

INTERVIEW WITH LUTHER GOLDMAN
RYAN HAGERTY AND GEORGE GENTRY
And STEVE HILLEBRAND
2003

MR. GOLDMAN: My name is Luther Goldman. It's L-U-T-H-E-R G-O-L-D-M-A-N. We're Germans, and it had two "n's" on the end, folks settled in Pennsylvania.

MR. HAGERTY: I'd like to get you talking about some of your experiences with Fish and Wildlife or, was it Biological Survey then, or Sport Fisheries?

MR. GOLDMAN: It was Biological Survey, U.S. Department of the Interior.

MR. HAGERTY: When did you start working with them?

MR. GOLDMAN: Right after college. I did some early work collecting some birds and mammals for the Bureau of Biological Survey. And those results are in the Smithsonian. Then I took all of the wildlife courses that I could at the University of Maryland. As soon as I got out, I had the opportunity to go out west. They put me in charge of the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge in California. I was there for a couple of years. Then the sea itself wasn't stabilized so they figured I couldn't do; make impoundment and so forth, until the sea was more steady and not going up and going down. I would come back when it was controlled. So they sent me to the Bitter Lake Refuge in New Mexico and I was there a couple of years when the war came along. I got into the military service and I became a Lieutenant because I went to a college that had military training. They made me a First Lieutenant, and after three years in the Army in World War II I came back and I was offered several places. I could go back and take my early refuge, Salton Sea, the Bitter Lake Refuge, or two new Refuges that they had bought down in south Texas. That seemed to me more attractive because of the birds and mammals that would be new to me coming out of Mexico. I had done a little work in Mexico so I was interested there. I went down there and they left me there for twelve years before dragging me into the Washington, D.C. office. I came into Washington and spent a number of years in the Washington office before I retired.

MR. HAGERTY: I am really interested in the photography aspect.

MR. GOLDMAN: In the what?

MR. HAGERTY: In your photography work. Did you do a lot of photography work at your refuges? And then, when you got to the Washington office, how did you become "the" photographer?

MR. GOLDMAN: In California, where I was in charge of the Salton Sea Refuge, I had to illustrate my narrative reports. We had to make three narrative reports a year. We made one that would circulate to other refuges so that other Managers of refuges around the whole United States would know what was going on in other areas. Another copy went in to the central office. One copy went to the regional office. We had to illustrate those with pictures. I got tired of these little pictures that I got at the corner drug store and started doing my own. I started making 8x10s to really show what's happening on a National Wildlife Refuge. I put in a few mammals and birds now and then. They seemed to make a hit in the Washington office too. So that's how I got started. I wanted to get away from those little pictures that they do in drug stores, and made my own stuff. I got started that way.

MR. HAGERTY: When you went to the Washington office, did you start out as a photographer?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, I didn't. I was Assistant Chief of a section of Biology there, and Refuges. The fellow who was in charge of the photographic work retired, and I said that I could do that as well as my other work. That's how I got into the photography for Fish and Wildlife Service.

MR. HAGERTY: So when you decided that that was the way you wanted to go; you wanted to do the Biology and then have fun traveling around taking photographs, how did that work?

MR. GOLDMAN: It worked just fine.

MR. HAGERTY: Explain to me the process behind it. Did you just say, "well, I pick this refuge out here. I want to go to this refuge in Alaska", and you went; or did someone...?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, my visits to the refuge were to see if I could improve what was going on. I had done a good job, I guess they thought, in my own refuges, and if I could help Refuge Managers in any way, I was to go to it. And I'd take my camera along and take a few pictures here and there and come back and illustrate my reports. I think that's how it got started.

MR. HAGERTY: After a while did you just go to a refuge to take a photo of a certain animal because you had a need for that in the Washington office?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, I never spent much time doing that sort of thing; pursuing birds and mammals for that purpose. I just kind of got interested in taking pictures of birds and mammals.

MR. GENTRY: Let me butt in just to clarify something. Really, your job was not as a photographer, what was your actual job?

MR. GOLDMAN: That's right. My work was not solely as a photographer, no. I was, as I say, as Assistant Chief of the Section of Habitat Improvement. I'd go around and see how the guys were keeping their water levels; whether they were raising and lowering them and that sort of thing; and changing things around. So, no, it wasn't. When this fellow left, or retired, I figured well, I like to take pictures so I'll take his job over if they wanted me to, and they did. So that's how I got into the photographic part of it.

