

LOUISIANA
ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



No. 41

Natchitoches, La.

May 20, 1966

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Numerous letters were received in response to "write a letter month". A variety of topics were covered in these letters as can be seen in the excerpts printed below. None indicated any opposition to an increasing involvement in conservation matters, the feeling being that bird watching and conservation work could both be functions of the society, each member participating in either or both areas as his time and interests dictate. Some quotes are stated below.

"As an ordinarily silent and retiring member of the LOS, I welcome your invitation to 'write a letter' and take sides on the two different views of the Society's program. I suppose, naturally, we will be known as 'the hawks and the doves,' according to the side we choose. Though I am pretty well tethered by home responsibility, I am a hawk.

"I certainly think we should make our voices heard in the conservation programs of the State, should inform ourselves about our sanctuaries and other natural resources, and should develop or supplement existing youth education programs in the State.

"...I would like to see the organiza-

tion of local chapters which could get together occasionally to promote some project or for an outing or an educational talk. For instance, most of us housewives simply don't know much about the techniques of field observation, so we don't join the professionals in the Cameron meetings since we feel we might not contribute anything.

"Another thing, I know numbers of 'birdwatchers' in Lake Charles, almost none of whom are members of LOS. Couldn't we have a simple membership campaign? This might be one way of getting both more workers and more funds for any expanded efforts in conservation and education."

Beatrice H. Kuder

"Your March 10th LOS Newsletter was most interesting to me. I am not a resident of Louisiana but have been a member of the LOS for several years, and have an interest in the wildlife of Louisiana as well as in other states. I especially liked your Remarks from the President. I am glad you put the issues on sanctuaries and conservation right before the members where it belongs. I agree with you that Louisiana has done very little in the way of conservation but could do something if they would put their

shoulder to the wheel and start pushing. I have done quite a bit of birding around Shreveport and down South on to the coast. Hodges Gardens, the woods around Hackberry and Peveto Woods are some of our favorite spots. The Hodges Garden area seems rather secure for the time being but what about Peveto Woods and the area or woods at Hackberry? These areas could be cleared out with bulldozers and chain saws in short time and it would be a great loss to the naturalists of Louisiana and other states also. Just chasing birds will not keep these areas intact.

"I enjoyed your comments about the Bluebirds up around Little Rock, Arkansas. Bluebirds have been my project in East Texas for over 20 years. I have several boxes I personally look after and have put over 250 of these boxes while living in the Tyler Area. I try to encourage Bluebird projects wherever I work or might go. Tyler was tops in numbers of Bluebirds with 315 on the 1964 Christmas Count and we hope we will be near the top with 464 on our last count."

O. C. Sheffield

"Since I have been and continue to be most conservation minded, by all means count me as being in favor of expanding our Society's program along these lines. Those members who favor 'limited activities and informal relationships' can still have them, but we certainly should go beyond that. If a group such as LOS doesn't at least voice concern, loudly and publicly, as a minimum, and initial step, how can we expect the rest of the public to 'wake up?'"

"For one thing, may I suggest that the LOS itself should be publicized more effectively. Had I known of its existence, I would have been happy to join years ago! As it happened, it took well over a year while I was making an effort to secure an up-to-date La. State Bird List, before I chanced to hear about it. Possibly other local groups of the LOS are more active than the one in New Orleans? For example, there are at least half a dozen faculty members at my school, whose interest in birds ranges from

a mild to a rather serious one, and none of them ever heard of LOS!

"If you feel it would be appropriate should not some remarks be made in a future LOS Newsletter read the magazine, NATIONAL WILDLIFE. Many members may be unaware of the existence of this fine magazine, and the money goes for a worthwhile purpose, and there are a number of other benefits besides the subscription itself."

Helga Cernick

"We thoroughly enjoyed your last issue of the LOS News, and hope that you succeed in your mission to stimulate constructive activity. We are also envious of those that may get to go to Guatemala.

