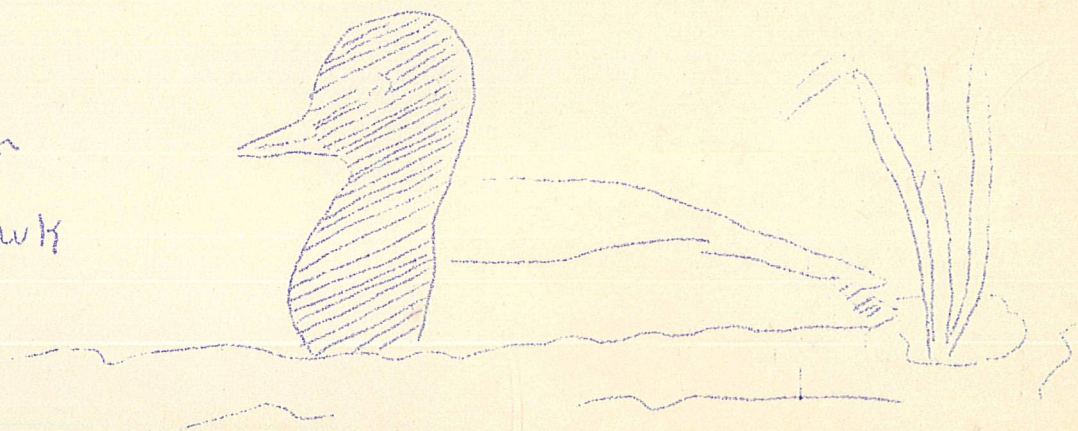


the
lessen
Squawk



Published at Charleston, S.C. by The Natural History Society. February 1968. Vol. XIX No. 4
Editor and Publisher: Mrs. Robert H. Coleman, 774 Ft. Sumter Dr. Charleston, S.C.

° ° ° OFFICERS ° ° °

President: Ernest A. Cutts, 1466 Edgewater Dr. Edgewater Park, Charleston, S.C.
Vice-President: Julian R. Harrison, III, Marine Laboratory, Ft. Johnson, Charleston, S.C.
Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. L.S. Smith, Jr. 1068 Northbridge Dr. Charleston, S.C.

PROGRAM FOR FEBRUARY

February 13
Executive Meeting Museum Office 7:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting Charleston Museum Lecture Room 8:00 p.m.
Substitute Speaker: Mrs. R.H. Coleman. A Bit of Botany, Slides
February 18
All Day Field Trip to Dean Hall and environs
Meet Eckerd's N. Charleston Pinehaven Shopping Center 8:45 a.m.
Leaders: The Belknaps. Bring lunch

BIRD MOVEMENT IN FEBRUARY
(in the Charleston area)

Arrivals.

1 Purple Martin (R. Coleman)°
Red-breasted Nuthatch (Beckett)°
8 White-tailed Kite

10 Rough-winged Swallow (Beckett)°
11 Yellow-breasted Chat (Beckett)°
28 Evening Grosbeak (Beckett)°

Departures

3 White-fronted Goose
15 Golden Eagle

15 Cinnamon Teal
? Dovekie

Casuals and Accidentals

Harlequin Duck
Long-tailed Jaeger

Parula Warbler
Common Redpoll (Mills)°

° When the date is not taken from South Carolina Bird Life the authority is given.

CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS.

Burnham Chamberlain, Compiler, reports 148 species noted on the 1967 Christmas Count. While this was more than those reported on last year's count, the estimated number of individual birds was considerably less, about 15,000 as compared to 33,000 in '66. Rare birds sighted were 9 Whistling Swans, an Eagle and a Common Eider, the second record for the state.

These observers in 8 groups took part, surveying our usual area east of the Cooper, fourteen miles north of Mt. Pleasant. J.H. Dick, A. Garrity of Rye, N.Y. E.C. Clyde of Effingham, S.C. H.W. Freeman, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Grinrich, Edwin Read of Greensboro, N.C. E.A. Cutts, A.M. Wilcox, A.M. Wilcox, Jr. These three searching the coastal waters in a small boat, Capt. & Mrs. L.S. Smith, Mrs. Jack Button of Summerville, Miss Ruth Clements, E.H. Chamberlain, Edwin Blich, Roy Baker, David Chamberlain, Norman Chamberlain, Edmund Cuthbert of Summerville, David Yount, Allan Bills of Summerville and D.M. Cupka, T.A. Beckett, Mrs. R.H. Coleman, Teague Coleman of Augusta, Ga., William McIntosh, Mrs. Leonard Glover, Mrs. Richard Monroe, I.S.H. Metcalf, Hugh Thompson, Miss Nell Prior, Mrs. G.T. Prior.