MR. HAGERTY: Do you have any favorite places that you visited in your travels in the Refuge System?

MR. GOLDMAN: Of course, I spent twelve years down in south Texas, so I enjoyed getting back there. But Moosehorn Refuge up in the corner of Maine there is an interesting place with interesting animals. The western refuges attracted me more because I had spent a lot of time collecting mammals and birds in Arizona and California. My folks had a ranch out there in California so I spent quite a bit of time out there, and the fact that I had the refuge at Salton Sea as my first assignment in the field.

MR. GENTRY: I want to jump in a little bit here.

MR. GOLDMAN: You bet.

MR. GENTRY: He's asking some questions that kind of make me curious. First of all, just in the biological or refuge field, what was it about all of this that interested you? Why did you care about even getting in to that field?

MR. GOLDMAN: I don't know. I guess it started out with my Dad. He was a good teacher. He collected birds and mammals so I started when I was just a kid to make specimens of birds and mammals. You know, catch them and stuff them and collect them. Because of that, I guess I had an interest in it. I always did like conservation of birds and mammals. It was just natural for me to follow that line of work. Does that answer your question?

MR. GENTRY: Well sort of. I was just wondering if there was any particular time that you remember, or event that you remember that just crystallized in you mind that "this is what I want to do". Or, was it just an evolution?

MR. GOLDMAN: I think as mentioned, it was an evolution. That's probably it.

MR. GENTRY: You said that you liked being down in south Texas. What in particular about that part of the country was so attractive to you?

MR. GOLDMAN: Big, open spaces and not crowded with people. If you want to park some place, even in the towns. The towns were small, where I was living and working. You could always find a parking space. You didn't have to wait, or fight or pay money to find a parking place. That's just one thing. It wasn't crowded.

MR. GENTRY: What about the wildlife down there? Was there anything in particular that interested you?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, I had thousands. The Refuge itself, Laguna Atascosa and Santa Ana, too; I had two Refuges. Laguna Atascosa is forty-five thousand acres, a pretty good-sized area. I could go sixteen miles up through the Refuge and still be on the refuge. It was located on the Laguna Madre and I had fresh water ponds; some I made with dikes and revetments. Seven eighths of all the Red Headed Ducks in North America come down there to winter at Laguna Madre, which borders the refuge. Part of the Refuge is right along side of it. With about a million Red Head Ducks feeding on the shoal grass, which is an aquatic plant in the shallow water of the Laguna Madre, they would feed there, and then they'd come over to the refuge to get fresh water. So I had about a million ducks on the refuge at one time. As I mentioned, most of the Red Heads in North America would gather together at one time and went down there to spend the winters.

MR. GENTRY: What was that like, so see a million ducks all at one time?

MR. GOLDMAN: Fantastic, to say the least? It was interesting too, for papers; to write up articles on it and take pictures of the waterfowl rising up into the air, you know.

MR. GENTRY: I can just sort of imagine for myself, and I was just wondering if there were mornings when you just stood out there and saw all of these ducks, what was that experience like?

MR. GOLDMAN: I got a couple of pictures there that will give you some idea of the numbers. I'll show them to you before you leave.

MR. GENTRY: I mean in words, what was that like?

MR. GOLDMAN: What's that?

MR. GENTRY: Can you describe in words, what it was like?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, 'fantastic' I guess, covers it. I enjoy the birds so much, and to see that many and to know that seven eighths of all the Red Heads of North America were down there, and they were all of my Refuge! That was fun. There were mammals there too; coyotes and ground squirrels and bobcats, white tailed deer.

MR. GENTRY: Did there develop for you any kind of sense that with you taking care of that many ducks that you had something to do with it?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, I planted six hundred and forty acres with food for the ducks and the geese. It was mostly the cereals. Since they're browsers and feed on the green vegetation that was planted for them. I had Sand Hill Cranes too. Sometimes there were large flocks of Sand Hill Cranes that would spend the winters with me down there.

MR. HAGERTY: Were you ever a hunter?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, I used to hunt, but I gave it up a long time ago.

MR. HAGERTY: Why was that?

