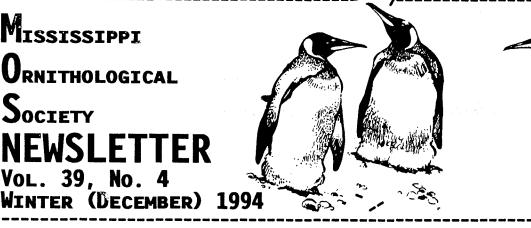
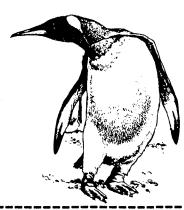
MISSISSIPPI **O**RNITHOLOGICAL Vol. 39, No. 4





LOOKING AHEAD--TO WINTER BIRDING:

Christmas Bird Count Schedules (? = Uncertain Dates)

Saturday, 17 Dec., Jackson County--call Larry Gates, 268-6411. Saturday, 17 Dec., Noxubee NWR, call Terry Schiefer, 324-3748. Saturday, 17 Dec., Vicksburg--call Hal Moore, 638-2680. Tuesday, 20 Dec., Church Hill--call Genevieve Tharp, 442-4622. Tuesday, 20 Dec., Grenada -- call Marvin Davis, 234-1773. Thursday, 22 Dec., Sardis Lake--call Marvin Davis, 234-1773. Monday, 26 Dec., Sumner--call Genevieve Tharp, 442-4622. Tuesday, 27 Dec., Sidon--call Philip Barbour, 455-4166. Tuesday, 27 Dec., S. Hancock Co. -- call Judy Toups, 896-3153. ?Saturday, 31 Dec., Hattiesburg--call Larry Gates, 268-6411. Saturday, 31 Dec., Jackson--call Steve Peterson, 957-3964. Saturday, 31 Dec., Arkabutla -- call Rob Peeples, 901/683-2315. Sunday, 1 Jan., S. Washington Co.--call Ed Alexander, 332-7895 ?info not provided, Natchez--call Ralph Shields, Vidalia, LA

All members are encouraged to participate in these CBC events as an exciting and challenging annual birding activity. If you don't have the habit, start now! The organizers whose names are indicated must have advance notice so as to arrange for you to have a proper assignment to party and route, or area of coverage, within the appointed count circle. Note to CBC Compiler: please remember in early January to send a copy of count data to Newsletter Editor so it can be highlighted in March issue!

REMINDER--J.J. AUDUBON ART EXHIBIT

As announced earlier this year, there will be a traveling exhibit of Audubon's paintings at the Brooks Museum of Art in Memphis, TN from mid-February to April. The formal opening of the exhibit will be on 19 February, when Lula Coffey, a Founding Member of MOS, will be speaking at a 2:30 p.m. occasion on Changes in Birding Since Audubon. This will be the only site in our region for the exhibit to be visited, so make your plans to attend!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW MOS PRESIDENT, 1994-96: Allan J. Mueller

WELCOME TO THE MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY!!

That salutation was to welcome any new members to the MOS who may be receiving the Newsletter for the first time. But it is also a welcome to me, myself! At the Ocean Springs MOS meeting in October, I went from never holding office in MOS to being President. This is a challenge that I welcome, but one that is doomed to failure without much guidance and help from the other officers and the general membership.

One of the first things that a new president should do is to thank the outgoing president, and in this case that is particularly appropriate. JoRee Pennell led the MOS through an organizational update (new constitution, revitalized Records Committee, etc.), which provides a solid foundation to build upon. We should all say "Thank You" to JoRee.

Since I have not been part of the past MOS leadership, I don't feel constrained by past policies, mainly because I don't even know what they are! This is both good and bad. Each of you should not hesitate to tell me when MOS is not going in the direction you want it to go. If you don't tell me to change directions, I will continue on my merry way, even if totally lost.

