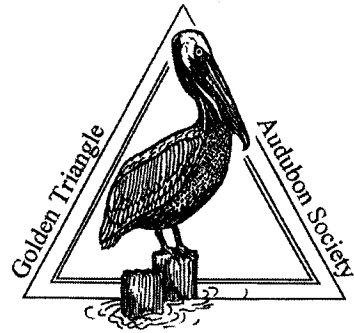


Brown Pelican

Scanned from Originals

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 6 No. 3

March 2000

Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 16, 2000

6:30 PM, Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

Birds of Southeastern Arizona

**David Bradford
Outdoor Nature Club, Houston**

David Bradford will discuss the birds of Southeast Arizona that can be seen during July and August. This is the height of hummingbird migration and 12 or more species can be seen in a week's time. He will describe some of the mighty "sky islands", hot, dry deserts, and lush riparian habitats which harbor some of Arizona's finest birds.

David is a past chair of the Ornithology Group of Houston, a past board member of the Houston Audubon Society, and presently the Executive Vice-President of the Outdoor Nature Club. He is also a tour leader for Penfeathers Tours.

As usual, the doors will be open no later than 6:30 p.m., and the proceedings will start at 7:15 p.m. approximately.

February Meeting Report

The Golden Triangle Audubon membership meeting held on Thursday, February 17, 2000, started off with a great social time and gumbo provided by Pat and Don Jeane. It was very good! Thanks to everyone that brought refreshments.

Charles Post was our speaker that night. Don and I met Charles and Jackie when we attended our first Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club meeting several years ago. I believe Charles was serving a two-year term as president at that time and he is a charter member of the club. For as long as we've known Charles he has shown a special interest in bluebirds.

Charles presented a wonderful slide show program entitled "On the Road to Recovery". Because of the efforts of many people putting up bluebird boxes and maintaining bluebird trails, it appears that the bluebird is making a comeback. There are three species of bluebirds that live in North America: Eastern, Western and Mountain. Check your field guides out for the differences in the three species and their ranges if you are not familiar with them. Bluebirds are secondary cavity nesters, making their nests in old woodpecker holes, holes in old dead trees and manmade nest boxes. Charles has maintained a Bluebird trail since 1989, monitoring Bluebird trail since 1989, monitoring 50 to 60 boxes in and around Liberty. With grant funds, several members of the Lower Trinity

(continued on page 7)

The Brown Pelican

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Golden Triangle Audubon Society

**RARE BIRD ALERT AND
SOCIETY INFORMATION
TELEPHONE NUMBER
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www.ih2000.net/gtas**

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The Brown Pelican is published monthly except July by the Golden Triangle Audubon Society, P. O. Box 1292, Nederland, Texas 77627-1292

Calendar of Events

If you can present a program of interest to a Membership Meeting, or know of some person who can, please contact Jana Whittle at (409) 722-4193.

For more information on field trips, please contact Steve Mayes, (409) 722-5807 or the trip leader.

March 11 - Sabine Woods Work Day

Please come help us prepare the Woods for the birds in advance of spring migration. Meet at the Woods at 7:30 a.m. or later. Bring pruning shears, clippers and your other favorite brush clearing tools. Increasingly, rotary lawnmowers are helpful. Also bring gloves and other protective gear, including mosquito repellent. The drought has resulted in relatively limited growth of vegetation over the last six months, so this will be a "light" work day. In addition, we have funds through the TNRCC Supplemental Environmental Projects program for habitat improvement, which will enable us to hire contractors to do some of the heavier work. Call John Whittle 409-722-4193 for further information.

March 11 - Big Thicket Loop of Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail -- Southeast Texas Migration Celebration

To celebrate the opening of the Upper Texas Coast section of the trail, the Convention and Visitors Bureaus and Chambers of Commerce associated with the Big Thicket Loop will be presenting a series of displays and programs at the new Texas Travel Information Center on Interstate 10 in Orange from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Ted Eubanks will be speaking about the History of the Birding Trail and its impact on Southeast Texas as 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

We will be taking our booth from the Home and Garden Show to this event. Volunteers are needed to help set up and man the booth. Call Jeannie Lanclos at 409-724-1307 to volunteer.

March 16 -- Membership Meeting.

See front page for details.

March 18 -- Field Trip.

Following tradition, we will seek early migrating shorebirds at Bolivar Flats, meeting at the vehicle barrier at 8:30 a.m., or join the group out on the flats shortly after. The Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary is accessed from Highway 87 about three miles east of the Ferry landing on the Bolivar. Turn south from Highway 87 along Rettilon Road (opposite the eastern intersection of Loop 108 with Highway 87). If sand conditions permit, drive onto the beach, turn right (west), and drive approximately one half-mile to the vehicle barrier. Full participation will require a lot of walking on firm moist

sand, but there will probably be many birds closer in.