MR. GOLDMAN: I don't know. I got to liking the animals so that I guess I didn't want to kill them any more. But I don't think anything bad about hunters, or people that do got out and enjoy the sport of hunting. I did. I enjoyed it. I liked to creep and crawl so to speak to approach these animals, and give them a chance. In other words, I didn't shoot them from three hundred yards away or something like that. I liked to get up and see how close I could get to them. When I shot them, I didn't want them to run off wounded. I never had that to happen. I would find, every once in a while, a deer that had been shot, and wasn't shot well and had lived for a while before it died. Some people began to use bow and arrows they didn't always make a good kill. Animals suffered and went off and died somewhere. I enjoyed hunting but I gave it up and just spent time seeing that the wildlife that I had on the area and was happy.

MR. HAGERTY: What are some of your favorite memories of working, and being out on the Refuge?

MR. GOLDMAN: Meeting some of the people, I think. Some of the "big-shot" naturalists, and people who were interested in wildlife would come down and see what I was doing. I enjoyed taking them around and showing them the wildlife on the Refuge. I made lots of friends that way. And still, there are a lot of them that I am in contact with. They went with me to see wildlife on the refuge. There are a lot of things that I was fortunate in being able to do. The biggest of all was doing the job that I thought I was helping and enjoying doing it, you know, wildlife conservation. You ought to go down and visit those areas some time. In the wintertime because that's when big flocks of ducks and geese are using the areas.

MR. GENTRY: About what period of time did you have your first Refuge? It was before World War II that you got interested in conservation?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah.

MR. GENTRY: What is the difference between now and then? Are we going up, or are we going down?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, we're level. I am still interested in conservation and birding, or bird watching. Bird watching, to me is looking out the windows at the birds at the feeders. Birding is going after them. I've been to Africa twice looking for birds. And Central America and South America. I still enjoy birding; finding them, you know, and learning the new ones. Of course, there are no new one for me in the United States any more. I have to go down to Central or South America to get new ones. I still read stuff that concerns birds and wildlife. I belong to several organizations.

MR. GENTRY: Are there any significant changes in the Fish and Wildlife Service or in Refuge Management that you have seen take place?

MR. GOLDMAN: I haven't been in the offices to know what's happening down there since I retired. Apparently, they are doing a good job because I read about the refuges. They've got more refuges since I left.

MR. GENTRY: What about management techniques? Is there a dramatic difference from when you were managing a refuge?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, I think they're probably doing the same thing. They see that the birds and mammals are protected. And then they, on areas that have enough good soil for planting, they do quite a bit of farming. They need to have farming equipment and people to operate the equipment. We used draglines to make impoundments, you know. We did a lot of dirt work. A Refuge Manager is busy all of the time. You think, "Well, today I'm going to get a little rest." And here comes a whole bunch of people who want to see the Refuge. They want to visit and they want somebody like Luther Goldman to lead them around!

MR. GENTRY: Do you see any difference in the degree or amount of public use between the early days, and now? How do you see that?

MR. GOLDMAN: I am sure that more people are aware of Refuges now. There are more refuges and more population. More people are visiting refuges that they used to. Transportation is better too.

MR. GENTRY: I remember one of my first experiences of just seeing a refuge; I thought it was not really, I wasn't welcome there as part of the public. Was that a....?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, I don't think there are any Refuge Managers that have that attitude. I didn't. I wanted people to enjoy the wildlife and helped them all I could to help them see it and enjoy it. That way, people get an interest in nature, and wildlife and conservation. The more they are exposed to it, the more they feel they want to associate with it. I had a lot of people who were hunters too. They'd come down. They couldn't shoot on the refuge, but they enjoyed looking at the quantities of wildlife that were on the refuge. Some of it would fly in and out, so when it was outside of the Refuge it was there for their entertainment, to enjoy hunting.

MR. HAGERTY: Is there anything that went on when you were working that you were unhappy with, or you thought was kind of bad things to do management wise, with the refuge? Was there something that you would have changed?

MR. GOLDMAN: I don't really think of anything right now. The Refuges are not inviolate sanctuaries. Some Refuge Managers, I think, have that attitude; that the refuges are for the wildlife alone. They don't want to be disturbed. But we had roads and trails going through the refuge that people could, not leave their cars and race around all over the refuge, but to use their binoculars and scopes and see the birds and wildlife. I never had that attitude. I wanted people to see the birds and enjoy them and think about conservation and wildlife.

MR. HAGERTY: What about some of the refuges that have been established since your retired? A lot of the refuges in Alaska, they have been in the news a lot lately. What do you think of Arctic experience?