What direction is MOS going now? We have a good birding organization with a nucleus of members ready to chase rare birds. That is great, and is what initially led all of us to MOS. We also have reached outside of the organization to become affiliated with the Mississippi Wildlife Federation and occasionally respond to birding-oriented conservation issues. However, as the representative and voice of ornithology in Mississippi, we should look to see what else we can do. Opportunities and projects are everywhere. All we need to do is pick a project and put our energies into it. Below is a list of such possibilities for you to consider:

- A. Lobby the State Legislature for specific legislation.
- B. Affiliate with and support Partners in Flight, a 4-year old national bird conservation effort.
- C. Affiliate with and support the newly formed Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.
- D. Lobby the national congress to pass the Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative. This would tax birding equipment to support the nongame programs.
- E. Work to establish an officially-designated coastal birding trail in Mississippi. Texas has started this and received good cooperation from their highway department.
- F. Work for/support/finance a fence on the Pascagoula River bridge to prevent road kills of fall roosting Purple Martins on the bridge.
- G. Sponsor and participate in the Mississippi Colonial Waterbird Survey; 1994 was the first year of this effort to count all of the waterbirds (colonies of herons, egrets, ibis, gulls, terns and skimmers) in the State each year.
- H. Sponsor and participate in the Mississippi breeding bird atlas project when it begins--should be within 2-3 years.
- I. Sponsor and operate MAPS station(s). MAPS (= monitoring Avian Productivity and Surveillance) is a national bird banding effort to measure population trends. Davis Watts currently runs the only station in Mississippi.
- J. Sponsor and coordinate a statewide celebration of International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). For the past two years, birders across the nation have used the IMBD in May to publicize bird conservation needs.
 - K. Conduct a local or statewide conservation project.

L. Anything else that you can think of.

Some of these are small and relatively easy projects to conduct (e.g., B and C), while others would be more difficult. Some may be bad ideas, but hopefully at least a few are good ones. Let me know what you what like and what you are willing to help with. If you don't talk to me, I am liable to go off and do just about anything. That's a promise!

Allan J. Mueller 4308 Shenandoah Road Vicksburg, MS 39180 601-638-5837

LOOKING BACK:

Report on MOS Meeting in Biloxi, Oct. 21-23--by Marion Schiefer

Our fall meeting was held in Biloxi the weekend of October 21-23, and in conjunction with our own meeting, we hosted the meeting of the Inland Bird Banding Association. Jerry Jackson did an excellent job of planning for and leading the meeting. Margaret Copeland and some of the coastal MOSers organized the Friday reception for the event, and other MOS members helped by bringing refreshments.

Jerry presented the program on Friday night, a slide presentation which oriented the group to the natural history of the Gulf Coast area, including the barrier islands. Bob and Martha Sargent, fellow MOS members from Trussville, Ala., and two of the very few banders who are licensed to band hummingbirds, conducted the Saturday night after-dinner program, telling us about their banding activities, particularly their recent banding of western species of hummingbirds in Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia. They asked the MOS members to be sure to keep their hummingbird feeders up during the fall and winter months and report to them <u>any</u> hummingbird that comes to the feeder during the winter months.

The field trips started <u>early</u> Saturday morning—some left at 6:00 a.m.! and got in a couple of hours of looking for birds before we had a torrential downpour of rain. Then about 10:00 that morning the sun came out and we ended up having a fairly nice day after we dried off a little. We had rain on Sunday early also but once again it turned off sunny and not as windy as Saturday; the birds were more cooperative and more easily come by, I felt. At the Saturday night count, the group total of birds seen and heard was at least 145 species, and several more species were added on Sunday.

The following were some birding highlights for me. At the Pascagoula River Marsh I got one of my best looks ever at a Reddish Egret under a bridge during the downpour between 8:00 and 10:00 Sat. morning. Also during the rain, on the military base near PRM, we saw American Avocets, the first time for me in Mississippi. There were a lot of Black-necked Stilts there also. Out on one of the mud flats in the water alongside the long causeway to the navy base, we saw Black Skimmers and American Oystercatchers. Caspian and Royal Terns were lined up side by side for good comparisons of the orange and red bills

of these similar species. Along with them were smaller Forster's Terns.

Several <u>Scissor-tailed Flycatchers</u>, one of my favorite birds, were seen. The group Terry and I were with saw two on Saturday, and Terry and I saw three more on Sunday. As Roger Tory Peterson says in his <u>Eastern Birds</u> field guide: a <u>beautiful</u> bird!