The weather was cold but sunny and windless and the misery of last year's rainy count was forgotten.

OBSERVATIONS

We have many fine observations from our members for this month's issue, several of them unusual. Ted Beckett tells of seeing two Short-eared Owls on Deveaux Bank on January 7. This is an owl of grassy tracts, salt marshes and barrier islands and is active in the daytime. It is not uncommon, but not too often seen.

Louise Button reports sighting with Edmund Cuthbert a rare transient. She says "Golden Plover watched for a long time at the end of Edisto Island at Jeremy Inlet on mud flats and rocky shoals of the beach - a gentle creature, kept aloof from other shore birds. Seen December 19" There are a number of records in S.C. Bird Life of the Golden Plover, but our society's only record was made on August 25, 1959 by Mrs. J.C. Green and the Robert Colemans in a pool in back of the Sgt. Jasper Apartments. Louise also says that she had Baltimore Orioles in her garden in Summerville in late December and the first week of January. Purple Finches, Flickers (lots of them) White Throats (fewer than usual) Juncos, a Sapsucker, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, many Myrtle Warblers and on December 14 Black and White Warbler.

David Yount reports large numbers of Gannets as close as 100 yards off shore at Folly Beach and as far out as he could see on December 23. Gannets are seen each winter at Folly, but usually far off shore.

Anne Richardson tells of one ~~and one~~ male and one female, or immature Baltimore Oriole feeding on the nectar of Rev. John Bennett camellias in her yard in Arcadian Park on December 24 and January 1 and again on January 25. This particular camellia seems to be the only variety which attracts them. She observed orioles doing the same thing last year.

Peg Metcalf reports a Fox Sparrow in her yard in Battery Point on January 9 and Francis Barrington had a flock of 15 or 20 Ruby-crowned Kinglets in his yard in Riverland Terrace on December 29, and members of Ted Beckett's group on the Christmas Bird Count came across a gathering of 50 or more of these little birds on Gerhan's Bridge Road (e. of the Cooper) on December 30. Ruby crowns are common winter visitors in this area, but are not usually seen in such concentrations. The Barringtons also report a Golden-crowned Kinglet December 30 and on November 6, 7 and 22 an Orange-crowned Warbler at their feeder for the 21st consecutive year. Not possibly the same bird?

Edwin Blich reports a Baltimore Oriole in St. Andrew's High School yard on Jan. 11

The Barringtons also send an interesting note from the Daytona Beach Sunday News-Journal. The Christmas bird count by the Halifax River Audubon Society recorded 123 species. Although the individual birds estimated were more than last year, the count showed a decline in number for forty different species, among them many of the more common ones. Our local showed a big drop in individual birds noted. Does this mean a definite widespread drop in bird population?

January Field Trip.

Well, as the saying goes, 'You can't win 'em all' and as we have had three unusually good trips this 1967-68 season we should not complain when the fates deliver a blow. But what a blow! So far the editor has heard of only one young and hardy member who even started out for the Santee Refuge. David Yount decided to make a try, but got to the meeting place to find it deserted so, sensibly, returned home. Lois Doscher, who was to meet our group at the entrance to the Refuge, reports that she didn't try to get to Manning (her home) after work on Friday as scheduled, and when she finally ventured forth on a foggy Saturday morning (late) she found icy pavements before she reached Manning.

This writer, having reached years of discretion, risked one eye at five o'clock Saturday morning and turned over for another nap and was glad she did. It's too bad the elements defeated us as there is no doubt that there were plenty of ducks and geese waiting to be spied on.

Looking back through past Squawks I find that extreme cold or chilling rain is the rule rather than the exception for our January trips, so maybe we shouldn't have been surprised.

W.M.C.

ANOTHER GOOD BOOK.

Those of our members and their friends who appreciate the bliss of solitude - - - with good natural history thrown in will enjoy reading 'The Winter Beach' by Charlton Ogburn, Jr. Mr. Ogburn, part ornithologist, part botanist, part geologist, ° ° to say nothing of being another part philosopher brings us down the east coast, from Maine as far as Hatteras during its lonliest, - - - and possibly loveliest time of the year. Good, big type, and excellent illustrations. I recommend it strongly.

Ted Metcalf

(Morrow, 1966)

NEW MEMBERS

We are glad to welcome these new members to the Society and hope that we shall see them at all of our meetings and field trips.

MR: AND Mrs. Alan Bills of Summerville
Robert H. Coleman, III of Augusta, Ga. (Student)
Robert F. O'Neil, Charleston
Mrs. A. E. Morrison of Hartsville, S.C.

This brings our membership up to 152