

LOUISIANA
ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



No. 49

Lafayette, Louisiana

October 28, 1968

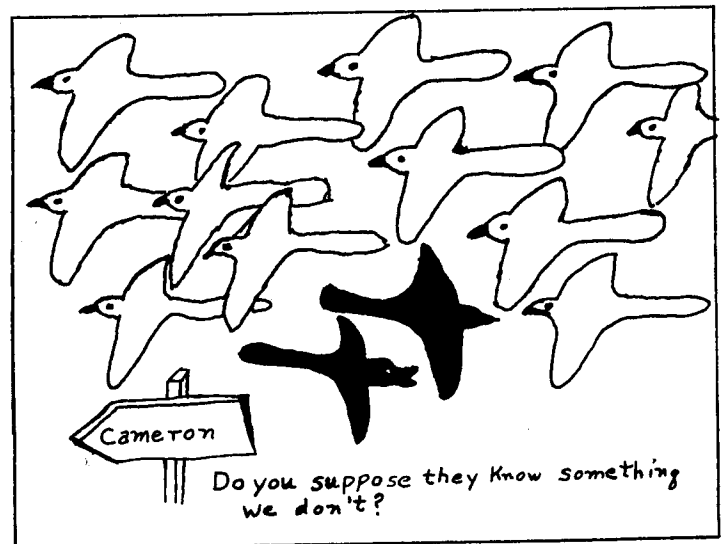
LOS TO MEET IN CAMERON

The fall meeting of the LOS will be held in Cameron during the weekend of December 6-8, 1968. As usual, we expect to have a good attendance so it would be advisable to make reservations well in advance for your sleeping accommodations. There are two motels in Cameron, the Gulf Motel and Broussard's Motel and two others within 10 miles of Cameron. The latter two are the Gulf View and Rutherford Beach Motel. Write directly to the motel of your choice to make your reservations.

A roster will be placed at the main desk at Fred's Restaurant in Cameron sometime Friday evening for LOS members and their guests to sign. Please attach your name to this roster at your earliest convenience after your arrival. The Saturday evening dinner meeting will be held at Fred's beginning at 6 P. M. One of the highlights will be the compilation of the birds observed in Cameron Parish during the day. What will the count be on December 7th? In 1966 the total count was 167 but last fall only 131 species were seen. Let's beat the bushes this year and obtain at least 150. We will have the election of new officers for 1969 and a most unusual and interesting program given by Dr. Hugh

Land. Dr. Land will show some motion pictures and color slides which he took last January on his latest expedition to Guatemala. Maps of the Cameron area will be available at Fred's so take one when you sign the roster. For those members not well acquainted with the Cameron birding areas it is suggested that they bring their copy of the LOS NEWS (No. 48 for April 1968) which contained an article discussing the better birding locales in Cameron.

Come to Cameron and help us celebrate our 21st birthday. Yes, the LOS will officially come of age on Friday, December 6.



RESUME OF SPRING MEETINGS

As usual the spring migration period was an active time for the LOS members as well as for their feathered friends. Two state meetings were held, one in Cameron on the weekend of April 26-28 and the other at Chicot State Park on May 10-12.

At Cameron the weather was somewhat variable, though there was no precipitation. On Saturday it was slightly windy and completely overcast during the morning hours. By noon the sun appeared and it turned muggy.

Saturday evening some 70 odd members and their guests (bird watchers are odd--I'm sure you have heard this expressed.) flocked together at Fred's Restaurant for their dinner and program before going to roost for the night. The meeting was officially opened by the President, Dr. Marshall Eyster. Members were advised that brochures about the summer camps of the National Audubon Society could be obtained from the secretary after the meeting by anyone desiring them. Inquiry was made about the current well-being of our long-time member and patron, Miss Ava Tabor. A suggestion by several members that future meetings be held in Lake Charles where more extensive accommodations are available was not looked upon favorably by most members. It was generally agreed that the 50 miles between Lake Charles and the better birding areas around Cameron was too great a distance to warrant holding the meetings in Lake Charles. Dr. Hugh Land was asked to say a few words about the upcoming Breeding Bird Survey being conducted by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He indicated that they were hoping for a complete coverage of our state and that more volunteers were needed. Mr. Bob LaVal then acted as compiler of the list of birds, which accrued to a very satisfactory 185 species. This was three more species than had been seen during the 1967 spring Cameron meeting. By far the outstanding bird of the day was a Kiskadee Flycatcher which was seen building