"Your proposal to accumulate a LOS list for 1966 sounds like fun so we couldn't help but contribute our list from the West Indies--February 7-20, 1966. We'll send another contribution at the year's end."

Bob Krebs

"I am with you on this matter of activities for the LOS. I enjoy my birding, and I enjoy the extra things we have done since you have been here. The activities you have handled have been well organized; I have always been disconcerted by the usual lack of organization, especially for newcomers to the group who don't know where to go or what to look for. I well remember my first trip to Cameron!

"I feel that it is important for us to have some link with state and national conservation agencies. We might be able to do a lot of good here in Louisiana, but we will never know if we don't give it a try. There is a place in the organization, I believe, for those who just want to birdwatch and those who think the additional things are important.

"It strikes me that some spring the group ought to come to Fontainebleau State Park. Zemurrays would be a good field trip, as would Fairview State Park. Who knows? Maybe someone could spot a Bachman's warbler!"

Virginia Mouw

" May I introduce myself. I am President of the Texas Ornithological Society and my wife and I are members of the LOS.

" I have just read the current issue of the IOS News and we support you and your program 100%."

Jerry Strickling

" Each spring for the past four years a Phoebe has nested on our porch coming back to the same nest. Right now I watch her daily cleaning and refurnishing the nest. I would like to keep a record of this springs progress. Will you please send me cards for this purpose."

W. Bednarz

"The following is a list of some of the birds I saw in New Jersey before the end of February:

Black-capped Chickadee	U. S.
Red-breasted Nuthcteh	U. S.
Evening grosbeak	U. S.
Purple Finch	U. S.
Tree Sparrow	U. S.
House Finch (<u>Carpodacus mexicanus</u>)	U.S.

" The house finches have become quite common in the Montclair area since they were first reported a few years ago. As far as I know their origin is a mystery."

Suzanne Haupt

" Greetings from the First President of the Louisiana Ornithological Society to the present one.

" I am glad to know that you are at the helm and that the IOS News is getting out an excellent bulletin which I receive as usual.

" I would like to call your attention however to the new March 10 issue on page 2 under 'List Builders Note'. The writer states 'I propose to do this in three categories: a Louisiana list, a U.S. list, to all states, and a world list to include all birds seen. But what about the NORTH AMERICAN List which includes Canada, Bermuda,

Greenland, and Lower California, as outlined by Stuart Keith of the American Museum of Natural History in Audubon Magazine of November-December 1933, page 376 etc. In that are about 19 members named of the famous '600 Club' and since then about half a dozen have reached that position. I find that many thousands of birders are aiming for this record, not just one state or all the states in North America but throughout Canada etc. Keith is also getting up a list of those who have reached 500 in North America. Having completed a 19,000 mile trip from here to Key West, stopping to see Lowery and Newman in Baton Rouge and up to Canada where many are working toward it. It is a big incentive in studying birds.

" Best Wishes, good birding and good luck."

Earle R. Greene
Oxnard, California

" Just wished to write that I was really delighted with your recent Newsletter--particularly the emphasis that you placed on conservation as opposed to just viewing birds. I too think that the Society should be more active in State Conservation affairs. When I signed up as a member it was with the assumption that the Society was active in that respect, and when I learned that it wasn't, I was ready to let my membership go--(not that that would have been an earth-shaking event). After receiving your Newsletter, however, I am glad to renew. I do not have much opportunity to get to meetings or to go birding these days, but if you need letters sent to representatives or game department people on conservation issues, I would be glad to comply."

D. G. Schueler

" I do hope to find time to send in my bird list, in the near future, but would like to inform you of a female Western Tanager I saw in my yard earlier this spring. The yellow wing bars cinched it for me, and of course, I was quite elated upon checking my field guides and realizing I had seen an accidental in this region.

"A wilderness area well worth preserving, but going fast, is the woodland around Swayze Lake and Secone Lake which is near Palmetto and Melville and off Highway 71.

