

## **Johnson Bayou, LA Christmas Bird Count, December 14, 2017**

### **Sponsored by Golden Triangle Audubon Society**

At Johnson Bayou, LA, on Wednesday, December 14, 2017, the Christmas Bird Count found 114 species and 18,510 individual birds. A Painted Bunting in Peveto Woods is a new species to LAJB, since at least 2002. Two unusual sparrows, a Seaside and two LeConte's, were also seen. The number of species is down from last year's 119, but the number of individual birds is the third highest in the current series of counts going back to 2002, thanks to 10,300 plus American Coots. Also very good numbers of ducks, especially Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks and Lesser Scaup, were big contributors to the high count. It was a pleasure to have four Louisiana birders join the Golden Triangle group for this count, but as luck would have it several GTAS birders were "under the weather", which may have made a difference in birds found in the chenier woodlands. Just like the previous year, December 14 was a very nice day to be outdoors on the Gulf Coast, with balmy fall weather and a gentle southerly breeze.

As in past years we have great cooperation from area landowners and would like to thank the owners and managers of The Gray Estate, Dore' Energy, and Crain Brothers for graciously allowing access to their property for the CBC and for help in the field with gates and directions.

Meeting at daybreak at the Bayou Convenience Store, we formed five parties and fanned out. By then, David Booth was across the road finding a Woodcock in the borrow ditch, and making a good start on the day's Yellow-rumps, blackbirds and grackles. We saw less than 100 Snow Geese flying through the day, but as mentioned above, duck numbers were good, especially Gadwalls, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks and Scaup. Others present were a few Mallards, Ruddy Ducks, Wigeon, Redheads, Mottled Ducks, Blue-winged Teal and Buffleheads.

Pied-billed Grebes and Neotropic Cormorants were plentiful. Both Pelicans were present but the American White Pelicans seemed to trend down since 2014.

All the usual Herons were present in normal numbers. White Ibis and dark ibis species were relatively plentiful.

The expected vultures, Osprey, White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawk, and Peregrine Falcon were found, with a miss on Sharp-shinned Hawk.

After some discussion with the Louisiana CBC editor about water salinity and vegetation around Johnson Bayou, we recorded our King/Clapper Rails as Kings.

American Coot numbers were very high this year, over 10,300, lifting the number of individuals counted over 18,500 and reversing what appeared to be a down trend in 2016.

Of waders and shorebirds, Lesser Yellowlegs was a miss this year but we had a pop in Least Sandpipers, which seems to happen occasionally on this count.

The usual gulls and terns were found, with addition this year of a Gull-billed Tern and two Common Terns

We seemed to find fewer woodpeckers, perhaps due to less time spent in chenier woodland. A Downy and a Northern Flicker were recorded but we missed the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Eurasian Collared and White-winged Doves were also missing, among the Rock Pigeons, Mourning and Inco Doves that we did see.

We did not find a Barn Owl this year, but did record one Great Horned Owl that was missed last year.

Eastern Phoebes, Vermilion Flycatchers, Blue Jays, White-eyed and Blue-headed Vireos and Loggerhead Shrikes were well represented, as well as Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird and Brown Thrasher.

Starlings appear to be holding their own.

All the expected wrens and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher turned up, with the exception of the unusual Winter Wren.

Tree Swallows and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were frequently seen; the Orange-crowned Warbler somewhat less and American Pipit just once. Yellow-rumps, Palm Warblers, and Common Yellowthroat rounded out the warblers.

The expected Song, Lincoln's, Swamp, White-crowned, White-throated and Savannah Sparrows were all present, along with a Seaside Sparrow and two LeConte's.

Red-winged Blackbirds, the three commonest grackles, E. Meadowlark, and Brown-headed Cowbird were well represented.

One Painted Bunting at Peveto Woods was a nice lagniappe, a new species to this count since 2002.