a nest about 60 feet up in a dead sycamore tree. Mainly Spanish moss was being used for the nest but a few small twigs were also employed. The bird had been discovered the previous weekend by Dr. Lowery and his students from L. S. U. Though without success, an effort was made to determine if it had a mate. However, Mrs. Charles Payne and some of the other Lake Charles birders reported seeing two birds a couple of weeks later. Does anyone know if they raised a family?

A bird not reported on the Saturday count but seen on Sunday was a Sandwich Tern. At noon on Sunday, Charles and Yvonne Payne told your president that they had seen a tern sitting on a piling in the water near to the Cameron Dump which they believed to be a Sandwich Tern. Being the careful and critical observers that they are, they sought confirmation. Fortunately the bird was still there when we went to investigate and were able to verify their identification. The amount of yellow on the tip of the bill was not as extensive as seen on many Sandwich Terns so the bird may have been an immature from the previous summer.

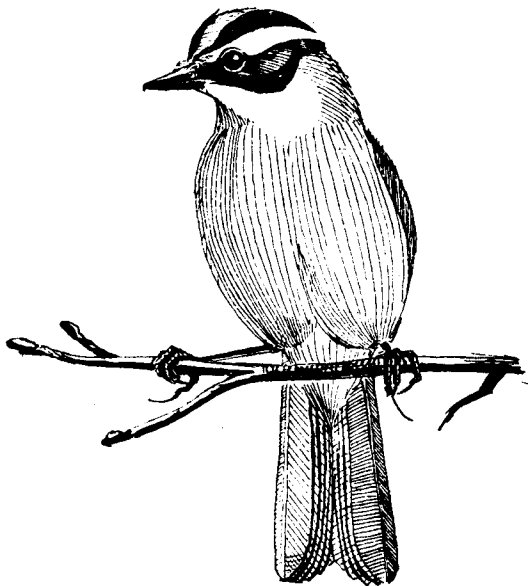
The meeting concluded with a remarkable presentation by Miss Mary Lewis and Mr. Wayne Blank, of New Orleans. They showed their movie and color slides taken while on an extended safari to East Africa last summer. The close-up photographs of the birds and mammals were fascinating to behold.

Two weeks after the Cameron meeting 40 LOS members and their guests assembled at Chicot State Park for two days of birding on May 11 and 12. Again there was rain but not nearly as much as there had been the previous year. It turned out to be rather late in the season thus most of the transients had already passed through the Chicot area. As a result only 84 species were reported, most of them being summer

residents of the area. We had never seen less than 100 species before. The best find was an Olive-sided Flycatcher right behind the recreation building. It would fly from the extreme tip of one dead tree to another. There have been only a few other spring records for this bird for the state.

The Friday evening program consisted of movies, the most enjoyable film being a life history study on the Mallard produced by the Missouri Conservation Department. At the Saturday evening program there were bird-word games, a short book talk by Mrs. Grace Eyster on some new and interesting bird books and a Kodachrome slide presentation on "Colorful Colorado and Some of its Bird Life" by Dr. Marshall Eyster.

Saturday morning there were guided bird walks along some of the scenic foot-trails for those birders that wished to participate and a motorcade to Miller's Lake in the afternoon. Although the group did not break any records in the number of birds observed they all truly enjoyed themselves.