On Sunday morning several of us got into the Seaman's Lagoons area north of Ocean Springs along with a group attending a Partners-in-Flight meeting on the coast. There we saw a lot of ducks and about 30 <u>Eared Grebes</u>, the most I've ever seen together at one place. We were treated to a dance by <u>Sandhill Cranes</u> in the fields adjoining the lagoons. It was the first time I've seen the Mississippi subspecies of the cranes.

Before heading back for home on Sunday, Terry and I decided to go down to the Port Bienville Industrial Park in the southwestern tip of Hancock County to try to find a <u>Vermillion Flycatcher</u> that had been sighted there on Saturday by Bill Turcotte. As we entered the area, we met Gene and Shannon Knight and were disappointed to learn that they had just searched in vain to find the bird. We decided to go ahead and look for ourselves, however, and luck was with us and we found it just a little ways down from where it had been seen the day before. It was a beautiful immature male, with plenty of red on it to make the identification unmistakable. I counted myself extremely lucky because in that same area we also came across a Sharp-tailed Sparrow, a new We had to work hard to get good looks at the bird, life-bird for me. though. I found out that they are very shy, secretive birds that run across the field hidden under bushes, akin to the LeConte Sparrows I had to work hard to finally see last year. We also saw a White-crowned Sparrow there and my best ever looks at a Merlin perched in a tree.

We had an exciting non-birding experience, too, in sighting three bobcats crossing one of the side roads. I saw the first one as it crossed the road and quickly disappeared, but Terry missed it; we were just about to head down that way to see if we could find him when another one came into view, following the same path as the first, and then a few seconds later a third one!

My final highlight of the trip was a really close-up look at a couple of <u>Franklin's Gulls</u> along the Waveland-Bay St. Louis beach. I've found these gulls hard to come by, and we got some excellent looks at them among a lot of <u>Laughing Gulls</u> for comparison.

	MOS Financial	ReportAp	ril to se	eptember	1994
	submitted by	y Janet Du	ıbuisson,	Treasure	r
INCOME AND E	<u>XPENSE STATEMEN</u>				
Income:	Dues			\$477.00	
	Interest			341.37	
	Sales				

Checklists, 89.00
Patches, 45.00
Donations
Total Income:

\$972.37

Expenses:

Postage	P	0	s	t	a	a	e
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Newsletters	\$123.78
Kites	174.90

298.68

Printing

Meetings

Newsletters 199.02 Kites 1345.84

1544.86 113.39 <u>9.54</u>

Supplies
Total Expenses:

\$1966.47

Net Loss

\$507.52

\$994.10

BALANCE SHEET

Assets:

Checking Accounts
Gulfport

Savings Account 2,258.27 CD 2,258.28

Total Assets

\$20,001.07

From the Field--Fall Season '94

Shorebirds in the Delta provided much entertainment again this year. The fish farm south of Tippo in Tallahatchie Co. had some good yields in Aug., but the J. Grant fish farm in western Humphrys County off MS Pt. 12 was the hot spot in Sept. On 9-9-94 Gene Knight found a single Red-necked Phalarope there among several hundreds of mudsearchers--100+ dowitchers, 100+(!) Blk-necked Stilts, 10+ Avocets, both Yellowlegs and sundry smaller sandpipers, including also 1 Wilson's Phalarope and numerous Blue-winged Teal. Your Editor and Phillip Barbour also had the Red-necked Phalarope there on 9-10 for state list firsts, but it was gone by 9-17, although the others were yet present, plus six Sanderlings, briefly.

A cold front passing on 9-22 apparently sent everything packing off southward, as there was not a single bird present at that pond on 9-24. However, it was a good two-Peregrine day for Ed. and 3 students from the Ole Miss Dept. of Biology; the Cox Rd. ponds at Yazoo NWR yielded 7+White Ibis, fine views of ad. Little Blues, plus one "Tricolored Heron" without white underparts [believed to be a hybrid with perhaps L. Blue Heron], and a nice variety and nos. of waterfowl. Ed Alexander saw up to 50 Blk-n. Stilts there 8-27 to 9-24; David Linden of NWR staff says Stilts were there "all summer," perhaps nesting, as was likely also at various spots across the Delta.

