



The Spoonbill

A Publication of the Ornithology Group (OG)
of the Houston Outdoor Nature Club

May 2006
Vol. 55 No. 5

May Meeting

Monday, May 1, 2006 -- 7:00 p.m.

Bayland Community Center
6400 Bissonnet, Houston

6:30 -- Learning Corner -- Adam Wood
will clear up *Those Confusing Blackbirds*.

Program: A Texas Big Year

Lynn E. Barber was born in Wisconsin, and has lived in Alaska, Oregon, North Carolina and, since 2000, Texas. She is a registered patent attorney in solo practice in Fort Worth. She has a Ph.D. in bacteriology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a JD from Duke University Law School (1985). Her avocations include bird-watching, nature photography, church volunteer activities, playing the hammered dulcimer, and baking cookies. She has been active in local Audubon organizations for many years, is currently president of the Fort Worth Audubon Society, and is a lifetime member of the Texas Ornithological Society. She is married to Rev. David Barber, pastor at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Fort Worth.

Lynn has had a passion for birding all her life. One reason that she moved to Texas in 2000 was because of its astounding diversity of birds. Her passion for Texas birding led her to drive more than 90,000 miles in 2005 and to break the record set in 2004, which was 511, for the most bird species observed in the state in one year. Her quest, in a year with a remarkable influx of birds from the south, took her to practically every nook, canyon, forest, and beach in Texas. She will speak about the highlights of her Texas Big Year, during which she recorded 523 species, and will show pictures of some of the birds seen that year. She is writing a book about her 2005 achievement entitled "Great Big Year of Texas Birding."

Editor's Note: This issue of *The Spoonbill* is smaller than usual. This is because we simply did not have much material submitted for publication. Please consider writing something for future issues!

Material for the next issue of *The Spoonbill* (August 2006) should be sent in by July 10.

Other Events

April 29: Galveston Migrants
with Dwight Peake

May 13: Big Thicket with Tom Kihn

Next issue of *The Spoonbill*: August 2006

Inside this issue:

About the OG	2
April Meeting Minutes	2
Field Trips	3
Field Trip Reports	3
Membership Form	4

Minutes of the April 3, 2006 Meeting

Bayland Community Center

Attendance: 47

About the Ornithology Group

The Ornithology Group (OG) is a division of the Outdoor Nature Club (ONC), a non-profit organization dedicated to greater knowledge about the environment and wildlife of the Upper Texas Coast. The OG is a club of individuals interested in all aspects of birding, including bird identification, listing bird sightings, competing in birding events, and preserving bird habitat. Some members study bird behavior, biology, distribution and migration, while others just enjoy watching birds. The organization is designed to accommodate these diverse birding interests. Monthly meetings and field trips provide an opportunity to interact with and learn from experts in local and international birding.

Chair: Michael Williams 713-228-9064
Vice-Chair: Bernice Hotman 713-782-7889
Secretary: Shirley & Raymond Mondshine
713-774-1413

Treasurer: Jim Winn 713-464-8057
Clearing House: David Sarkozi 713-412-4409
Library: Andy Scott 281-537-9690
Membership: Margret Simmons 713-776-2511

Spoonbill: Al Shultz 281-829-0970
Email: og_spoonbill@earthlink.net

OG website: <http://www.ornithologygroup.org/>

ONC website: <http://www.outdoornatureclub.org/>

1. **Learning Corner:** Bob Ohmart shared with the group his favorite migratory birding spots on the Upper Texas Coast. He prefers Sabine Woods to High Island and encouraged birding the many roads in this area. Edith Moore Sanctuary in Houston is another of his favorite migratory-bird spots, as is the Katy Prairie for shorebirds in the spring.
2. **Meeting:** Vice-chairman Bernice Hotman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7:10 asking for bird sightings. Two Lesser Black-backed and possibly a Great-Black-backed Gull seen at San Bernard NWR; Hooded and Prothonotary Warblers and Orchard Orioles seen. Kathy Farr had a Blue-winged Warbler in her yard and Margret Simmons saw a Swallow-tailed Kite over her house in Houston. Wilson's Phalarope and Upland Sandpiper seen.
3. **Minutes** of the March meeting approved.
4. **Membership:** If you have not paid your dues, please do so ASAP. Note the new dues amounts (page 8).
5. **Library:** Tracy Kleinhans donated a signed copy of Kevin Karlson's new book on shorebirds to OG.
6. **Spoonbill:** Articles are due ASAP, April 10 being the deadline.
7. **Environmental Issues:** A workshop is being held at U. of H. Downtown on ways to help our state parks; call Mary Dodson for information. Artic NWR drilling and Endangered Species Act changes are still ongoing concerns and should have all our attention.
8. **Field Trips:** Adam Wood handed out field trip evaluation forms and asked all to fill them out. April 8 is OG trip to Jasper County with Tom Kihn. April 14-15-16 is quarterly trip to San Antonio with Mike Creese. April 29 is Galveston Migrants trip with Dwight Peake. The Bear Creek Trip on March 18 was a success; two Le Conte's sparrows seen. Skip Almoney reported that Barker Reservoir produced 8 species of sparrows, and many hawks were seen on the Katy Prairie. Galveston Featherfest held March 30 - April 2 was good on birding and socials. Audubon field trip to Texas City to see Attwater's Prairie Chicken has two openings. Volunteers needed to man the OG booth in Lake Jackson for Migration Celebration on April 8. The next Midweek Trip will be Wednesday, April 12, for birding at Herman Brown Park.
9. **Budget:** Jim Winn to give full report at May meeting.
10. **Program:** Bernice introduced Gil Ekrich, the Outreach Coordinator for the Natural Resources Management Branch of the Environmental Division of the Texas Directorate of Public Works. His presentation was about managing the habitat of the Golden-cheeked Warbler and the Black-capped Vireo. Fort Hood has been very successful in its endeavor; there are now 5000 Golden-cheeked Warblers and 8000 Black-capped Vireos. Fort Hood's constant monitoring and care of these birds has paid off! Many questions followed the presentation.
11. **Meeting adjourned** at 8:45 pm.