SECRETARY-TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Active Account on Hand (December 2, 1967)	\$ 851.29
Receipts	<u>385.92</u>
Total	\$1237.21
Disbursements	109.35
Total Balance on Hand	<u>\$1127.86</u>
Special Fund in New Orleans Bank	<u>951.34</u>
Total LOS Assets, April 27, 1968	\$2079.20
(Signed) Mrs. Helga Cernicek	

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

BIRD WORLD c/o Miss Marjorie Adams
P.O. Box 2124
Austin, Texas 78767

Mr. C. Bernard Berry
1125 E. Lakeview Dr.
Baton Rouge, La. 70810

Dr. Salvatore F. Bongiorno
Biology Dept., LSUNO
Lake Front
New Orleans, La. 70122

Mrs. John R. Coor
Rt. 2
St. Joseph, La. 71366

Miss Vickie Davis
428 Eighth St.
Baton Rouge, La. 70802

Mr. Hugh M. Glenn, Jr.
413 Hector Ave.
Metairie, La. 70005

Mrs. Kline B. Grigsby
230 Grand Ave.
Lafayette, La. 70501

Dr. Stanley A. Heath
387 Maxine Dr.
Baton Rouge, La. 70808

Dr. Loys Huckabay, Jr.
1304 Fourth St.
Westwego, La. 70094

Mrs. T. H. Jones
Box 476
Natchez, Miss., 39120

Mrs. John G. Landwehr
2853 Ramsey Dr.
New Orleans, La. 70114

Dr. F. Earle Lyman
12403 Rip Van Winkle
Houston, Texas 77024

Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Mahone, Jr.
Route 1
Karnack, Texas 75661

Mr. and Mrs. Jack S. Mann
Victory Drive
Marshall, Texas 75670

Mr. Gary Monroe
Rt. 1, Box 77A
Glenmora, La. 71433

Mr. Michael J. Musumeche
P.O. Box 232 USL
Lafayette, La. 70501

Mr. Donnie Norman
1139 Third St.
New Orleans, La. 70130

Mrs. James N. Norris
751 Kirkman Street
Lake Charles, La. 70601

Mr. Edward J. Nunenmacher
205 Beaver Dr.
Arabi, La. 70032

Miss Elizabeth Parham
121 South Tenth St.
Baton Rouge, La. 70802

Miss Ruth Parkman
615 Delgado Dr.
Baton Rouge, La. 70808

Mr. Larry Ponder
R. R. 1, Box 25
Saline, La. 71070

Mr. Ray Price
1366 Camp Street
New Orleans, La. 70130

Mr. and Mrs. A. Quinn
1808 Mason Smith Street
Metairie, La. 70003

Mr. H. Newton Smith
Fairview Plantation
Berwick, La. 70342

Mr. and Mrs. Chs. Spangler
Middle Rosborough Springs Rd.
Marshall, Texas 75670

Mrs. B. L. Spann, Jr.
930 S. River Oaks
Baton Rouge, La. 70815

Mrs. Sidney M. Sundbery
505 West Main Street
Houma, La. 70360

NEW LIFE MEMBER

Mrs. Charles L. Payne of Lake Charles became the 35th life member of the LOS on April 27, 1968. Congratulations Yvonne. Yvonne and Charles have been long time members dating back to 1956.

INFORMATION NEEDED

Does anyone know the whereabouts of the following LOS members? Please advise our Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Helga Cernicek. There is no chirping or twittering at their last known address.

Mr. Lewis Collier
6400 Press Dr.
New Orleans, La. 70126

Mr. Robert J. Pfrimmer
4208 Desiard Rd.
Apt. A
Monroe, La. 71201

Mrs. John C. Ohrt
621 Southfield Rd.
Shreveport, La. 71106

CRESCENT BIRD CLUB CONCLUDES SECOND SEASON

The Crescent Bird Club of the greater New Orleans area marked the conclusion of its second successful year with two events in May. Its First Annual Spring Count was held on May 4. Though hampered by unfavorable weather, eleven observers in six parties recorded 120 species. Dr. R. Dan Purington acted as compiler. On May 15, the CBC met to view two very interesting films: one on Woodpecker Nesting (supplied by Dr. G. H. Lowery and described by him as "one of the most exciting bird films I have seen"), the other on the life cycle of the Bobwhite, supplied by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. Officers for 1968-69 were elected: for Chairman - Mr. Wiley Wilkinson, succeeding Mrs. Helga Cernicek. Miss Louise Poillon was re-elected Secretary-Treasurer. With over 70 members, the CBC is looking forward to another active season of outings and indoor programs.



