

News and Notes

New Editor for Northern Great Plains Region

We are pleased to announce that a successor to Dr. Stuart Houston as Regional Editor has been appointed. She is Mrs. Esther M. Serr, of 615 8th Street, Rapid City, South Dakota 57701. Mrs. Serr is well-known to all birders of this Region as compiler for South Dakota, a dedicated and thorough chronicler of the Region's birdlife. All reports for the Autumn Migration Season (August 1 - November 30) should be sent to Mrs. Serr, immediately after the close of the season.

To "Stu" Houston (and Mary) who served a full year longer than they had planned, our heartfelt thanks for services beyond all reckoning.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES, AMENDED

Several complaints have been received objecting to the Christmas Bird Count period this year, particularly to the cutting off of New Year's Day. It has been pointed out that some counts have scheduled this day traditionally for many years, and will have great difficulty rescheduling their counts this year. So, as a special last-minute dispensation, *those counts, and only those, whose traditional day has been (including last year) New Year's Day, may submit counts for January 1, 1975.* Counts new this year, and all counts which do not traditionally count on New Year's Day, will not be accepted if submitted for January 1. The regular count period is Dec. 14 to Dec. 31, 1974.

11 NATURE TOURS FROM QUESTERS FOR YOUR WINTER TRAVEL

For this winter Questers offers 11 of its 34 exciting Worldwide Nature Tours for 1975. We visit national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, botanical gardens, and cultural centers. All tours are escorted by naturalists.

December 1974
HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, 15 days
Six islands: birds, plants, geology.

January 1975
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL MONUMENT
10 days exploring a natural museum.

MIGRATORY GREY WHALES—BAJA, CALIF.
8 days of whale- and seal-watching.

MEXICO: CHIAPAS, TABASCO, AND YUCATAN
15 days: birds, pre-Colombian sites.

February 1975
GUATEMALA, HONDURAS, AND BELIZE
16 days: Mayan sites; flora, fauna.

SOUTH AFRICA AND BOTSWANA
22 days: myriad birds, rich flora and fauna.

COSTA RICA, PANAMA, AND THE CANAL ZONE
15 days: land bridge of the Americas.

March 1975
BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK
8 days exploring canyons, mountains, and the desert.

COLOMBIA, 19 days
Wild flowers and 1500 bird species.

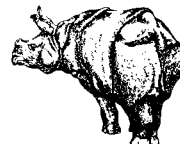
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, 10 days
Birdwatching and . . . snorkeling!

NEPAL RHODODENDRON TREK
23 days: Spring flowers and tiger-watching.

See your travel agent or write *today* for detailed itineraries and the new Directory of Worldwide Nature Tours showing all 34 tours for 1975.

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Third National Wild Turkey Symposium

The Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society has scheduled its third national symposium on the Wild Turkey for San Antonio, Texas, on February 11-13, 1975. Formal presentation of papers is scheduled for the first two days. The third day a field trip is planned to some representative Rio Grande turkey habitat. A full roster of speakers from universities, state and Federal conservation agencies, and the private sector is promised. Headquarters for the Symposium is the San Antonio-Sheraton Motor Inn. Full details and registration forms may be obtained from Charles W. Ramsey, Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences Department, Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas 77843.

Blackbird-Starling Winter Roost Survey

Biologists of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are attempting to locate all major winter concentrations of blackbirds and starlings in the United States this coming winter. Success of a project of this scope requires assistance from many cooperators throughout the country. Such a nationwide survey is useful in estimating the total population of blackbirds and starlings, in locating roosts from which samples of birds can be obtained for banding, and for other research purposes.

The most stable period for winter roosting populations is in midwinter. Therefore, the winter roost survey will be conducted from December 21 to January 31. Late December is included to take advantage of the annual Christmas Bird Count sponsored by the National Audubon Society. Since many roosts are located by Christmas Count participants, compilers of Christmas Bird Counts are asked to complete winter roost survey forms for any roosts located during the count period.

If you should find a winter roost of blackbirds or starlings *after* the Christmas Count period, especially if the roost contains 1000 or more birds, please report it on one of the winter roost survey forms. You can obtain these forms from the Regional Editors of *American Birds*. Return completed forms to the Regional Editors by February 15.

How many Western Sandpipers (pg 757)? If you guessed 100, you get an A. We counted about 105.

(continued from pg. 770)

sity Medical College, teach formal courses, and direct dissertation research. Graduate students participating in such programs base their activities at the Museum and thereby avail themselves of its resources. The following individuals received graduate degrees for dissertation under the direct guidance of Departmental staff: Hiroyuki Morioka, on the morphology and interrelationships of the thrushes, thrashers and wrens; Joel Cracraft, on the functional morphology of the hind limb in pigeons; Charles R. Shear, on comparative studies of physiological cross-sections of avian muscles; Marion Cohen, on physiological studies of denervated avian tonus muscles; and Linda Vardy, on the nature of the non-bimodal color variation in the crown of the White-throated Sparrow. The following graduate students are currently based in the Department and are writing dissertations for their doctorate degrees: David N. Ewert, on an analysis of variation in the song of the Rufous-sided Towhee, Michael Gochfeld, on the systematics and evolution of the Red-breasted Meadowlarks of South America; and James Gulledge, on a phenetic and phyletic analysis of relationships within the avian family Mimidae.

On a more informal basis, the Department's facilities have been used and its staff has assisted in the training of students from other universities here and abroad. Students, often with support from the Chapman Fund, visit the Department to work with the collections and consult with our staff, and receive intellectual stimulation from the many visiting researchers, including renowned foreign and domestic ornithologists.

As a result of its unique collections, library resources, financial resources for support of research, educational programs, and the expertise of its staff, it is not surprising that the Department has become a cross-roads, gathering place, and "center of learning" for ornithologists and would-be ornithologists around the world.

The following common abbreviations are used for the sake of saving space in Regional Reports: Co., County; Cos., Counties; Ft., Fort; I., Island; Isle; Is., Islands, Isles; Jct., Junction; L., Lake; Mt., Mountain, Mount; Mts., Mountains, Par., Parish; Pen., Peninsula; Pt., Point (not Port); N.W.R., National Wildlife Refuge, W.M.A., Wildlife Management Area; P.P., Provincial Park; N.P., National Park; S.P., State Park; Ref., Refuge; Res., Reservoir; (not Reservation) R., River; Twp., Township. ♂, male; ♀, female; ad., adult; imm., immature; juv., juvenile; Am., American; Com., Common; Eur., European; m.ob., many observers; *fide*, reported by; *et al.*, and others; *, specimen; †, documentation on file.