



## Fall Migrations Bring Many Interesting Shore Bird Species

BY BILL FAVER

September days can be crisp and cool or, like weekend before last, hot and humid. A friend and I were offering some cut mullet to the bluefish but they were not very hungry and the morning would have been almost unpleasant had it not been for the birds moving around on the beach.

We enjoyed the pelicans sailing along just above the cresting of the waves. They seemed to be heading west, away from their rookeries in the Cape Fear River, toward feeding grounds. We knew we could watch them return later in the day when they would ride the updrafts of wind currents nearer the dunes.

The water's edge entertained several Semi-palmated Sandpipers and they were using most of their energy probing and jumping and stepping fast to stay landward of the wash from the incoming waves. Once in a while they would decide to rest and move up on the beach and settle down for a while with their faces to the wind.

Along with the smallest sandpipers were several larger ones I took to be Sanderlings. They too were

feeding on the small mole crabs washing in with each wave. Since plumage in the fall is fading into a dull gray, identification of shore birds becomes a different game. The colors and shades you learned in spring no longer apply; you've got to go back to the field guide and look again!

Willetts were squawking as usual when things did not go their way or someone got too close to them. Several Black-bellied Plovers were on the beach, one with his springtime black head and throat and the other a mottled graying black, possibly a young bird from this year's brood. They, too, will soon change colors and identification will depend upon their stocky build and short bill rather than the obvious black markings of spring. Soon waves of Knots will visit us as they migrate southward for winter. They, too, will be gray, having lost the rich reddish-brown backs that help us identify them in spring.

Fall migrations bring us many interesting species of shore birds in September, October and November. Even if you aren't interested in naming them all or learning about their habits, they can be interesting to watch. As they search through the debris of the high tide line, or probe the soft sand for food, or rest a while on the warm sand, we get to watch them closely. And often we forget the fish aren't biting.

MIGRATING SHOREBIRDS can become amusing when we are waiting for the fish to bite. PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## No One Will Take Robinson's Place

To the editor:

I'm writing to voice my opinion on an article I read in the *Beacon* a few weeks ago that was very upsetting to myself and friends around Brunswick County. Everyone I speak to about this is alarmed about it.

This article was about replacing Ronnie Robinson. And I'm sure that most of the older adults are very displeased about this for we think there's no one who can do any better for the older adults than Mr. Robinson.

Why can't some folks ever be satisfied? I'm sure Mr. Robinson is as faithful, truthful and honest as any person can be on his job. He has really done great for the older adults. If a person needs him, he is always ready to help if he can; and if he can't, he gives the person the phone number of the one who can help.

No person will ever take his place.

Georgia Gingery  
Rt. 3, Supply

## Commissioners Will Axe Clegg

To the editor:

Recently you published an editorial about the county commission's sudden decision to review the months-old applications for the position of county manager. Your piece raised a big question: why.

The one person involved with county business who commands the respect of the voters, who has shown himself to be ethical and responsible, is David Clegg. He has been acting as both county attorney and county manager.

He has tried very hard, I believe, to convince the threesome who still appear to be in control that they should stop putting relatives on the county payroll and to find the right person to head the Department on Aging. Neither of these two problems has been corrected. Hence, Mr. Clegg has become disposable.

When they hire a county manager, Mr. Clegg will be axed. That's the answer to your why.

M. L. LaMar  
Yaupon Beach

## Hankins Best Qualified Man

To the editor:

At last at least four members of the school board had the wisdom to vote for the absolutely best

qualified man to be our school superintendent.

How do I know? P. R. Hankins was my boss for the last seven years I taught in Brunswick County. He and I had several one-on-one discussions about educational philosophy.

Also, I taught in two different school districts in Illinois before I came here. One superintendent I knew personally, the other did many innovative things to develop teacher competence and, in Peoria where I taught last in Illinois, after about four years in that school the principal resigned to teach education at

Bradley University.

She contacted me to tell me that the longer she was there the more she knew how much I know about teaching.

P. R. Hankins was a person who got to know "his" teachers personally, learned their weaknesses and engaged experts to conduct workshops to "fine-tune" their abilities. In addition, P.R. developed a warm, personal relationship with the teachers.

As to more of my qualifications to judge, when I came here I had to take the National Teachers Exam for the first time after being out of school for some years. The superin-

tendent told me I made the highest score ever made in Brunswick County.