WILDLIFE MOVIES

Again the Audubon wildlife movies will be presented in only two cities in Louisiana, Lafayette and Shreveport, during the 1968-69 season. For the benefit of those LOS members that live within commuting distance of these two communities we present their schedules.

LAFAYETTE (7:30 P. M.; Angelle Auditorium, USL Campus)
October 9, 1968, Wednesday, Three Seasons North - D. J. Nelson
November 10, 1968, Sunday, Four Seasons - Wilfred E. Gray
February 5, 1969, Wednesday, Nature's Ways - William J. Jahoda
March 31, 1969, Monday, This Curious World in Nature - William Ferguson
April 16, 1969, Wednesday, Our Unique Water Wilderness - The Everglades - William A. Anderson

SHREVEPORT (evenings; La. State Exhibit Museum)
October 10, 1968, Thursday, Three Seasons North - D. J. Nelson
November 8, 1968, Friday, Four Seasons - Wilfred E. Gray
February 6, 1969, Thursday, Nature's Ways - William J. Jahoda
March 26, 1969, Wednesday, This Curious World in Nature - William Ferguson
April 17, 1969, Thursday, Our Unique Water Wilderness - The Everglades - William A. Anderson

BIRDS OF THE CHANDELEUR ISLANDS Marshall B. Eyster

On June 5, 1968, I was very fortunate in being invited by Mr. Jake M. Valentine, of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to accompany him on a three-day trip to the Chandeleur Islands off the southeast coast of Louisiana. The Chandeleurs are a series of barrier islands forming a north-south crescent about 35 miles in length with the northern most end of the chain approximate-

ly 25 miles south of the Mississippi Coast. These islands that average less than a mile in width have been largely set aside to protect a variety of colonial nesting seabirds and wintering waterfowl. We drove to Biloxi where we met Mr. Robert Stevens, the refuge manager. We headed south out of Biloxi with Frank Carroll as our captain and by late afternoon reached Stake Island after a voyage of about 50 miles. The water was rough during the first part of the trip but after we reached the westward side of the islands it became calmer. One Brown Pelican, several Magnificent Frigate-birds and various gulls and terns were observed on our way out. A few birds were discovered nesting on Stake Island including one small colony of about 30 Louisiana Herons and a few Laughing Gulls and Least Terns. The mosquitoes were in great profusion especially around the Louisiana Heron colony which was in a low marshy clump of mangroves. One immature Herring Gull that was not able to fly was captured by Jake's son. It appeared to be sick or injured. That night we slept on board ship some distance off shore to keep away from the mosquitoes as much as possible.

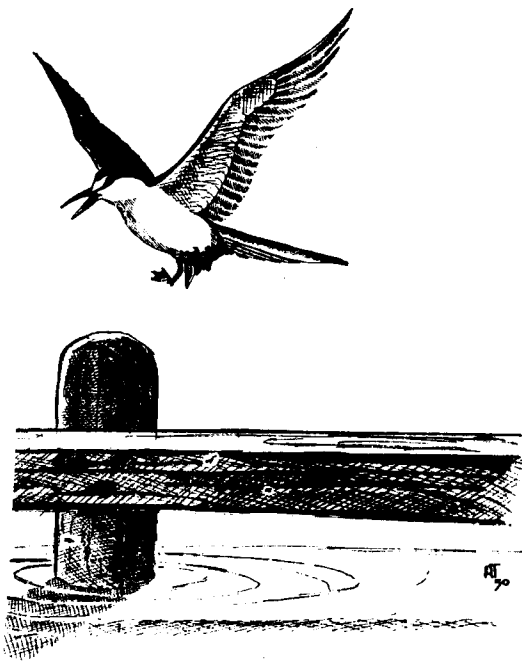
On the morning of June 6 we went ashore on Curlew Island. This is literally a sea-bird paradise. Here we located a nesting colony of about 150 Black Skimmers. Unfortunately someone had been there recently since we could still see footprints and had collected about 80 skimmer eggs and placed them in an old plastic container. A Biloxi news reporter immediately took a picture of Jake and the wasted skimmer eggs. This photo subsequently appeared in the Biloxi newspaper with a caption warning against such vandalism on these bird islands and decrying such wanton destruction.