MR. GOLDMAN: I was just reading about Alaska Refuges and the fight to keep people from building roads and encroaching on the refuges. Alaska is one of the places where there are large areas occupied by wildlife that should be left that way, instead of having people racing around all over the refuges. It would give them a chance to live in an undisturbed habitat so to speak. Even though there's some huge areas up there in Alaska. There are a lot of interesting wildlife; mammals as well as birds of course.

MR. GENTRY: What are your favorite, or more interesting Refuges that you have visited, been to, or managed?

MR. GOLDMAN: Of course, refuges that I have been involved with are the closest to my interests. But there are other interesting areas. I keep thinking about Moosehorn Refuge. I have been up there in Maine and that's a good area. There are mammals like Moose.

MR. GENTRY: Do you know Steve Hildebrand? The one Refuge that was nearest and dearest to your heart. The most interesting?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, it would have to be Santa Ana and Laguna Atascosa. Santa Ana was up the Rio Grande, up the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and the Rio Grande went down one side of the refuge there. It goes down one side of the refuge. You've got birds and mammals that come out of Mexico, just over the line so to speak. So you don't know that once in a while, you get some Mexican stuff down there. One of my achievements; I make a little joke or story about it; my achievement was that I saw the first Ruddy Ground-Dove ever to see the United States down there! It came across the border from Mexico. A thing like that is kind of interesting. You see some oddball stuff coming out of Mexico. Tropical birds that you don't see any other place in the United States except right on the border there. Once in a while some stuff comes over. Maybe a hurricane comes up the coast and you get to see some things that you don't normally see thirty some miles inland from the coast, maybe. So Laguna Atascosa, forty-five thousand acres, a big area, and Santa Ana was two thousand acres. But it was a sort of a remaining area of what used to be a larger area along the rivers. The people that found out that there is so much variety of vegetation growing, that this soil must support all kinds of crops you know, food crops. Farmers went down there and bought up most of the land, so it's just a little narrow strip along the river that's in the vegetation that used to be in much of the valley, the Lower Rio Grande Valley. So by having the refuge there, we've got a couple thousand acres of that original type of area and the birds and the mammals that used to live in it. We even had a Jaguar or two that would come over, and Mountain Lions. I never did see one, but I saw the tracks. They put an oil well down on the Santa Ana Refuge and a fellow said that every evening around eleven o'clock at night there was a Mountain Lion that would walk down the trail. I'd see the tracks, but I never did see him. I did on Laguna Atascosa; we had Mountain Lions on Laguna Atascosa. We had a lot of deer there and they fed on the deer.

MR. GENTRY: Were you part of the team that acquired the land for that, or some of the other areas?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, other people do that land evaluation, to decide where they'd make a refuge. No other people did that.

MR. GENTRY: I was wondering, when you try to make a refuge like that, in that area, or anywhere else; what was the, was it difficult to go through the process and work with the public and everything?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, you're much concerned with the public because if you have a refuge that is overrun with human beings you don't have a good refuge. So that area being area, Laguna being forty-five thousand acres was in a place where there wasn't very much visitation by people. It's down near the tip of Texas, only nineteen miles from the border, on the coast. And going north of the refuge you get to King Ranch and that's a habitat for wildlife. So it's still a wild area, and it remain that way as long as they don't open it for a lot of...

MR. GENTRY: Was there an argument or debate between private landowners who maybe wanted to keep that land for private use, versus turning it into public lands?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, I'll tell you, there was some of that when I first down there. The hunters were a little bit upset that we took over some of their best hunting land, see. But by maintaining fresh water ponds, and the Laguna lying along the side, it made hunting a whole lot better. They came to me one at a time later and said how sorry they were that they even thought about being upset, because the refuge now is attracting ducks out of Laguna Madre. They fly in and out and we get wonderful hunting, so they were real happy about it.

MR. HAGERTY: Where were you in the Fish and Wildlife when you had your best time? Was it in the refuges, or in the Washington offices when you got to travel around and take pictures?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, I liked the refuges because we were building impoundments and we could see the results. I planted foods for the waterfowl and so forth. That was the happiest time of my life, I guess in wildlife work, while I was with the government; to be a Refuge Manager. I enjoyed getting out and helping people see the wildlife.

MR. HAGERTY: Was there a reason you went back to Washington? I think you were born in Washington, so did you want to get back there, or did they just kind of make you come?

