

PROGRAMS

- February 15 Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers: A New Perspective
Dr. Frank Gill
- March 1 Experiences as Editor of American Birds
Robert S. Arbib, Jr., National Audubon Society
- March 15 Birding in Israel Arthur Bergey
- April 5 Birding Experiences in Antarctica Dr. Ernest Choate
- April 19 Mixed Species Flocks Foraging in the Amazon Jungle
Dr. John Torborgh, Princeton University
- May 3 On the Non-Existence of Trans-Atlantic Passerine Migration
Dr. Bertram G. Murray, Jr., Rutgers University
- May 24 May Run Reports

All meetings will be a 8:00 PM at the Academy of Natural Sciences. Please note that the second May meeting is on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Informal summer meetings will be held on the first Thursday of June, July, and August, and the first and third Thursdays of September.

CONGRATULATIONS

- Elected Honorary^{ar} Member of the DVOC: Phillips B. Street
The Julian K. Potter Award to John T. McNeill
The Witmer Stone Award to Alan Brady for his Cassinia article, "A Summary of Recent Pelagic Trips off the New Jersey Coast" (No. 56, 1976).
Elected New Councillors of the DVOC: Chris Garacino and Jesse Grantham.
Departing Councillors of the DVOC: Frank Hubbard and Dr. Edward Wildman.

1979 DUES Still only \$10.00. Make out your check and mail to the treasurer:

Walter F. Lipski
485 Willow Drive
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

FIELD TRIPS

March 4	Owls in South Jersey	Meet Ed Manners at 8AM in the parking lot of the Montana Mining Company (restaurant-bar) in Woodbury at Interstate 295 and Delaware St. Going south on 295 exit just after crossing Woodbury Creek.
April 8	South Jersey Shore and Brigantine NWR	Meet Jim Meritt at 7AM in the Refuge parking lot.
April 21-22	Pocomoke	Individual arrangements
Your day in May	Spring Round-Up	New Club policy allows the count day to be anytime in the first 20 days of May.
May 26	Pelagic Trip	See below for details.

DVOC — URNER — SUPER-PELAGIC TRIP
May 26th, 1979

Again these two clubs are sponsoring a pelagic trip — birds seen this time of year on our previous trips have included Leach's and Wilson's Petrels; Sooty, Greater, Cory's, and Manx Shearwaters; Arctic Terns; South Polar Skuas; Red and Northern Phalaropes; Parasitic, Pomarine and Long-Tailed Jaegers; and Northern Fulmars.

TIME: 5:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. (leaving later this time, with hopes of picking up other species closer to shore. The boat's larger engines do not require a very early start.)

PLACE: Barnegat Light Yacht Basin, 18th Street and the Bay

BOAT: Miss Barnegat Light — Breakfast, Lunch and Beverage available for purchase

EQUIPMENT: Binoculars, warm clothes, and foul-weather gear — just in case

COST: \$25.00 — Send To: Alan Brady, Box 103, Wycombe, Pennsylvania 18980
 Home Phone: (215) 598-7856 — Work Phone: (215) 968-2833

DVOC Members have first call on the forty (40) places assigned to our Club. Club members have until February 28th, 1979, to sign up before reservations are opened to non-members. Although we will try to maintain a waiting list, each paid registrant is responsible for disposing of his own place, should he or she be unable to go.

Please provide your telephone number with your registration in case last-minute cancellation is necessary.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: CHARLIE WONDERLY

The homo-genius group known as the DVOC have managed to complete another year of doing what comes naturally. That is keeping vertebrates carrying feathers on a high priority in their lives. This has been going on for 90 years in DVOC (so what is new!) on field trips and in meetings. Well habitats change and birds have wings, so keep young in heart and ever alert.

I wish to thank everyone who has contributed to another good year for the club: For some who have contributed many hours of work down to those who report local notes. A big vote of thanks to Jim Meritt, Vice-President and Program Chairman; Frank Moody, Secretary and detail man; Walt Lipski, Treasurer and budget maker; and the brain stormers known as "Council."

The chairmen of committees also are to be thanked: Chris Caracino and Brian Moscatello of the Book Committee; Armas Hill, Rick Mellon, and Al Brady on Field Trips; Fred Ulmer on Conservation; Dick Bell and Harry Franzen on Ornithological Studies. Other specialthanks: to Bob Sehl's Committee on Life Members and Investments; to Ron Logan for heading the Banquet Committee; to the members of the Refreshment Committee; and to Keith Richards and Dick Bell for their work on Cassinia.