April 14-16 -- Twenty-first Annual Texas Wilderness Pow Wow.

This will be held at the Townsend Park Recreation Area in the Angelina National Forest near Broadus. Featured will be walks into the Turkey Hill Wilderness. For more information, contact the Texas Committee on Natural Resources, 1301 South IH-35, Suite 301, Austin, Texas 78741. Tel: (512) 441-1122; email tconr@mindspring.com.

April 20 -- Membership Meeting

Jace Stansbury will present a program on Purple Martins.

April 22 - Field Trip

Bird Walk at Sea Rim State Park and Sabine Woods. Meet at the headquarters area of Sea Rim State Park at 7:30 a.m. This trip will involve only easy walking.

May 13 - North American Migration Count - Jefferson County.

Contact John Whittle 409-722-4193 for details.

May 18 -- Membership Meeting.

Details in later issues of the *Brown Pelican*.

Gentling Brothers Art Exhibition

Thanks to a generous donation by Entergy, we are sponsoring an exhibition of 22 large life-size watercolors of birds by the Gentling Brothers in the style of John James Audubon at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas during April.

There will be a reception on Friday evening, March 31, before the official opening on April 1. The exhibition will run through the month of April. The Art Museum is at 500 Main Street in Beaumont and is open Monday through Friday 9 to 5, Saturday 10 to 5 and Sunday 12 to 5. Admission is free, although donations are appreciated.

The Migration Celebration -- see Calendar, March 11 -- is sponsoring a Coloring Contest at all the schools in the area covered by the Big Thicket Loop. The winners from each school will also be on display at the Art Museum during the exhibition.

President's Column

Change is a part of life As the year changes and millennium so too must our club. The big shoes of our past two presidents will be hard to fill and their experience will be drawn upon for us to succeed. Robert and Joe both deserve our respect for a job well done. As your new president I hope to encourage more members to become active in birding. As I get deeper and deeper into birding I realize how little I do know and that challenge makes my excitement of birding grow. Each time out I am spiritually and psychologically reawakened and get excited over a common bird as a rare one. Listing and seeing new birds should not be our sole reason for birding. One should improve upon birding skills by learning new field marks and sounds. To this end I encourage all local birders to join our Golden Triangle Audubon Society (GTAS) as well as the Texas Ornithological Society (TOS) and the American Birding Association (ABA). Few of our members belong to one and even fewer belong to two and a sparse minority belong to all three. GTAS supports local bird habitats and with field trips promotes "hands on" birding and skill improvements. TOS and ABA on a broader scale do likewise. Both have excellent publications with in depth articles on birding. TOS 's recent articles on the Black-headed Gull and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow will improve anyone's field skills. ABA's recent article on the recent Solitary Vireo complex split helps our understanding of how to tell them apart and shows us there may be birds around that we did not know of because we did not look. Becoming a better student in bird identification and honing one's skills, the "usual" may turn out to be the unusual.

Ken Sztraky

Our Membership Policies

The Golden Triangle Audubon Society is a certified chapter of the National Audubon Society. As such, all NAS members living in the chapter territory, which comprises Jefferson, Orange and Hardin counties and a few additional adjacent communities, are automatically members of the chapter. We receive a modest dues share from NAS for such members. If you are not already a member of Audubon, you may become one by completing the membership form on the back page and sending it along with a check for \$20 to us. For this you will receive Audubon magazine and this Newsletter. If you live outside our territory, but would like to receive this Newsletter on a regular basis, we ask for a subscription of \$15. In fact, even for those living in our territory, our dues share from NAS barely covers our Newsletter costs, and we ask those who are able to contribute \$15 a year as a donation so that we can continue and expand our programs. Many of you receiving this issue visited our booth at the Home and Garden Show and expressed an interest in our activities. This, however, will likely be the only issue we are able to send you unless you request that we continue.

Home and Garden Expo Report

Our GTAS exhibit at the Beaumont Civic Center February 4-6th was a huge success. This was our third year to have a booth at House with a Heart. We are appreciative to Houseman Homes for inviting us and giving our booth at no cost. This year we gave out pencils and magnets with our hotline phone number and website address. We also gave out animal stickers, bird water whistles, and pencils to children. The children had their hands stamped with a butterfly, hummingbird, snail, or spider.

