillo (P. Acord); BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, March 11, near Amarillo (K. Seyffert, L. Galloway); two adult BALD EAGLES, Feb. 26, Floyd County (K. Rylander, R. Powell);

REGION II: SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER, Jan. 25, Arlington (Bruce Mack); LITTLE GULL, Feb. 2, Lake Benbrook (Ethel Bowman, Margaret Parker); Feb. 3 (Midge Randolph); two COMMON SCOTERS, Feb. 9, Bachman Lake, Dallas (Dorothy England, Ethel Harris, Polly McLeroy, Marianna Roach); one WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, Feb. 11, TRA Sewage Ponds, Irving (Hazel Nichols); two WHITE-FRONTED GEESE, Feb. 15, TRA Sewage Ponds (numerous observers); two CINNAMON TEAL, Feb. 18, (Hazel Nichols); one FRANKLIN'S GULL, Feb. 18, TRA Sewage Ponds, (Hazel Nichols); 15 WHITE-FRONTED GEESE, Feb. 23, TRA Sewage Ponds, (Bruce Mack, Warren Pulich); two pairs of CINNAMON TEAL, TRA Sewage Ponds (Bruce Mack, Warren Pulich); one SAGE THRASHER, Feb. 25, St. Francis Village Benbrook (Joann and John Kargas); one PINE SISKIN, Feb. 8, Caruth Sanctuary, Dallas (observer unknown); one PINE SISKIN, Feb. 11, Palo Pinto County (Bruce Mack, Warren Pulich, Joe Williams); one PYGMY NUTHATCH, (collected by Warren Pulich Jr. & Sr. on the campus of the University of Dallas);

REGION IV: Eleven WHISTLING SWANS, Dec. 28, three Feb. 26 (also other dates), Midland (Midland Naturalists);

REGION V: Three RED CROSSBILLS, Feb. 19, Buescher State Park (Mary Anne McClendon); TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE, Feb. 19, Buescher State Park (Mary Anne McClendon); one GREEN KINGFISHER, Tom Miller Dam (Dan Scurlock); KING RAIL, 15 WHITE IBISES, BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON, and EGRETS (date?), Eagle Lake (Members of the San Antonio and Travis Audubon Societies); RED CROSSBILLS, Bastrop Park (Maggie Swartz, Lillis Thaxton);

REGION VII: RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD, Jan. 4, 7, 18, 23, and Feb. 6, 21, Falfurrias area (A. W. O'Neil); PRAIRIE FALCON, Jan. 19, Falfurrias (A. W. O'Neil), FERRUGINOUS HAWK, Feb. 2, King Ranch (A. W. O'Neil); PIGEON HAWK, Feb. 2, Falfurrias area (A. W. O'Neil); two TROPICAL KINGBIRDS, Feb. 2, Falfurrias area (A. W. O'Neil); KISKADEE FLYCATCHER, Feb. 5 and 13, Falfurrias area, (A. W. O'Neil); BLACK RAIL, Feb. 16 (A. W. O'Neil).

NOTICES

The Editor extends an invitation to wildlife photographers to submit PHOTOGRAPHS of birds for inclusion in the TOS BULLETIN. There are few things enjoyed and appreciated by TOS members as much as a striking portrait of a bird, and at least one photograph will be published each issue if enough are available. Prints or negatives of any size may be submitted, and they will be returned after publication.

ROLAND H. WAUER, a member of our TOS, sends a special request to birders who have records for BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK. He is assembling records for the park area to include in a book he is witing on the birds of Big Bend. (He recently published a similar book on the birds of Zion National Park.) He writes, "There are many excellent records in our files but I know that many competent birders in Texas and elsewhere have good records that were never given to the Park. I hope they will send their records to me now." If you have pertinent records, please send them to Chief Naturalist Roland H. Wauer, Big Bend National Park, Texas, 79834.

Under the sponsorship of the Dallas County Audubon Society, (5421 Drane Drive, Dallas, Texas, 75209), the 3rd edition of TEXAS FLOWERS IN NATURAL COLOR, by Eula Whitehouse, will be published this Spring. The book will sell for $5.00 and proceeds will go to the Dallas Audubon Sanctuary Fund.