MR. GOLDMAN: They wanted me back in here. The fellow in charge wanted me in the Washington office because they doing things; making rules and regulations that didn't have the background of refuges. The people making them didn't have the right background. The people were more business minded and so forth. They needed some people to tell them what was happening on the refuges. They dragged me in for that, and they pulled a fellow in from the west refuges. Then they had people who had been working on refuges and had the knowledge of what was going on.

MR. HAGERTY: Did you feel picked on?

MR. GOLDMAN: What's that?

MR. HAGERTY: Did you feel like they were picking on you?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, not at all. One thing, my home was in Woodbridge, on the edge of Washington. My family was there. My wife, this was here home out here, so it wasn't too hard to come back. It was a better situation than it could have been. Now,

Betty was back with her home and her family here, and I with my family. We just enjoyed being back here.

MR. HAGERTY: Did your wife enjoy living on the refuges?

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh yes, I am sure she did. She had a lot of friends. They'd come out and she'd take them out too. We'd go out at nighttime and she and I would go out and have some people with us, some kids maybe. We'd look for wildlife at nighttime. We'd shine their eyes, especially raccoons; their eyes look like a couple of fireballs down the trail. Even you have been out, and seen even frogs; bullfrogs have eyes that look like a couple of lamps in the dark when you shine their eyes.

MR. GENTRY: Was it kind of like you were your own boss out there?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, right. I didn't mind the people out of the regional office or the Washington office coming to visit me if they could be of any help. I always welcomed it. They always seemed to enjoy getting out of the Washington or Regional offices and coming down and seeing wildlife instead of being at the desks. So they always enjoyed visiting the refuge and I enjoyed taking them around.

MR. GENTRY: In my imagination of being a Refuge Manager, especially during that time when you were sort of isolated; no emails and all that sort of stuff. You were really, it seems like to me that a person really carried a tremendous amount of responsibility and had a tremendous amount of freedom about how they managed their refuge. Would that be along the lines of what your experience was?

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh yeah, that was. The Washington and Regional offices would let you know if they weren't happy. And I seemed to keep them happy. So that worked out. And I didn't care if they came or not. They were more complimentary, I enjoyed them coming.

MR. GENTRY: Who was responsible for making all these decisions about how to run that refuge?

MR. GOLDMAN: I don't know. I guess there are certain lines that you follow. Each refuge is a little bit different. Some refuges have water areas already made. On other refuges you had to make them, make the impoundments. I did both. I had the Laguna Madre, which attracted all of the waterfowl in the wintertime, and I had my natural impoundments that would collect water from runoff. When I was making impoundments I would follow a rainstorm and see where the water went; what slopes carried the water off and where it went and so forth. I'd race off to the refuge from my headquarters in the Post Office building; the federal building, in San Benito, its eighteen miles out to the refuge. I ran both refuges from my office there in San Benito. I'd race out to see where

the rain was flowing when we'd get those storms. That's the way I built my impoundments to catch the runoff. And then there were natural impoundments anyway, that would trap water. I did anything to make the waterfowl happy! I had a number of mammals to the refuge too, because I was interested in mammals as well as birds. I guess lately, I have become a bird man! They call me a bird man!

MR. GENTRY: [addressing a new arrival to interview room] Steve, did you come here wanting to get a particular question answered?

MR. HILLEBRAND: Well, I don't know what you've got into yet, as far as before I got here, but I am kind of curious as to how you got into the photography part of your business.

MR. GOLDMAN: Well that's a story in itself. I would take pictures with considerable patience. Maybe it's birds, and I would send them to the little corner drug stores in the little town where the headquarters was, and they weren't doing a good job developing them. So I decided to do my own work. I made my own 8x10s. My office was in the federal building down in San Benito, so I made a darkroom in the basement. At nighttime I'd go and make my prints for my narrative reports. We had to make one for the regional office and one for the Washington office, one for circulating to other refuges and one for my own office. So that's what got me into photography; the lousy work that was done at the corner drug store.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Did you use strictly Hasselblads or did you get into bigger formats?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, I did some 8x10s. [Showing some of his photography equipment] This is my best bird lens, a Kilfit lens. It's 600mm but I can put a 2x extender on it and really reach out there and bring the birds in.

MR. HAGERTY: Did you have this camera when you were working for Fish and Wildlife?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, I got to use it quite a bit.