We would like to thank Jeannie Lanclos for the tremendous amount of time and energy that it took to plan the lay-out of the booth, call volunteers, order pencils, magnets, make handouts, create signs for the plants, and for designing wooden display poles built especially for our booth. Jeannie, Joe Halbrook and Jana Whittle set up and took down the booth. Our volunteers were wonderful. If you have never participated in helping with our booth, please consider it next year.

We had 172 people who signed up for a chance to win two birding field guides. (One lady wanted a field guide so bad that she asked to sign up two times.) That should tell us many things as an organization. One of them being that people are very interested in birding. Our booth consisted of twenty hummingbird plants and two bird baths. Suet, hummingbird and regular birdfeeders were on display along with a birdhouse, a butterfly house, various types of birdseed, bird books, and bird magazines. We gave out informative handouts on Purple Martins, feeder projects, hot spots for birding, and our current newsletter. One of our new members even brought his own computer for people to view various species of bird pictures. We would like to thank him very much for coming Thursday night to set up his computer and then again Sunday for dismantling. It was a wonderful new addition for our booth. The pictures that kept flashing on the screen continually were taken by Ken Sztraky and Travis Lewing. (Maybe they will eventually make it into a screen saver for others.) The Big Thicket National Preserve allowed us to use their nice backboard which was extremely helpful and truly "dressed up" our booth. Ranger David Baker was kind enough to put up the backboard before we even arrived on Thursday and take it down on Sunday. As we're sure that you've noticed, it took a lot of team effort.

The purpose for our booth is to reach out to our local public in order to promote birding, an interest in wildlife, and conservation. We get so charged up helping with this exhibit every year because we are reaching more than one thousand people by placing information out for them. (We gave out over 500 pencils alone with our GTAS information on them.) Yes, it takes many hours to plan, work, volunteer, and money for supplies to hand out. We feel it is definitely well worth all of our effort. People were constantly asking birding and plant questions almost faster than we could answer. They were very, very eager to learn which plants to put out for birds, which seeds birds prefer, which bird books to buy, etc. We hope you will join in our fun next year.

Many thanks to our terrific Expo 2000 volunteers!!!! Don and Nancy Fisher, Joe Halbrook, Harrison Jordan, Steve Kuritz, Jeannie Lanclos, Travis Lewing, Steve Mayes, Annette Riddle, Sherrie Roden, Gail Slocum, Herb and Mary Stafford, and Jana Whittle.

Oil Field Christmas Count

Robert Hurt submitted this account of participation in the Sea Rim Christmas Count. Space restrictions prevented it from being published last month- Ed.

With a roll of the tumblers and a pull of the lock the gate was open and the 100th annual Christmas Count was on for me. I poised for a moment, the wind in my face, the smell of the salt in my nostrils. I turned to listen for a "small still voice" and what I heard was the marsh. My prayer for the day had already been lifted and I was ready. Already the Ring-billed Gulls and terns were moving out on the Intracoastal Waterway. Off in the distance I could hear the yelping of Snow Geese as they headed out for a days feeding and overhead was the whirring of duck wing as they made their way about. I could only guess as to what they were as it was still quiet dark and an early morning fog hampered my efforts to focus on them.

I was on my way to the bridge! As I rounded the second curve in the road I came up along side of what this past spring had been a large nesting colony of herons, egrets and cormorants. Now it is a roosting place for the parents and juveniles of those nesters. It was light enough to see the hundreds of Double-crested and Neotropical Cormorants poised in the trees ready to take flight into a new day. Their guttural squawking sounded more like hogs at the trough than birds. I got out of my Jeep, resisting the urge to count them as I knew in a short while they would present themselves in flight for easy counting. I walked down the road a short distance and my early morning presence was making many of the egrets and cormorants nervous enough to fly a short distance away. I noticed one large silhouette, rather upright and bulkier than that of a cormorant not having that long slim look about it. It was sitting high in a hackberry tree on the left side of the road, separated from the rest of the birds. As I moved forward staring at it, it just stared back. Soon though I was to close for comfort and the large rounded wings of a Great Horned Owl set and silently carried him to a more comfortable vantage point away from me. I returned to the Jeep and once again I was headed for the bridge. At the boundary line of the J.D. Murphree Wildlife Area, I stopped to glass a canal that flows out to Keith Lake. The tide was out and the banks were well exposed. Already there were several Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets on the banks of the canal and in its shallow waters along with a Great Blue Heron. An immature Red-tailed Hawk took to the wing, and large numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers were leaving the trees lining the levee along the canal.