The October period on the Coast is highlighted above in the report on the Fall Meeting, and below in the Meeting Bird List. However, there were new treats awaiting there in November. Two small-boat trips on MS Sound to the barrier islands (Horn, Petit Bois) conducted by Captain Charley Delmas on 21 & 22 Nov. produced one juvenile **Great Cormorant**, just off Petit Bois for your **Ed's**. lifer, plus exceptional counts of 50+ and 68+ on N. Gannets! The latter trip had a quartet of Delmas, Davis, and Don McKee conducting visiting speaker (for a Mon. night Coast Aud. Soc. mtg.), **Kenn Kaufman**, whose program on "Birding in the 21st Century" was greatly enjoyed by a large crowd at the GCRL Education Center Auditorium in Biloxi.

EXPEDITION REPORT: ARM-CHAIR BIRD-TRAVELERS -IT'S TIME TO GET OUT YOUR WORLD ATLAS AND "BIRDS OF THE WORLD"!

BIRDING "DOWN UNDER"

by **Hal Moore** Vicksburg

The trip didn't begin so well as the bad weather in Dallas caused me to miss connection with my flight from Los Angeles to Cairns, Australia. Finally I arrived there 6 hours late, and my luggage was 4 days late!! One member of the tour group I was to travel with had a heart attack on the first night, and another fell and broke an arm. But it was still a great trip, despite our group shrinking to 12 birders and two leaders after the bad incidents.

From Cairns we drove down the coast to Mission Beach, home of the giant Cassowary, a 5-ft. tall, 15-lb. ratite (flightless bird). We were able to see one of these giants in the dense rain forest. Leaving there and driving on the "wrong side of the road," we headed west to the Atherton Tableland and Lake Eacham for more good birding. There we saw birds such as: Brush Turkey and Orange-footed Scrub-fowl (both megapods); Kookaburra; Pygmy-Goose; Dollarbird; Sulphur-crested Cockatoo; Topknot and Torresian Imperial pigeons; Superb and Rose-crowned fruit-doves; Brolga and Saura cranes; White-headed Stilt; Masked Lapwing; Royal Spoonbill; Black-necked Stork; Tooth-billed Catbird; and many others. After birding another day near Cairns, we flew north to Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Arriving at Port Moresby, its capitol, we birded the rest of the day there and then flew west to Tari, a small mountain town, where we were seemingly met by the entire population of natives. Many of the men were wearing Bird-of-Paradise feather headdresses, a "lap-lap" (a small; skirt in front and leaves in back), face paint, and nose ornaments for We were met by a Lodge bus, and after about a one-hour drive we arrived at AMBU Lodge. We stayed in round, thatch-roofed huts, as nice as State-side motels; it was quite cool as the elevation was 6,000 ft. The only drawback was the 90- to 120-step stairway up to the dining room. One quickly learned not to forget anything back at the hut. Birds were everywhere, so we birded around the Lodge and along roads up to 8,000 ft., seeing species such as: Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise; Yellowheaded, Brown-chested and Ornate orange-tails; Blue Bird-of-Paradise: black with a light blue and white back and two long black streamers; Ribbon-tailed Astrapin, an 11-in. bird with a 40-in. white tail(!); Superb Bird-of-Paradise, a small black and yellow bird with two 16-in. movable head-plumes. This wondrous array left us all staring with open mouths! Being a high altitude rain forest, there were many birds to see at every stop.

Returning to Cairns, Aust. we took a boat trip out to the Green Islands and the Great Barrier Reef, where we birded and had views of reef fish from an underwater viewing area. After leaving there, we flew to Brisbane, Aust., then drove to Yungaburra and O'Reilly's Lodge, a

renowned nature lodge adjacent to a large national park. As we left our vans, flocks of Regent and Satin bower-birds almost knocked our hats off in their hurry to get to the feeding platform. If one stood still too long, King Parrots and Crimson Rosellas would alight on your head-looking for a handout. Brush-turkeys, Wonga Pigeons, Curawongs, and Magpies walked around on the ground nearby. We birded on the many developed paths and roads. Albert's Lyrebird was the hardest to see, species and probably the most spectacular one. But many other beautiful and interesting such as: Noisy Pitta; Green Catbird; Red-backed, Varied and Superb fairy-wrens; Rose and Yellow robins; Logroneus; Whipbirds; Riflebirds; Wood-swallows; Peltops and Willie wagtails. We left this place of excellent birding and wonderful food with great reluctance!