MR. HAGERTY: Did you use this one a lot?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, I used that quite a little bit. I've got some pictures I can show you that I took with that. This works out, so I could get close up. I made some 8x10s with it.

MR. HAGERTY: Could you take close ups of flowers with this?

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh yeah, I took a few flowers. But mainly I liked to shoot pictures of wildlife; birds and mammals.

MR. HILLEBRAND: What years were you using this camera?

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh, I don't know. I've used that more when I got down to Texas. When I left California and went down to Texas. When I left New Mexico, I should say, because I didn't have it when I was in California. But I used it mostly to take pictures to illustrate what was going on on the refuge. Not only for the birds and mammals. I'd use this for the birds. That one would be for construction work and dirt moving and building dikes and revetments and stuff like that; to illustrate my narrative reports. I got to where I was making my own prints in my own darkroom.

MR. HILLEBRAND: We've got another one down here. Let's see what size it this?

MR. GOLDMAN: That's an earlier camera than this one. That's a cute little fellow, it takes good pictures, and it still does. I've got an adapter on there to take two and a quarter by three and a quarter shots.

MR. GENTRY: What about the technical aspects of taking pictures back then compared to now; for light and measuring the light and that sort of thing?

MR. GOLDMAN: I used a light meter, separate and apart from the camera to start off with. You don't have any light meter with that one. Now the cameras have their own light meters. You look through the finder and you read the light.

MR. HAGERTY: Did you use the light meters a lot?

MR. GOLDMAN: I used them quite a little bit, to take a light reading. Maybe take it in the morning and then I would judge the light intensity during the day, and stuff like that.

MR. HAGERTY: So you had to kind play it by ear, or by eye sometimes?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah.

MR. HAGERTY: These are nice. [Admiring Mr. Goldman's cameras and equipment].

MR. GOLDMAN: This is the good old baby though. This will reach out and get them!

MR. HAGERTY: It's kind of a heavy thing to lug around though, isn't it?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, you carry it on your shoulder like you would a ladder or something. Feel the weight of that.

MR. GENTRY: Exactly what kind of camera is it?

MR. GOLDMAN: It's a Hasselblad.

MR. HAGERTY: Why did you use the Hasselblad?

MR. GOLDMAN: Because takes good pictures! The Hasselblad is pretty hard to beat. I used 35mm quite a little bit too. I've got a Canon camera, and I use 35mm quite a little bit. I did my own darkroom work so I could take 35 and blow it up to 8x10 if my lens was cutting sharply.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Tell us about the film you were using.

MR. GOLDMAN: I used fast film, of course; 100 rated Kodakrome. I used black and white too, Tri-ex film.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Tri-ex is still around.

MR. HAGERTY: When did you start shooting more color film?

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh, I guess after I got down to Texas, I shot more color. But I didn't do a whole lot of illustrating in color. I'd take pictures with 35mm and use the slides to give talks. In fact, there are some like this. I thought maybe you all would want to see some of the slides if you had time. [Show boxes of slides]

MR. HAGERTY: All Kodakrome.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Naturally! I think this is Texas. Did it say "Texas" on there?

MR. HAGERTY: It does, it says "Texas" on it.

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, I've got a lot of slides.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Can I take a peek?

MR. GOLDMAN: Sure!

MR. HILLEBRAND: I'll do it the easy way here. It's two little shore birds, can you tell what they are Ryan, I'm not that good at it? Plovers of some sort maybe?

MR. HAGERTY: That's a good guess Steve!

MR. HILLEBRAND: Maybe I'll try another one!

MR. GOLDMAN: Does it say on there, what it is?

MR. HAGERTY: It's Avocet chicks!

MR. HILLEBRAND: Oh, okay. Well see, Avocet chicks always look like Plovers to me. Let me pick another one, we'll have "twenty questions"...

MR. GOLDMAN: There's a finder there somewhere.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Oh well, that one's dark, we'll pick another one here. Okay, that's a good one. What's that? And don't read it!

MR. HAGERTY: That is a shorebird.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Very good, and what is it?

MR. HAGERTY: [Reading the slide label] Semipalmated Sandpiper.

MR. HILLEBRAND: There you go.

MR. HAGERTY: I'm one of those guys, I'm afraid, that unlike you I'd have to crack open the wildlife or bird guidebook.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Here's a butterfly. These are really good. You've kept them well, and in the dark I presume. They don't seem to have faded at all.