Underway again, I was determined to make it to the bridge. I don't know what it is about that bridge that mystifies me so but each time I see it I'm in awe of it. It's so huge and it seems out of place here in the marsh. Only some of the older Tallow trees are taller than it. As I pulled up, there it was like an old friend, standing ready to watch the marsh wake up again. For five years now, my Christmas Counts have started here at this spot. Quickly I slipped into my overalls, grabbed my 10x50's and scope and headed up the bridge. It was now about a quarter after seven and looking out over the marsh it didn't appear that the fog was going to be a problem. Large flocks of cormorants were now starting to leave the rookery 2,200, 10, 45. Ducks were heading for Lost Lake 35, 60, 80. Herons and egrets were landing in the marsh grass as well as White and White-faced Ibis. To my west large flocks of White Pelicans were getting up 10, 24, 45. Things were starting to add up. In the distance, harriers could be seen gliding over the marsh looking for a mouse omelet.

It was now about a quarter till eight and I was going to have to stop birding so that I could run back up to the gate to meet some more birders. I must admit I didn't really want to stop. About then I looked down the road and saw a couple of pick-ups headed my way. I held on and sure enough they pulled up and parked. It was Joe Tibbs, Jack Baugh and John Haynes. To my thinking this was a good team of birders. Joe and Jack, from talking with them, are fairly new to this type of birding. Today would prove to be interesting, as this was their first time on a Christmas Count. They took the birding class at Lamar this past fall and are active birders having made numerous birding trips in the area. I've have been birding with them a couple of times now and we were just here in the oil field a few weeks ago on a field trip. John Haynes of course is no stranger to the GTAS and birding in this area. As the day progressed John shared stories with us about time spent in this same marsh as a youth with his father.

The four of us gathered together on top of the bridge and at once started keeping track of what we were seeing, and watching the march wake up. About nine o'clock the light was right and the ducks were still heading for Lost Lake and so were we.

We made our way down the levee to a spot I had cleared a couple of weeks before on another field trip. As we got closer to the blind glimpses through the cane only served to tease us at what we were about to see. True to its form Lost Lake was full of ducks and coots. Once we had worked our way down onto the shoreline our view opened up and there were ducks from shore to shore. For a moment we were speechless, all's we could see and hear were ducks thousands and thousands. Right off the bat John noticed a large "raft" of Pied-billed Grebes, about 75 we estimated, feeding near us. We noted that neither of us had seen so many Pied-bills in one raft. They acted more like Red-breasted Mergansers the way they were feeding and diving not the usual twos and threes you see in the ditches. As we continued to look out over the lake several more rafts were noted. The sloped red heads of Canvasbacks were all over the lake. Some you could tell had been shoving their heads into the mud on the bottom of the lake to feed causing their heads to look gray. The white foreheads and caps of Wigeon were everywhere. Their green eye patches shown like emeralds in the improving sunlight. I thought to myself how strange to see so many and last year I didn't see a single Wigeon. It was just possible to that at this very moment I was looking at more Ring-necked Ducks than I have seen in my entire life. Mingled amongst all of these ducks every third or fourth head was a coot and mixed through this avian gumbo was a smattering of Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Redheads, Mallards and the purple heads of Lesser Scaup showing as well. I looked long and hard for the green head of a Greater Scaup, but none were to be seen.

Having come up with numbers that we all agreed with and felt were accurate, we headed back out to the trucks. We spent the next two or three hours birding our way to the back of the refuge or as far as we could go. This is the area where the shallow marsh ponds are at but the wind had come up by now putting the birds down in the grass. Large flocks of Roseate Spoonbills were hiding on the downwind side of the stands of cane. Mixed in with them were numerous egrets and herons. Groups of 10 to 20 weren't uncommon. A flock of a hundred White Pelicans came floating by from the ship channel headed for calmer waters. At the south end of the road we got to watch an Osprey dinning on a fish out on one of the poles in the water. Once he had finished with lunch he showed us how a proper Osprey tided up after a fish lunch. It was this same area that we added nine more Hooded Mergansers to our now

impressive list. Once we reached the end of the road we got out to walk a ways. I noticed a couple of ducks that were napping and there were the green heads. My mind went straight to Greater Scaup. Yeah one more for the list. I said "Look guys, do ya'll see what I see?" Deep inside I hoped they did. The ducks tails were facing towards us with their heads tucked under their wings so our main field mark was the green head. John felt we need more info to go on before we made a call. We continued to look and discuss what we were seeing and I continued to hope "Greater". Jack whom had held his glasses steady on the birds from the start said "Look one of them is stretching it's wings", and as the bird settled back down it presented it's side to us a little. The brown sides of a male Shoveler shown clear. My hopes of a Greater Scaup flew away as fast as a flushed Quail. It was a rich time of observation and discussion of what field marks we had and didn't have. We looked and then consulted our field guides and then talked some more. This to me was birding at it's best. With a little more walking and a few more numbers we decided to go back up front and check the woods. We added a

few more birds to the list and then we settled down to compile things, and discuss numbers.