"My ten years of bird study were done mostly at Swayze Lake, which is teeming with wildlife, and I can't bear to see it being gradually torn away for farming and lumber. This is where the birds sing all day in the spring, and I learned their songs, habits, and saw more species than I imagined we had in this area."

Mrs. Marion J. Miller

SPRING MEETING AT CAMERON

Probably the largest number of birders ever to attend a meeting at Cameron crowded into Fred's Restaurant on April 30. A total of 87 diners contributed records as Sid Gauthreaux tabulated a list of 192 species for the day, only about a dozen short of a record. The Black-whiskered Vireo headed a good mixture of usual and unusual birds.

The second LOS research grant, this one for \$250, was awarded to John Morony who is studying the behavior and nesting of the Glossy and White-faced Ibis. He hopes his work will shed some light on the problem of whether these two birds should be considered as one species.

In a short business meeting the idea of publishing a brochure on LOS activities was brought up, several members having indicated the need for publicity to reach interested people. The brochure would be available to all members to give to interested friends. The Society also is considering purchasing "Bulldozed America," an excellent conservation film for educational purposes.

The most important decision was to explore the possibility of creating a sanctuary in one of the wooded areas in Cameron Parish. After the meeting Mr. Joe Samner, who with his father owns most of the area we call Hackberry Woods, was contacted. He was receptive to the idea of creating a sanctu-

ary. He mentioned that they have never minded birders using the area. "We hardly know when you are there, you people are so quiet," he said. As a member of the corporation that owns the remainder of the woods, he said he would talk to the other members. We should be able to have a report by the fall Cameron meeting. On a decision as serious as the possible establishment of our first sanctuary a vote of the entire membership will be taken by mail. Since less than one-third of the membership can attend a given meeting, a vote of those present is not sufficiently representative. Our constitution does not cover situations of this sort clearly.



CAMERON, FALL 1966

Here is something to look forward to for our next fall meeting. An invitation was just received from Conway Le Bleu, State Representative from Cameron Parish.

"I have just learned of your Society's visit to Cameron Parish this weekend and regret that I was unable to be of assistance to you or your members.

"Several local people have indicated much pleasure with your selection of Cameron for your meetings, and we want to go out of

our way to make your future visits more enjoyable. I understand that one of your meetings is highlighted by a seafood dinner at Fred's Restaurant here in Cameron, and certainly we do not want to do anything which would interfere with those same meals in the future. However, we thought that we might be able to arrange a shrimp boil or something on that order for your December visit. Will you be kind enough to let me know what you think of the idea, how many people we could expect, and any other pertinent data you might have? I am most certain that we can arrange with local landowners to provide any extra facilities you might need.

"Hoping to hear from you at your convenience, I am,

Respectfully,
Conway LeBleu"

We assume a shrimp boil would appeal to most members so this letter is being answered immediately accepting for the society. We will try to include in the arrangement an alternate meal for the non-shrimp eaters. So plan to be there November 19 for good birding and good eating.

TRAP OR TREAT

Of the pressing state problems in conservation, none is more worthy of our consideration than the plight of our large predators, such animals as the Red Wolf, Coyote, Mountain Lion, and Great Horned Owl. There has been a gradual transition in many states from a program of persecution and bounty payments to tolerance and finally acceptance of these carnivores as a natural part of our landscapes. I don't know what laws we have on the books in Louisiana but I do know that state trappers operate in the Natchitoches area taking good numbers of carnivores, often keeping them in small cages for several days without food before killing. If you are interested in this topic read the article from a California newspaper that appears below, then help us find out what our present laws are and how we might initiate some change. Working as a group we might

accomplish something, but we need information.

COYOTE FINDS YOU CAN BEAT CITY HALL

Friends of Howling Critter
Overturn Trapping Ordinance

The lonesome wail of the coyote has persuasion. At the meeting of the Pasadena Board of Directors Tuesday night the members voted unanimously to toss out a proposed ordinance amendment that could have permitted the trapping of coyotes in the Annandale - Linda Vista - San Rafael hills.