We next flew to Sydney, Aust. for one day of birding and supper adjacent to the famous Sydney Opera House, then left for the 1,000 mile flight to New Zealand on the next morning. We arrived at Auckland, NZ and had a night to rest before boarding another plane for Invercargill, the southernmost city in NZ. There we changed to two small planes for a 30-min. trip to Stewart Island, where we stayed at the southernmost hotel in the world, so they claimed. Here we saw the Brown Kiwi, the most "unbird-like" bird I have ever seen. It looks like a large brown lump of hair with big feet and a long bill. Here and on nearby islands we saw: Weka, a flightless rail; Kaka, a large parrot; the huge New Zealand Pigeon; Kelp and Red-billed gulls; Pied and Little Black cormorants; Bronze and Spotted Shags.

After a flight back to Invercargill, we motored around South Island, which is the <u>greenest</u> place that I have ever seen, and it has more sheep than I knew existed. They also raise Red Deer, which are about like our Elk. We ended up at Dunedin and visited a Royal Albatross colony where we also saw penguins; we saw three species in all for the trip. From there we flew to Rotarura and a hotel overlooking a geysers. Morning birding gave us a few more species before we took our flight to Auckland, NZ. From there we took a pelagic trip out to Little Barrie Island and saw 4 spp. of petrels, 4 spp. of shearwaters and 2 spp. of albatrosses. This wound up our birding trip

At 11:10 p.m. on Nov. 11th, I left Auckland, and I arrived back at Jackson, MS at 11:50 a.m. on Nov. 11th, believe it or not!! Not bad time for an 8,000-mile flight. After 17 plane rides, 4 or 5 boat rides, countless bus rides, I had listed 382 species of birds, 350 of which were new to me. I can only close by saying, "it was a wonderful trip!"

Watching Feeder Birds—Some of our MOS members are especially involved with "yard birds" or feeder birds. Many interesting observations may occur there, which others would enjoy your sharing via the Newsletter. It was particularly pleasing to hear a remark of Bob Sargent, at the Fall Meeting, about how a hummer may appear in early Spring and hover before one's window, where the unhung feeder was hanging last fall—seemingly remembering the exact spot! This was noted also at the Davises' home by Sandra several years ago; it was hard not to believe that the bird had used a feeder at that spot and was expecting it to be there; she seemed to look inquiringly and expectantly into the room for someone to provide the tardy service! Won't you write a few lines for us on a favorite happening with your yard birds?

COASTAL COUNTIES BIRD LIST, FALL MOS MTG., 21-23 OCTOBER, 1994

Common Loon
Pied-billed Grebe
Horned Grebe
Eared Grebe
Am. White Pelican
Brown Pelican
Double-cr. Cormorant
Magnificent
Frigatebird
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Snowy Egret
Little Blue Heron
Tricolored Heron
Reddish Egret
Cattle Egret

Cattle Egret
Green Heron
Black-crn. Night Heron
Yel.-crn. Night-Heron
White Ibis
White-faced Ibis
Gr. Wht.-fronted Goose

Gr. Wht.-fronted Goose Canada Goose Wood Duck

Green-winged Teal Mottled Duck Mallard

N. Pintail
Blue-winged Teal

N. Shoveler Gadwall Am. Wigeon Redhead

Ring-necked Duck Lesser Scaup Hooded Merganser

nooded merganse Ruddy Duck Black Vulture Turkey Vulture Osprey

Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Bald Eagle
N. Harrier
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Am. Kestrel
Merlin

Merlin Peregrine Clapper Rail King Rail Sora

Common Moorhen

Am. Coot
N. Bobwhite
Sandhill Crane
Black-bellied Plover
Am. Golden-Plover
Semipalmated Plover