It was the late evening hour and the birds were returning to their roost. Numbers decided, we all headed back to the bridge to end the day, and put the marsh to sleep. Wave after wave of Canvasbacks got up off of Lost Lake, 50, 80, 40, they just continued to leave. They headed east to where we knew not? Dabblers got up and headed for the deep marsh. Cormorants returned to the trees that they had nested in this past spring. In twos and threes and tens egrets and herons found their way to sheltered places in the marsh grass. They got a last bite to eat and found a place to settle down and sleep, sheltered in the grass out of the wind. Soon the light diminished and once again a Christmas count was over. For me, each of the past five years' counts have ended here on this bridge. We all began to depart for the day was over. For me though that still small voice that the Bible speaks of called to me once again. I stood in simple awe of it all and said "Good Night", I'll see you soon!

Robert Hurt

Bird Sightings - January 2000

Coverage: Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Tyler, Jasper, Newton, Angelina, San Augustine and Sabine counties. **Send Reports to:** John Whittle, 3015 Nashville Avenue, Nederland, Texas 77627-6749 by the 10th of the month after or e-mail to whittleja@hal.lamar.edu or call (409) 880-8276 or fax to (409) 880-8270. For "very rare" birds, please submit a brief account of your sighting, including a description of the bird (unless unmistakable), brief details of what it was doing, and where it was seen (if on publicly accessible property).

Format: "Common" to "abundant" birds are shown in the fashion "JEF 4 reps(25)" which means four reports in

Jefferson County totaling 25 birds. Less than "common", as "JEF-SW 7/5(2) ABC", which means seen in Jefferson County (JEF) at Sabine Woods (SW) on the 5th of July, two (2) birds, reported by observer "ABC".

Commentary: This month's report is dominated by the Sea Rim State Park CBC, which saw 29 observers in the field for a whole day. Weather conditions during the month were warmer than and drier than average for the most part, but we received few reports. The wintering hummingbirds have thinned out. Waterfowl are still concentrated in a few areas, such as the Keith Lake area of Murphree WMA.

LOON, Common	JEF 1 rep(1)
GREBE, Pied-billed	JEF 5 reps(1105)
GREBE, Horned	JEF-MURW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-PI 1/2(2) SRCB
GREBE, Eared	JEF 3 reps(13)
GANNET, Northern	JEF-SRSP 1/2(115) JAW
PELICAN, American White	JEF 7 reps(1118)
PELICAN, Brown	JEF 13 reps(172)
CORMORANT, Neotropic	JEF 13 reps(662)
CORMORANT, Double-crest.	JEF 6 reps(405)
CORMORANT, Species	JEF 3 reps(299)
ANHINGA	JEF 1/2(12) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(3) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/22(1) FTTP
BITTERN, American	JEF-SRSP 1/2(1) SRCB
HERON, Great Blue	JEF 11 reps(79)
EGRET, Great	JEF 12 reps(298)
EGRET, Snowy	JEF 8 reps(161)
HERON, Little Blue	JEF 2 reps(45)
HERON, Tricolored	JEF 2 reps(37)
EGRET, Cattle	JEF 7 reps(41)
HERON, Green	JEF 1/2(1) SRCB
NIGHT-HERON, Black-cr.	JEF 1 rep(55)
NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-cr.	JEF 1/2(4) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(2) SRCB
IBIS, White	JEF 1/2(70) JAW; JEF 1/2(13) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(106) SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/2(47) SRCB; JEF 1/9(55) JAW; JEF 1/15(3) JAW; JEF-TP 1/16(3) JAW; JEF-TP 1/22(5) FTTP
IBIS, White-faced	JEF 1/2(2) JAW; JEF-MURW 1/2(303) SRCB; JEF-PI 1/2(30) SRCB; JEF 1/9(38) JAW; JEF-TP 1/16(3) JAW; JEF-TP 1/22(95) FTTP; JEF 1/30(3) JAW
IBIS, Plegadis	JEF 1/2(34) JAW; JEF 1/9(749) JAW; JEF 1/15(14) JAW; JEF-TP 1/16(250) JAW; JEF 1/30(1) JAW
SPOONBILL, Roseate	JEF 7 reps(338)
VULTURE, Black	JEF 6 reps(81)

