

BIRDS IN ART NEWS

In mid-March, San Antonio will host the biennial Wildlife Exhibition/Game Coin Convention. While the convention itself is not open to the public, several events associated with it will be. The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures will be exhibiting the watercolors which are featured in 'Of Birds and Texas', a limited edition portfolio of Texas birds by Scott and Stuart Gantling of Fort Worth. The twin brothers depict Texas birds in the style of John James Audubon, to whom the book is dedicated. The 39 paintings will be on exhibit from March 3 to April 5 at the Institute which is located at Durango Boulevard and Bowie Street on HemisFair Plaza. Exhibit floor hours are 9 to 5 Tuesday through Sunday. Admission is free and parking is \$1. For more information call the Institute at 226-7651.

David Ord Kerr, English painter and bird artist of Garden Birds by Noble Proctor, will be featured in an exhibit at Odyssey Galleries, 5800 Broadway, #306 in Cambridge Place the week of March 23 with a book signing from 2 to 5 on March 28. Copies of the book will be available during the exhibit. The gallery is open 10 to 5 Monday through Saturday. Telephone 828-0167 for more information.

Read Stremmel Gallery, 100 West Olmos Drive, will open an exhibit of wildlife paintings by Botswana artist Keith Joubert on March 10. The exhibit will also feature other wildlife paintings from their collection and will run through March 25. Call 828-7454 for additional information. Gallery hours are 9:30 to 5 Monday through Saturday.

This is a unique opportunity to see, and perhaps purchase, paintings by some of the leading bird and wildlife painters in the world.

--Charles Bender

SHRIKE ON DUTY

One of the commonly observed birds we encounter on our walks during the winter months is the loggerhead shrike. It is classified as a song bird yet it behaves as does a bird of prey; indeed, it has been referred to as 'the song bird of prey.' Its prey consists mainly of insects like grasshoppers.

We see our neighborhood shrike perched on transmission lines or on streetlight poles and it reveals its identity at a distance less by its appearance than by its characteristic flight as it swoops low, flies horizontally skimming the ground, then zooms up to perch at another lookout. Its black and white wing pattern helps accent the impression of a 'buzzy' mode of flying.

Shrikes are known for their sharp vision and in Europe they were once used to spot overflying hawks and thus alert the trappers who sold their captured birds of prey to the falconers who trained them to hunt.

The shrike's name which is derived from the word 'shriek,' and its nickname of 'butcher-bird' alluding to its habit of maintaining a virtual larder of captured prey impaled on thorns, give this little bird a bad image: you'd think