Information about the Third PAN AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS to be held in Kruger National Park, March, 1969 can be obtained from: The Hon. Secretary S.A.O.S., c/o Percy FitzPatrick Institute, University of Capetown, Rondebosch, C.P. South Africa.

In the next issue of the TOS BULLETIN we will publish a list of local CHECKLISTS. Please send a copy of your checklist, including price and address from which it may be obtained, to the Editor by May 5.

Annual TOS DUES are now payable to the treasurer.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Walter M. Schneider, 6128 N. Mason, Chicago, Illinois, 60646
Judge J. Allen Simpson, 3635 Nicolet Place, Racine, Wisconsin, 53402
Mr. L. T. Adams, P. O. Box 2124, Austin, Texas, 78767
Mr. Travis A. Peeler, 401 Troy, Corpus Christi, Texas
Mr. Robert F. Coffee, 2102 Parkway, Austin, Texas, 78703

EDITORIAL: PLATO'S INTIMACY AND THE TOS

A scholarly friend of mine once described to me a provocative idea of Plato's, wherein Plato quite seriously maintained that an effective teacher would not hesitate to convey knowledge in its entire and complete form, even if imparting wisdom to one's student involved the intimacy of sexual relations. While Plato's approach as such might not be immediately relevant to the TOS and its members, a little reflection shows a patent contrast between ivory tower-grass roots relations as conceived of by Plato in this manner and the crippled relationship that sometimes exists between the ornithological "scholar" and the backyard birdwatcher, although fortunately this rift is small in Texas. Furthermore, I have an idea that, just as a large number of prejudiced or intimidated students might have secretly wished to be taught by Plato in the manner alluded to above, so are there a large number of so-called "amateur bird-watchers" who would like to enrich and widen their knowledge of birds by having an opportunity to pick the academic and technical brains of the "professionals." Yet prejudice and intimidation sometimes seem as prohibitive to this type of relationship as our sexual mores are to Plato's approach to learning.

Now, no editor in his right mind would try to force someone to do something he didn't like—such as coerce an avian physiologist into watching dickybirds, or coax a contented "lister" into graduate school. But in conversations with both birdnamers and serious experimental ornithologists, I find what seems to be a latent desire to blend, to share, and to receive some of the thrills derived from the other's orientation towards birds. Quite tragically, a desire for such an enriching exchange of knowledge and experiences is too frequently rendered impotent by defensiveness and lack of understanding on both sides. Yet it seems to me inevitable that many, many amateurs would relish a great deal of scientifically oriented knowledge if it were available in an understandable and meaningful form; and that many blase' ornithologists, who haven't been thrilled by a new life bird since they were Boy Scouts, would regain their capacity to respond spontaneously to nature if they could be exposed to the contagious excitement of the enthusiastic birdwatcher. Although Plato may have carried the idea farther than we would wish to, the principle is the same, viz., that we are more enlightened and perhaps happier by pursuing total knowledge, and that we can free ourselves to learn spontaneously and without restrictions, whether our teachers be the professional ornithologists or the amateurs.

It seems likely that if any means of communication were to successfully help us in this respect, it would be a publication such as this state bulletin rather than a professional journal or a local newsletter. Just how a state publication can most effectively serve in this capacity is difficult to determine. Perhaps it is through art, since art evidently has the capacity to bridge even linguistically separated cultures. Perhaps it is by popularizing, to some extent, the scientific aspect of ornithology. Perhaps it is by bringing together between these covers several different orientations towards birds, and conveying, insofar as possible, the meaning which these orientations have for the contributors. At any rate, it was the possibility that this bulletin might stimulate growth in both the professional ornithologist and the amateur birdwatcher that led me to accept the position as editor. I intend to resist the stultifying pressures of conventional journalism when they interfere with our growth; and I am likewise receptive to your creative ideas concerning the bulletin, REGARDLESS OF HOW OUTRAGEOUS THEY MAY SEEM. It is in an atmosphere of almost childlike enthusiasm that this first issue of the Bulletin is being issued, and I feel certain its message will speak to some of you who are in sympathy with the TOS's desire for growth and enrichment.—M.K.R.