--Shirley Mondshine

May 13: Trip to the Big Thicket

Tom Kihn will be leading us to several of the units of the Big Thicket in Hardin County, in search of breeding warblers and vireos and other summer residents of the Big Thicket and Piney Woods. Tom has spent a lot of time birding in east Texas and has some reliable spots for some of the warblers that breed there. He has also been a regular participant in the monthly Bolivar bird surveys.

The plan is to meet at Tom Kihn's complex at 6:30 a.m. and to depart by 6:45 a.m. Tom's complex is at Bayou Park Village at 4400 Memorial, which is just east of Shepherd on Memorial. The only entrance to his complex is from the westbound lanes of Memorial. He will meet us at the gate into the apartment complex.

Be sure to bring your binoculars, hat, sunscreen, water, camera (if you wish), snacks, and a lunch because we will not be stopping at a place for lunch and we will be birding all day.

So come out and join us for a nice spring day of birding with an experienced guide in the Big Thicket and Piney Woods.

--Adam Wood, OG Field Trip Coordinator

713-515-1692 Birdman_570@yahoo.com

Midweek Birding Trip: Hermann Park

The May 2006 midweek birding trip will be on May 10, 2006, and we will revisit Hermann Park. The leader for this trip will be Skip Almoney; he will be at the designated meeting point at 8:00 a.m. and the trip will not last beyond 12:00 noon. We will bird several habitats including open oaks, a small prairie, Brays Bayou and a wooded forest. The meeting place will be the parking lot in the

Bayou Parkland portion of Hermann Park. This parking area is on the west side of Almeda Road between Holcombe Boulevard and South Macgregor Way. Look for the Bayou Parkland Pavilion adjoining the parking area. Hopefully, the construction on Almeda Road will be completed.

Bear Creek Field Trip Report

Fourteen participants enjoyed birding in Bear Creek, Addicks Reservoir and at the Williams' house on March 14, a windy, cool, and overcast day. A Cooper's Hawk chasing a Red-tailed Hawk near Pavilion #5, the traditional Merlin spot, greeted participants at Bear Creek. However, after that we went through a dry spell of about an hour and a half until we got to the area around restrooms 9 and 10. Here we found a Brown Creeper, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Rusty Blackbirds that we missed earlier at Fox and South Golbow, their traditional spot. A Yellow-throated Warbler serenaded us but afforded only a few of the participants brief fleeting glimpses of it. After chasing the Yellow-throated Warbler trying to get better looks, we left Bear Creek and went to Addicks Reservoir in search of LeConte's Sparrows. We were treated to several fleeting glimpses of two LeConte's Sparrows. We ended the day at the Williams' house to see if they had any hummingbirds still around. We were able to locate two male Rufous Hummingbirds and a female Ruby-throated Hummingbird. All in all it was a good trip -- the rain held off and we saw about 45 species.

--Adam Wood

Outdoor Nature Club
Ornithology Group
P.O. Box 270894
Houston TX 77277-0894

TO START OR RENEW A MEMBERSHIP:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-Mail: _____

	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Family</i>
ONC Annual Dues:	\$ 8.00	\$ 15.00
OG Annual Dues:	\$ 14.00	\$ 19.00
Total:	\$ 22.00	\$ 34.00

Additional contributions are welcome in any amount.

Send to:

Outdoor Nature Club
PO Box 270894
Houston TX 77277-0894

Membership questions? Contact Margret Simmons
phone 713-776-2511
msimmons@compassnet.com

New in 2006:
Discount for Electronic *Spoonbill*

Members who do not wish to receive a printed copy of *The Spoonbill* can save \$4 off their dues:

	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Family</i>
ONC	\$ 8.00	\$ 15.00
OG	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00
Total	\$ 18.00	\$ 30.00

To receive a PDF version of
The Spoonbill by email each month,
contact: **og_spoonbill@earthlink.net**
or **msimmons@compassnet.com**