VULTURE, Turkey	JEF 9 reps(77)
GOOSE, White-fronted	JEF 3 reps(210)
GOOSE, Snow	JEF 6 reps(8806)
GOOSE, Ross's	JEF 1/2(6) JAW; JEF-NEDR 1/2(2) JAW; JEF-PI 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/22(4) FTTP
GOOSE, Canada	JEF 4 reps(123)
DUCK, Wood	JEF 1/15(14) JAW
GADWALL	JEF 4 reps(1361); ORA 1 rep(87)
WIGEON, American	JEF 2 reps(533)
MALLARD	JEF 4 reps(61)
DUCK, Mottled	JEF 1/2(4) JAW; JEF-MURW 1/2(14) SRCB; JEF-PI 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/16(2) JAW; JEF-TP 1/22(10) FTTP; JEF 1/30(4) JAW
TEAL, Blue-winged	JEF 4 reps(435)
TEAL, Cinnamon	JEF-TP 1/22(4) FTTP
SHOVELER, Northern	JEF 7 reps(947); ORA 1 rep(23)
PINTAIL, Northern	JEF 5 reps(315)
TEAL, Green-winged	JEF 4 reps(6016)
CANVASBACK	JEF-MURW 1/2(3500) SRCB; JEF-PI 1/2(300) SRCB
REDHEAD	JEF-MURW 1/2(12) SRCB
DUCK, Ring-necked	JEF 3 reps(745)
SCAUP, Greater	JEF-PI 1/2(4) SRCB
SCAUP, Lesser	JEF 5 reps(230); ORA 1 rep(45)
SCAUP species	JEF 1 rep(300)
SCOTER, Surf	JEF-SRSP 1/2(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 1/2(2) SRCB
SCOTER, White-winged	JEF-SRSP 1/2(2) JAW
SCOTER, Black	JEF-SRSP 1/2(5) JAW
BUFFLEHEAD	JEF 2 reps(251); ORA 1 rep(4)
MERGANSE, Hooded	JEF 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(15) SRCB; JEF-TXPT 1/9(16) JAW; JEF-TP 1/16(1) JAW
MERGANSE, Red-breasted	JEF 1 rep(5)
DUCK species	JEF 2 reps(522)