It was a week ago Tuesday night that the ordinance had its first reading. It was prompted by a few residents of the hill areas who complained that dogs and cats had fallen prey, over a period of time, to the coyotes.

It was argued that coyotes were traveling in "packs of 30 or 40" in the hills and that it had been suggested that pedestrians in the area should carry a club to beat off attacking coyotes.

Following the announcement of the board action the friends of the coyote in the Pasadena area came forward.

City Manager Elder Gunter offered as evidence 16 letters in support of the coyote. Director Richard Jencks, who spoke eloquently Tuesday night in behalf of the small predator, acknowledged receiving more than 100 letters, "all but one in favor of coyotes."

He listed a number of facts made by the "eloquent, cogent and much to the point" letters he had received. These were:

1. Coyotes are not known to attack humans. They do not travel in packs.
2. Numerous people have kept dogs adjacent to coyote areas and have not lost their pets.
3. The suggested steel traps constitute a

greater danger to domestic animals and small children.

4. Coyotes help to keep down the pesky rodent population.

5. The coyote population in the local hills is part of the colorful heritage of the West.

6. It should be considered a privilege to live next to wild areas and wild animals. Children should benefit from such an environment.

7. Steel traps are a cruel way to take coyotes.

8. If there is a coyote problem it should be dealt with in a different manner.

Jencks praised the Star-News for the stories and columns it had run on behalf of the coyote.

Mayor Floyd Gwinn admitted that he too had grave reservations about the dangers of steel traps to children and pets.

A member of the audience, Bob Evans, offered a petition of 72 names that had been collected in the Annandale area against the proposed ordinance.

When the roll call vote was taken on the second reading of the ordinance, all directors present voted against the bill.

By Russ Leadabrand
Pasadena, Star-News

STATE OF SIEGE

The word from Guatemala is that the political situation is at best, uncertain. If the president-elect takes over this month the country may go communist. If the military keep him out of office a revolution may start. In addition to these political difficulties several members who have indicated an interest in going would prefer to make the trip later in the year. Therefore we had better consider the June trip canceled at this time. More will appear later about a rescheduling, possibly around Christmas.

BIRD SANCTUARY, LOS ANGELES

Halfway up the road to the observatory
We saw the sign and turned in under the
trees,

Thinking of birds. Walking and stopping,
Looking up, listening, our ears filled
With the sound of their absence. Not one.
Not even a falling sparrow. Only the trees
That we knew, live oaks, sycamores, maples,
Empty leaves rustling,--

Reminding us of another sadness last year
In the hills above Taxco, a shrine
We came upon in a place once bright
With the faith of many flowers, dying slowly
Of neglect and loneliness, of loneliness
Most of all, and in different place,
Voiceless, unvisited. Dispossessed.

By Eric Barker
Saturday Review

NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. Marjorie Beghtol - 108 Rowena Street
Natchitoches, Louisiana.
Mrs. Sarah Boutte, 2872 Ontario Street-Baton
Rouge, Louisiana.
Dr. F. C. Colley, 539 Esplanade Street - New
Orleans, Louisiana.
Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Darden; 555 East River
Oaks-Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Jimmy Hill; 4533 Essen Lane; Baton Rouge, La.
Mrs. Marguerite B. May; 2872 Ontario Street;
Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Swan; 366 Pine Street;
New Orleans, Louisiana.
Miss Fran Wargo; Box 16191; Louisiana State
University; Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

NEW ORLEANS CHAPTER

A meeting is being held in New Orleans on May 24, for the purpose of organizing a New Orleans chapter of the Louisiana Ornithological Society. Helga Cernicek, who is in charge of local arrangements, hopes to attract both LOS members and non-members. The program will include Hugh C. Land's film-lecture on Guatemala. If you want a chapter in your area, write the editor.