Piping Plover Killdeer

Am. Oystercatcher

Black-necked Stilt Am. Avocet Greater Yellowlegs Lesser Yellowlegs Willet Spotted Sandpiper Upland Sandpiper Ruddy Turnstone Red Knot

Sanderling Semipalmated Sandpiper Western Sandpiper Least Sandpiper

White-rumped Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper
Dunlin

Long-billed Dowitcher Short-billed Dowitcher Common Snipe

Laughing Gull Franklin's Gull Ring-billed Gull

Ring-billed Gul Herring Gull Caspian Tern Royal Tern Common Tern Forster's Tern Least Tern

Least Tern
Black Tern
Black Skimmer
Rock Dove
Mourning Dove

Eurasian Collared Dove Belted Kingfisher Chimney Swift Ruby-thr. Hummingbird

Black-chinned Hum.
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Yel.-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker

N. Flicker Pileated Woodpecker E. Wood-Pewee

E. Phoebe Vermilion Flycatcher Scissor-tailed Fly.

Scissor-tailed Fly.
Tree Swallow
N. Rough-wing, Swal

N. Rough-wing. Swallow Barn Swallow

Blue Jay Am. Crow Fish Crow

Carolina Chickadee Tufted Titmouse

Brown-headed Nuthatch

Carolina Wren House Wren Sedge Wren Marsh Wren

Ruby-crowned Kinglet Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

E. Bluebird Gray-cheeked Thrush Hermit Thrush Wood Thrush Gray Catbird N. Mockingbird Brown Thrasher Loggerhead Shrike Eur. Starling White-eyed Vireo Solitary Vireo Red-eyed Vireo Tennessee Warbler Orange-crowned Warbler Northern Parula Yellow Warbler Magnolia Warbler Yellow-rumped Warbler Blk.-thr.Green Warbler Yel.-throated Warbler Pine Warbler Palm Warbler Am. Redstart Com. Yellowthroat Hooded Warbler Summer Tanager N. Cardinal Rose-breasted Grosbeak Blue Grosbeak Indigo Bunting Rufous-sided Towhee Lark Sparrow Savannah Sparrow Sharp-tailed Sparrow Seaside Sparrow Swamp Sparrow White-crowned Sparrow Red-winged Blackbird E. Meadowlark Boat-tailed Grackle Common Grackle Brown-headed Cowbird House Finch Am. Goldfinch

House Sparrow

3-Day Total: 168 sp

MOS NEWSLETTERS--BOUND BACK-ISSUES, VOLS. 1-21 (1956-1976), \$20.00 "At the November 1993 MOS meeting, it was suggested that members might be interested in purchasing a bound volume of our historically important MOS Newsletters. The Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Library has archival copies on file, and I will be willing to have them reprinted and spiral bound. However, PREPAYMENT WILL BE REQUIRED. Checks must be received at the Museum before I can go to the printer."
--Mary Stevens (Cut here and mail to Mary Stevens)

PRE-PUBLICATION ORDER FORM

To order, please indicate the desired quantity and your name and mailing address on this form. Make checks payable to MOS and send to:

Mary Stevens Mississippi Museum of Natural Science 111 N. Jefferson Street Jackson, MS 39202

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Pass Christian, MS 39571

MISSISSIPPI ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY Organized 30 April 1955

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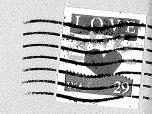
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All persons interested in Mississippi bird life are invited to join the MOS. Annual dues: Sustaining, \$20; Individual (regular), \$10; Family, \$15; Student, \$5; Senior, \$5; Subscribing, \$10. Life, Membership, \$200. All classes of members receive the Mississippi Kite semi-annually, and the MOS Newsletter on a quarterly schedule each season. Please send unpaid '94 dues, '95 dues or new address, to: Janet Dubuisson, 22410 Glad Acres, Pass Christian, MS 39571.

RETURN ADDRESS:
Miss. Ornithol. Soc.
P.O. Box 515
University, MS 38677







Reports on Fall '94 Meeting, Election New President's Messaage Expedition Report from Down Under Notice: Dues reminder—see page 9 for convenient dues-payment form.