The most common bird nesting on Curlew Island was the Sandwich Tern. There were several small colonies but one very large one. We estimated that there were about 40,000 Sandwich Terns nesting on the island. About 1,000 Royal Terns were nesting on the periphery of the larger colony. We did not walk in the area because the sand

was so covered with nests that it would have been hard for anyone to tread through the colony without breaking a few eggs and we did not want to disturb the birds any more than necessary. Mr. Valentine was making a study of these colonies for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The raucous calling of the birds was deafening and it made the sight even more wonderful to behold. I was able to obtain some good photographs of these terns. Observing this colony was certainly a memorable occasion. An even greater surprise was finding a pair of Sooty Terns nesting near to one of the smaller Sandwich Tern colonies. The nest was nothing more than a slight depression in the sand containing a single egg, tucked up under the bent-over blades of a clump of grass. In addition to being a new life bird I was pleased with the photographs I was able to obtain. According to Lowery's Louisiana Birds this tern was formerly a rare but regular nester on these islands. Two were collected on Curlew Island in June 1933 and then no state records were obtained until September 1961. Since 1964, however, they have been reported nesting on the Chandeleur Chain. A fair number of Caspian Terns and Laughing Gulls were also found nesting on Curlew Island.

Leaving Curlew we headed north to North Island where we were greeted by another spectacular sight--an estimated 3,000 Magnificent Frigate-birds. They rose from the island and filled the sky with their magnificent silhouettes as we approached. Many of the birds were immatures but there was no sign that they had been nesting on the island. In all probability they had nested hundreds of miles to the south of the Chandeleurs and had flown here but a short time before to feed on jellyfish and other marine life surrounding the islands. Other birds were nesting on North Island including Little Blue Herons, Common Egrets, Laughing Gulls, and Black Skimmers. Along the shore 11 American Oystercatchers were seen.

The next morning we had to return to port since a storm was brewing. We encountered some heavy rain and choppy water. During one of the lulls between showers a very dark, chunky, short-tailed Herring Gull-sized bird flew in front of the boat and appeared to be chasing some gulls. Everyone remarked how fast it flew and with what apparent ease it could overtake any gull. Then a second such bird appeared off the port side. These were birds none of us had ever seen before. One at least had white patches in its wings. One hesitates to name these birds but by the process of elimination they must have been Skuas. They stayed in view for only about a minute and then disappeared rapidly over the horizon. We circled around in the boat for a few minutes hoping to get another look but without success. It was an exciting and unexpected way to end a wonderful birding expedition.



EXOTIC GAME BIRDS IN LOUISIANA

Marshall B. Eyster

There are some game birds found in Louisiana that are not on the official state list. These are game birds from foreign countries introduced into Louisiana by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission.

About 10 years ago the Coturnix Quail was introduced into Louisiana. It is a native of Eurasia and looks so much like our Bobwhite that it may be difficult to tell them apart in the field. In addition to being slightly smaller, it has a little longer neck, is more distinctively marked on the back and the bill is longer and narrower. Its habits differ somewhat from the Bobwhite in that it does not form coveys but is found usually either singly or in pairs. It lives more in the open fields, similar to a meadowlark, and does not need dense cover like the Bobwhite. The Coturnix consumes many seeds but eats more insects and other animal matter than does the Bobwhite. In its native land it is exceptionally prolific, rearing as many as four broods per year, each of 10 to 16 chicks. The Bobwhite usually has a single clutch of about 14 eggs. The Coturnix Quail also matures to breeding stage within three to four months.