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, maybe they have faded. They were better at one time.

MR. HILLEBRAND: This looks like a Rattler. [Snake]

MR. HAGERTY: Oh, yeah. Rattlesnake, Texas Diamondback.

MR. HILLEBRAND: We got that one right, didn't we?

MR. GOLDMAN: I've got some 8x10s of that Diamondback.

MR. GENTRY: That kind of raises a question, when we're sitting here talking about this; To be a wildlife photographer how much do you need to know about identifying the critters and everything, the wildlife itself?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, I think naturally you want to know what you are photographing. So if you are bird person you either go out with people that know the birds and take bird guides with you. My Dad was a biologist and knew all of the birds and the mammals, and I learned all of that stuff when I was a kid. When it came time to take the examination for Fish and Wildlife Service Employee, I already had the answers to the biological questions.

MR. HAGERTY: Did you have to take an exam?

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh yeah, a three hour examination! That was for Refuge Manager.

MR. GENTRY: Was the photography, especially in the earlier days, more of an art you were working on, or was it just a tool?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, it was to get better pictures to illustrate my narrative reports. That was the main thing. I mentioned the fact that the drug store on the corner, their photographic people did such a poor job, that I started doing my own.

MR. GENTRY: Did you ever look at it as being art? I mean, there are people now who are looking at your pictures now on the wall and thinking of it as pieces of art.

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, I never thought about it too much as being an art. I've got a few pictures hanging around the walls here that are just photographs; there's not much art connected with them.

MR. HAGERTY: So you don't think your photographs were or are art?

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, they're on the verge on being, some of them.

MR. HAGERTY: What do you think would them over the edge?

MR. GOLDMAN: I really don't know. It all depends on what you consider art. I don't like to see a bird that's frightened; a picture of a bird that's been frightened. I also enjoyed creeping and crawling to get to where I could take a picture of a bird. But I didn't like bird photographers that tramped up to a nest and left their trail so that a coyote or a bobcat could sniff all the way to the nest and feed on the youngsters. So I didn't want to do that. In other words, I'd sacrifice taking maybe what would be a good picture. At least I didn't cause the loss of the bird by doing it. Some of the more famous photographers used to come down to visit us; like Elliott Porter. He did a couple of things up there I think.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Were there ever Presidents, or Governors and anybody like that?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, the Governor of Texas.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Who was it at the time?

MR. GOLDMAN: I forget the name of the guy now. I've got a picture of him. I was trying to think the other day, "What the heck was his name?" I had Roger Tory Peterson. He came down, and I took him around. James Fisher came from England. I am trying to think of the people out of New York; they were a husband and wife. I've got a picture, it may be in that slide tray you have there now of a fellow controlling a rattlesnake, and a group of people around him. That was the Audubon Society that met at Corpus Christi and they came down to the refuge. I invited them to come down and I used my equipment to take them around, and gave my assistance to tell them what was happening. On that particular day, I was showing a group of people a concentration of Red Heads, there were pretty close to a million. I got on my short wave and talked to some of my people who also had a short wave, they were taking groups of people around, and Ira Gabrielson was up in New England and he heard my short wave. He said, "Is that you Luther?" I said, "Yes it is!" Then I said, "I'm glad to talk to you because I've got pretty close to a million Red Heads down here!" I said, "How about taking some aerial shots of them?" He told me he'd think about it. And he must still be thinking about it because he never did. That was kind of fun because he picked up my voice all the way up in Massachusetts. He was just going out to visit some refuge and he heard my voice. And again, somebody else heard my voice, it was the refuge manager at the refuge I had had out in California. He said, "Is that you Luther?" Then when I'd be going out to the refuge, I'd be talking to some of my help, giving instructions, and "See you out there", and some Refuge Manager way up in the Central Flyway would say, "Is that you Luther?"

MR. HAGERTY: Everybody was on short wave radio!

MR. GOLDMAN: We were all on the same frequency.

MR. GENTRY: We'd better clarify for history what kind of technology we're talking about here. Short wave radio, people might not know.

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, we had short wave in our car so we could contact people at a distance, you know.

MR. GENTRY: But it wasn't intended to go all the way from Texas to Maine though, was it?