DUCK, Ruddy	JEF 5 reps(405)	SRCB; JEF-SW 1/9(1) JAW; JEF 1/23(1) KS; JEF-BMT 1/24-31(1) RAJ; JEF 1/30(2) KS; JEF-SW 1/30(1) KS
OSPREY	JEF-MURW 1/2(2) SRCB	
KITE, White-tailed	JEF 5 reps(17)	OWL, Barred JEF-TX87 1/2(1) SRCB
HARRIER, Northern	JEF 8 reps(87)	OWL, Short-eared JEF-MURW 1/2(1) SRCB
HAWK, Sharp-shinned	JEF 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF 1/9(2) JAW; JEF 1/15(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 1/15(1) JAW	HUMMINGBIRD, Black-chin. JEF-NEDR 1/2(1) JAW; JEF-SW 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-NEDR 1/4(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 1/5(1) JFW; JEF-NEDR 1/6(1) JAW
HAWK, Cooper's	JEF 1/2(4) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF 1/9(2) JAW; JEF 1/15(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 1/16(1) JAW	HUMMINGBIRD, <i>Archilochus</i> JEF-SW 1/2(1) JAW
ACCIPITER species	JEF-SW 1/16(1) JAW; ORA 1/22(1) KS	HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous JEF-BMT 1/1-31(2) RAJ; JEF-NEDR 1/2(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 1/5(1) JFW; JEF-NEDR 1/6(1) JAW
HAWK, Red-shouldered	JEF 9 reps(16)	KINGFISHER, Belted JEF 9 reps(44)
HAWK, Red-tailed	JEF 16 reps(175)	WOODPECKER, Red-bellied JEF 5 reps(9)
HAWK, Red-tailed (Krieger's)	JEF-TXPT 1/9(1) JAW; JEF-TP 1/16(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 1/16(2) JAW	SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bell. JEF 5 reps(10)
HAWK, Rough-legged	JEF 1/2(1) SRCB	WOODPECKER, Downy JEF 6 reps(28)
KESTREL, American	JEF 13 reps(219)	FLICKER, Northern JEF 3 reps(8)
MERLIN	JEF 1/2(2) JAW; JEF 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF 1/9(1) JAW; JEF 1/15(1) JAW; JEF 1/17(1) JAW; JEF-SW 1/23(1) KS	PHOEBE, Eastern JEF 14 reps(122)
FALCON, Peregrine	JEF-MURW 1/2(1) SRCB	SHRIKE, Loggerhead JEF 13 reps(333)
BOBWHITE, Northern	JEF 2 reps(6)	VIREO, White-eyed JEF-PI 1/2(1) SRCB
RAIL, Clapper	JEF 3 reps(4)	VIREO, Blue-headed JEF 3 reps(5)
RAIL, King	JEF-MURW 1/2(3) SRCB	JAY, Blue JEF 15 reps(130)
RAIL, Virginia	JEF-SRSP 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/16(1) JAW	CROW, American JEF 4 reps(12)
SORA	JEF-MURW 1/2(3) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/16(3) JAW	CROW, Fish JEF-TP 1/22(17) FTTP
MOORHEN, Common	JEF 2 reps(7)	SWALLOW, Tree JEF-NEDR 1/2(1) JAW; JEF-TP 1/22(25) FTTP
COOT, American	JEF 5 reps(4795); ORA 1 rep(587)	CHICKADEE, Carolina JEF 4 reps(18)
CRANE, Sandhill	JEF 1/2(23) JAW	TITMOUSE, Tufted ORA 1 rep(4)
PLOVER, Black-bellied	JEF 5 reps(89)	NUTHATCH, Red-breasted JEF-BMT 1/1-31(1) RAJ
PLOVER, Snowy	JEF-SRSP 1/2(9) JAW; JEF-SRSP 1/2(7) SRCB; JEF-SRSP 1/16(9) JAW	NUTHATCH, Brown-headed JEF-SW 1/23(1) KS
PLOVER, Piping	JEF-SRSP 1/2(2) JAW; JEF-SRSP 1/2(6) SRCB; JEF-SRSP 1/16(1) JAW	WREN, Carolina JEF 4 reps(5); ORA 1 rep(1)
KILLDEER	JEF 13 reps(232)	WREN, House JEF 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SRSP 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(5) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/16(1) JAW; JEF 1/23(2) KS; JEF 1/30(2) KS
OYSTERCATCHER, Amer.	JEF 1/2(3) SRCB	WREN, Sedge JEF 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(3) SRCB; JEF-SRSP 1/2(4) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/16(1) JAW
STILT, Black-necked	JEF 4 reps(175)	WREN, Marsh JEF 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(3) SRCB; JEF-SRSP 1/2(7) SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/22(3) FTTP
AVOCET, American	JEF 4 reps(302)	KINGLET, Golden-crowned JEF 1/2(8) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(2) SRCB
YELLOWLEGS, Greater	JEF 4 reps(20)	KINGLET, Ruby-crowned JEF 6 reps(87)
YELLOWLEGS, Lesser	JEF 3 reps(12)	GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray JEF 8 reps(96)
YELLOWLEGS species	JEF 3 reps(8)	BLUEBIRD, Eastern JEF 8 reps(47)
SANDPIPER, Solitary	JEF 1/2(1) SRCB	THRUSH, Hermit JEF 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/9(1) JAW; JEF-SW 1/16(1) JAW; JEF-SW 1/23(1) KS
WILLET	JEF 5 reps(179)	ROBIN, American JEF 9 reps(43)
SANDPIPER, Spotted	JEF 1/2(4) SRCB; JEF-PI 1/2(4) SRCB	CATBIRD, Gray JEF 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-PI 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(3) JAW; JEF-SW 1/2(3) SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/9(1) JAW; JEF 1/23(2) KS; JEF-SW 1/23(2) KS; JEF 1/30(2) KS JEF-SW 1/30(2) KS
CURLEW, Long-billed	JEF 3 reps(7)	MOCKINGBIRD, Northern JEF 17 reps(197)
SANDERLING	JEF 3 reps(990)	THRASHER, Brown JEF 8 reps(79)
SANDPIPER, Western	JEF 3 reps(66)	STARLING, European JEF 14 reps(562)
SANDPIPER, Least	JEF 3 reps(119)	PIPIT, American JEF 4 reps(22)
DUNLIN	JEF 4 reps(1910)	WAXWING, Cedar JEF 1 rep(5)
DOWITCHER, Long-billed	JEF 2 reps(100)	WARBLER, Orange-crowned JEF 7 reps(103)
DOWITCHER species	JEF 2 reps(12)	WARBLER, Yellow-rumped JEF 12 reps(864); ORA 1 rep(23)
SNIPE, Common	JEF 5 reps(14)	WARBLER, Pine JEF 6 reps(41)
WOODCOCK, American	JEF-SW 1/2(6) SRCB	WARBLER, Palm JEF-MURW 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TP 1/22(1) FTTP; JEF 1/30(1) KS
GULL, Laughing	JEF 9 reps(865)	YELLOWTHROAT, Common JEF 8 reps(36)
GULL, Bonaparte's	JEF 3 reps(1532)	TOWHEE, Spotted JEF 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/23(1) KS
GULL, Ring-billed	JEF 8 reps(1646)	TOWHEE, Eastern JEF-SW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/30(1) KS
GULL, Herring	JEF 4 reps(109)	SPARROW, Chipping JEF 2 reps(3); ORA 1 rep(28)
TERN, Gull-billed	JEF 1/9(2) JAW	SPARROW, Field JEF 1/2(10) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF 1/23(8) KS; JEF-SW 1/23(3) KS; JEF 1/30(3) KS
TERN, Caspian	JEF 2 reps(4)	SPARROW, Vesper JEF-TP 1/16(1) JAW; JEF 1/23(5) KS
TERN, Royal	JEF 4 reps(177)	SPARROW, Savannah JEF 12 reps(498)
TERN, Common	JEF-SRSP 1/2(2) JAW; JEF-SRSP 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-TXPT 1/9(1) JAW	SPARROW, LeConte's JEF 1/2(2) SRCB
TERN, Forster's	JEF 5 reps(322)	SPARROW, Nelson's Sharp-t. JEF 3 reps(102)
SKIMMER, Black	JEF 2 reps(41)	SPARROW, Seaside JEF 1 rep(12)
DOVE, Rock	JEF 5 reps(31)	SPARROW, Fox JEF-SW 1/30(6) KS
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	JEF-TX87 1/2(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 1/2(5) SRCB; JEF 1/9(8) JAW; JEF 1/17(4) JAW; JEF 1/30(2) JAW	SPARROW, Song JEF 7 reps(46)
DOVE, White-winged	JEF-TX87 1/2(32) SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/9(19) JAW	
DOVE, Mourning	JEF 15 reps(473)	
DOVE, Inca	JEF 4 reps(15); ORA 1 rep(6)	
OWL, Barn	JEF 1/2(5) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(2) SRCB	
OWL, Great Horned	JEF 1/2(1) SRCB; JEF-MURW 1/2(1)	