The introduction of this bird appears to have been a failure not only here in Louisiana but in the other states where similar attempts have been made. Alabama for example, released over 132,000 hatchery-reared birds before giving it up in 1959 as a failure.

The Coturnix Quail is migratory, breeding in Europe and western Asia and wintering in northern Africa. Formerly they migrated in unbelievable numbers. The Bible tells of such a flight in the Sinai Desert where the Children of Israel gathered them for two days and one night. One researcher has estimated that they killed some nine million quail. Could this migra-

tory habit explain the disappearance of all those thousands of birds released in the U.S.? Did they migrate and vanish into the Gulf of Mexico? The author knows of no recent reports of this bird in the wild in Louisiana but large numbers are being used in pesticide studies by Gulf South Research Institute at New Iberia.

Another exotic game bird in Louisiana is the Black Francolin from southern Asia. Since 1960 this bird has been released in a dozen states and in Louisiana in particular has demonstrated an ability to survive and reproduce in suitable habitat. In April 1961 a release of 152 Black Francolins was made near Oak Ridge in Morehouse Parish followed by another release there of 190 birds in May 1962. These were wild trapped birds from Pakistan and were all banded before release. Four nests were found during the summer of 1961 and more nests and broods observed in 1962. In the summer of 1964 calling males were heard and a total of 45 adult males and females were reported sighted. Only about 3 of these were banded, meaning that the rest were birds that had been hatched in the wild in Louisiana. However, in 1965 only five birds, all without bands were observed and the population appeared to be dying out.

Similar releases had been made in the Gum Cove area in Cameron Parish in April 1961 (110 birds) and February 1962 (201 birds). Two broods, but no nests, were observed during the summer of 1961. Nests and broods were located in 1962 and four nests were found between June 29 and July 21, 1965. Reproduction appeared to have been good in this area and the species had spread at least 10 miles to the north. One calling male was observed 17 miles north of the release area. The area is surrounded by marsh on the east, south and west and there appears to have been no spread in these directions. The call of the male is so unlike that of other birds that it is said that it must be heard to be believed. First, there is a low guttural note similar to a click of the tongue, followed

immediately by zzzzeeee, zzzzeeee, zzee, zzee, which sounds not unlike a cicada. The call can be heard for at least a third of a mile.

The Black Francolin feeds on more insects than the Bobwhite; it does not form coveys and does not migrate. The future status of this species in the state is still in doubt but they have survived one extremely cold winter and the Gum Cove birds lived through the flooding caused by hurricane Carla.

A third and more recent bird introduced into Louisiana is the Red Junglefowl. The original home for this species is southern Asia where it is a forest dweller. The southern half of Louisiana is supposed to offer a habitat similar to that found in its native range in India. In February 1963 the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission obtained ten hens and five cocks from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. These were placed at the DeRidder Exotic Game Farm as breeding stock. Forty-six young birds were released on the Idlewild Game Management Area in December 1963. However, by summer 1964 these apparently had all disappeared except for two males that were consorting with a flock of barnyard chickens. In December 1964, four more releases were made (50 at Idlewild GMA, 80 at Thistlewaite GMA, 58 at West Bay GMA, and 30 at Pat Needham Farm). From November 1965 to March 1966 four subsequent releases were made (61 at Thistlewaite, 51 at West Bay, 41 at Idlewild and 50 at St. Helena). At least four broods were observed at both Idlewild and St. Helena during 1966 and prospects appeared good. No evidence of reproduction was observed at Thistlewaite or West Bay.

If you happen to be birding in any of these areas where these exotic game birds have been released keep your eyes open and you may be able to pick up an exotic new "lifer" for your list.