As we again pool our knowledge and talents we can look forward to a better club this year with continued good fellowship and good birding. So let's do our best to make the most of a good thing.

SANDHILL CRANES IN INDIANA: RICHARD BELL

While attending the National Association of Biology Teachers' annual meetings in Chicago, Illinois, during the final weekend in October, 1978, it was possible for me to combine business with birding. I followed the advice of Olin S. Pettingill in A Guide to Bird Finding East and drove to Medaryville, Indiana, to view the migration spectacle of the sandhill cranes.

Medaryville is located about 60 miles southeast of Chicago near the intersections of routes 421 and 10. Here is found the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish and Wildlife area where vast numbers of sandhill cranes can be viewed during the fall and spring migrations. During my visit I estimated that about 7,000-8,000 cranes were in this area. Most of the birds were visible from route 10 about 5 miles from route 421 feeding in farm fields. I am told that they return to the Jasper-Pulaski area to spend the night. One can get a permit from the headquarters to visit the observation tower, but one should plan to arrive there before dawn, as most of the birds have left the refuge by seven in the morning to feed.

Such a mass concentration of spectacular birds in a small area is very impressive and well worth a visit to witness the phenomenon. It was possible to photograph the birds with a telephoto lens from route 10. In fact, photography is difficult in the refuge, and best results can be obtained from the highways in the area. The birds are rather easily "spooked," so it is best to stay in the car if possible.

December 29, 1978

While the sane world was still basking in the warmth of a traditional Christmas, several DVOC'ers were 2000 miles from home in--of all places--the Brownsville, Texas, city dump. Sehl, Logan, and three LaVias had already seen the unforgettable Whooping Cranes at Aransas (up to 74 this year) and a satisfying assortment of lifers along the Texas Gulf coast. But of course we were not yet content and decided to extend our car and camping trip a bit further in order to spend a morning in Brownsville to see what might turn up that close to the border.

We knew that if we could find the city dump, we would almost surely run into a flock of Mexican Crows--a lifer specialized enough even to please the over 600 Sehl and LaVia. Finding the dump (moved since Lane's book) had proven difficult for many visiting birders, but we located it the night before so as not to waste precious daylight during one of the shortest days of the year. After almost getting the car stuck in the mud, we knew that we would have to slog our way into the dump on foot in the morning. What we did not know, however, was that we had not found the main entrance. Later we would be able to give a couple from Colorado directions to find the crow while sitting in their car on paved roads. We had to earn our lifer.

Remind me some day to tell you the kinds of delicacies to be enjoyed in the dump of a border town. Our Mike was through the foulest sort of garbage. I tried to look far ahead to avoid the details, but my teenage sons insisted on showing off their considerable sharpness at spotting by calling out by name the various types of filth they noticed. It was a long disgusting walk, and the worst problem was the original one of the boot-sucking mud.

In the center of the dump we discovered huge flocks of large black birds and encountered temporary difficulties in sorting out the Mexican Crows from the White-necked Ravens while they were on the ground. In the air the crows tended to move in rather compact flocks and finally ended all problems by emitting their odd call, which sounded nothing like a raven and very little like a crow. After this firm identification and a bonus of several Franklin's Gulls, all we wanted was to escape the sights, smells, and even feel of the mud, garbage, and composite slime.

With such ugliness all around us, why were we all so exultant over this unsavory crow? Sure, it was a life bird and a remote one at that, but long, treacherous trek across mounds of slithering refuse and adhesive mud somehow augmented our pleasure. The degree of difficulty in getting to the birds increased their value. Now do not get me wrong; if you had a Mexican Crow coming to your feeder and served me coffee in a warm kitchen until the bird routinely appeared, I would love it; but I doubt if I could value the experience as much as our morning in the effluvia of the Brownsville dump. Nothing could cheapen our accomplishment; so what if the LaVias on refusing to retrace their foul steps discovered the main entrance of the dump and returned to the car on a paved road, and so what if both returning parties observed a flock of Mexican Crows within a hundred yards of the parked car. In birding sometimes the hard way is the best way.

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