MR. GOLDMAN: No, it was usually...I had it to keep in touch with my personnel. For instance, I'd be out at the refuge and I'd say, "Oh, geez, we need a few roles of barbed wire!", or something like that you know. I'd get in touch with one of my helpers nearest to a store. It was just to be in touch with your people, and with other refuges,

too. There was another refuge two or three hundred miles up the coast. They would contact us and say that they had a group of people that wanted to come down and visit us; 'So and so is in the group, and wants to speak to you.' We would talk back and forth. I could get to Louisiana easily and I'd talk to fellows over there that had refuges. We talked around quite a little bit. I hear a guy in Moosehorn, you know, all the way down there at Laguna. I'd have my windows open to get fresh air in, and they'd have theirs closed with the heat on! I'd joke with the man about weather conditions. I'd say, "I've got my windows open, the curtains blowing and a nice cool breeze is coming in". He'd be up there freezing to death! They'd have road plows, plowing the road way so he could get to his refuge and stuff!

[Group looks at large, heavy camera Mr. Goldman is holding. He hands it to Mr. Hagerty. They are examining it and seeing how it works.]

MR. HAGERTY: That's a heavy one!

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, you carry it on your shoulder when you're going from place to place.

MR. HILLEBRAND: I guess you had a pretty sturdy tripod.

MR. GOLDMAN: It takes 3.25x4.25, and I put an adapter on there and it gets it down to 2.25x2.75. Then, in the darkroom, I can either handle 4x5s or.... This takes a smaller picture, 2.25x2.25 I guess. That's an older camera.

MR. HAGERTY: How does this front open?

MR. GOLDMAN: [Showing him] there we go.

MR. HAGERTY: Oh, it just pops right out. I don't have as many 'secret openings' on my newer cameras.

MR. GOLDMAN: Well, I used 33mm quite a little bit now when I take pictures now.

MR. GENTRY: [Giving instructions; this conversation is being filmed] Steve, look at some slides over there like you were doing earlier.

MR. GOLDMAN: Remember to say, "Oh and ahh!" [All laugh]

MR. HILLEBRAND: Oh look at this one!

MR. GOLDMAN: Don't you want a finder to look at those? I've got a finder over there.

MR. HILLEBRAND: Oh, that's too easy for us. Oh, what is that one Ryan? Oh, you're cheating.

MR. HAGERTY: It's a Phalarope! Okay, let's try another one here.

MR. GOLDMAN: You know, the Phalarope is an interesting bird because the female is the boss. They lay their eggs.... [tape skips]

MR. HAGERTY: This is a digital camera, one of my new ones. This is a 17 to 35mm lens.

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh my goodness!

MR. HAGERTY: So it's a really, really nice lens.

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah, that's a real good unit.

MR. HAGERTY: The beautiful part about these guys is that you can take a photo and then you can just see on the back of it immediately what you've taken.

MR. GOLDMAN: How about that! That's wonderful! That's a big step forward for photography!

MR. HAGERTY: And if you don't like it you can just delete it!

MR. GOLDMAN: Oh you can? And the same film to take another picture?

MR. HAGERTY: That's right. Here's my film right here. [Shows him the digital memory card for the camera].

MR. GOLDMAN: I'll be darned! How about that! That's wonderful. That's the first one I've seen. I've seen pictures of them in the catalogs. That's quite a unit.

MR. HAGERTY: The one thing it does it that eats up batteries. This is the battery for it. You have to plug that in. It doesn't take too long to charge up the battery.

MR. GOLDMAN: How heavy is that?

MR. HAGERTY: That one's kind of a chunk. It's not quite as heavy as your Hasselblad.

MR. GENTRY: Pick up the graphics and let's compare them.

MR. GOLDMAN: They are quite different. Of course, you have a smaller film.

MR. HAGERTY: That's right, but....

MR. GOLDMAN: But it's sharp and you can make enlargements so that you don't need a big, wide film to begin with.

MR. HAGERTY: But you know, 4x5 or 2.75 or what you have here still beats digital on resolution. The technology is great, but it's still not what real film is.

MR. GOLDMAN: Is that so? Well this is a nice unit. I'll give you a dollar and a half for it! Boy, that's alright! It balances nicely. There's a place for you finger. Oh man!

MR. HAGERTY: Actually, it's auto focus. All you have to do is just lightly touch your top button right there and it'll focus for you.

MR. GOLDMAN: How about that!

MR. HAGERTY: But then you can put it on manual too.