GOOSE, Snow (95); WIGEON, American (7); GADWALL (806); TEAL, Green-winged (267); REDHEAD (6); MALLARD (6); DUCK, Mottled (12); PINTAIL, Northern (9); TEAL, Blue-winged (22); SHOVELER, Northern (142); DUCK, Ring-necked (500); SCAUP, Lesser (329); SCAUP, Greater (2); SCAUP, species (98); BUFFLEHEAD (26); DUCK, Ruddy (94); DUCK, species (145); GREBE, Pied-billed (145); CORMORANT, Neotropic (109); CORMORANT, Double-crested (11); CORMORANT species (33); PELICAN, American White (80); PELICAN, Brown (40); HERON, Tri-colored (65); HERON, Little Blue (24); EGRET, Snowy (126); HERON, Great Blue (46); EGRET, Great (102); EGRET, Cattle (2); NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned (1); BITTERN, American (1); IBIS, White (512); IBIS, White-faced (5); IBIS, Plegadis sp. (331); SPOONBILL, Roseate (51); VULTURE, Black (6); VULTURE, Turkey (8); OSPREY (4); KITE, White-tailed (4); HARRIER, Northern (19); HAWK, Cooper's (5); HAWK, Red-tailed (38); CARACARA, Crested (5); KESTREL, American (24); MERLIN (5); FALCON, Peregrine (2); RAIL, King (23); SORA (6); GALLINULE, Common (126); COOT, American (10,365); WOODCOCK, American (2); SNIPE, Wilson's (28); YELLOWLEGS, Greater (3); WILLET (3); TURNSTONE, Ruddy (20); SANDERLING (10); SANDPIPER, Western (50); SANDPIPER, Least (58); STILT, Black-necked (21); AVOCET, American (70); KILLDEER (89); GULL, Ring-billed (54); GULL, Herring (17); GULL, Laughing (50); TERN, Gull-billed (1); TERN, Caspian (22); TERN, Royal (104); TERN, Common (2); TERN, Forster's (10); PIGEON, Rock (11); DOVE, Mourning (20); DOVE, Inca (3); OWL, Great Horned (1); KINGFISHER, Belted (19);

SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (0); WOODPECKER, Downy (1); FLICKER, Northern (Yellow-shafted) (3); PHOEBE, Eastern (47); FLYCATCHER, Vermilion (3); JAY, Blue (2); VIREO, Blue-headed (1); SHRIKE, Loggerhead (30); THRUSH, Hermit (2); ROBIN, American (10); CATBIRD, Gray (3); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (24); THRASHER, Brown (2); STARLING, European (227); WREN, Sedge (9); WREN, Marsh (33); WREN, Carolina (1); WREN, House (5); GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (46); SWALLOW, Tree (145); KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (43); KINGLET, Golden-crowned (2); PIPIT, American (1); WARBLER, Orange-crowned (12); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) (119); WARBLER, Palm (3); YELLOWTHROAT, Common (10); SPARROW, Song (4); SPARROW, Lincoln's (2); SPARROW, Swamp (98); SPARROW, White-crowned (6); SPARROW, White-throated (1); SPARROW, Savannah (82); SPARROW, Seaside (1); SPARROW, LeConte's (2); SPARROW, Chipping (10); CARDINAL, Northern (2); BLACKBIRD, Red-winged (1122); MEADOWLARK, Eastern (58); GRACKLE, Common (3); GRACKLE, Boat-tailed (178); GRACKLE, Great-tailed (208); QUISCALIS species (322); COWBIRD, Brown-headed (63); SPARROW, House (5); BUNTING, Painted (1).

SPECIES, total (114); INDIVIDUALS, total (18,510); Observers (12); Parties (5); Party-hours total (40); Party-miles total (102); Party-hours on foot (15); Party-miles on foot (11.25 ); Party-hours by car (25); Party-miles by car (90.75).

Observers: David Booth, Mike VanEtten, Sheila Hebert, Craig Geoffroy, Howard Davis, Malise Prieto, Rick Delaune, Sherrie Roden, Edward Craven, John Whittle, Ashley Fusilier, Gary Kelley