Thanks to the wise decision of our school board, just watch and you will see, in time, our national test scores begin to rise. That will confirm my judgment, but advances cannot be made overnight or in just one year.

Some principals have hindered creative teaching in the past unless the teacher knew how to politic the principal. I'll bet that will improve also.

Teddi Neal  
Bolivia

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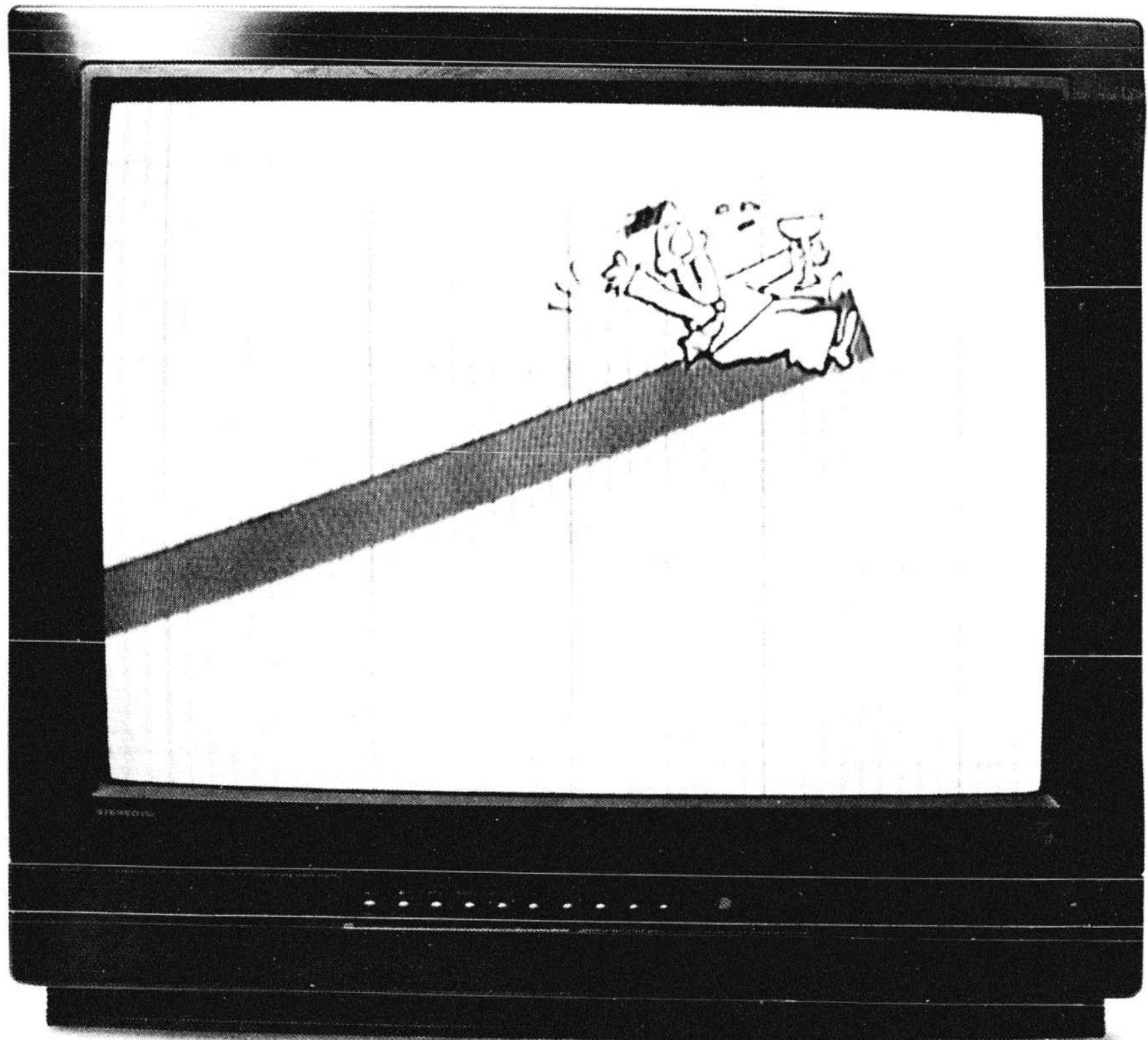
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