SPARROW, Lincoln's	JEF 1/2(14) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(1)
JAW; JEF-SW 1/2(2) SRCB; JEF 1/23(3) KS	
SPARROW, Swamp	JEF 8 reps(112)
SPARROW, White-throated	JEF 10 reps(288)
SPARROW, White-crowned	JEF 1/2(8) SRCB; JEF-SW 1/2(1)
SRCB; JEF-TX87 1/2(3) SRCB; JEF 1/9(2) JAW; JEF 1/15(13)	
JAW; JEF-SW 1/16(1) JAW; JEF-TP 1/16(7) JAW; JEF-TP	
1/22(30) FTTP; JEF 1/23(18) KS; JEF 1/30(1) KS	
CARDINAL, Northern	JEF 14 reps(130)
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	JEF 11 reps(7314)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	JEF 5 reps(63)
MEADOWLARK species	JEF 6 reps(78)
BLACKBIRD, Brewer's	JEF 1/2(10) JAW; JEF 1/30(10) JAW
GRACKLE, Common	JEF 8 reps(1107)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	JEF 9 reps(894)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	JEF 9 reps(584)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	JEF 8 reps(480)
BLACKBIRD species	JEF 2 reps(525)
FINCH, House	JEF-NEDR 1/2(4) JAW
GOLDFINCH, American	JEF 13 reps(129); ORA 1 rep(28)
SPARROW, House	JEF 6 reps(117)

Number of Species 178
Number of Individuals 63682

County Abbreviations:
JEF - Jefferson; ORA - Orange

Location Codes:
BMT - Beaumont; MURW - J. D. Murphree WMA; NEDR - Nederland;
PI - Pleasure Island, Port Arthur; SRSP - Sea Rim State Park; SW - Sabine Woods; TP - Tyrrell Park incl. Cattail Marsh; TX87 - Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim; TXPT - Road to Pilot Station at Texas Point

Observer Abbreviations:
FTTP - Field Trip to Tyrrell Park/Cattail Marsh; JAW - John Whittle; JFW - Jana Whittle; KS - Ken Sztraky; RAJ - Rose Ann Jordan; SRCB - Sea Rim Christmas Bird Count.

Details of Rare Birds

Surf Scoter - 2 January 2000 - Dwight and Richard Peake

Seen on the Gulf from Sea Rim during the Christmas count. Two birds (along with eight others identified only as scoter species). Large dark ducks, with white patches on crown and back of head. No white seen around eye or on wing.

Rough-legged Hawk - 2 January 2000 - Tex Wells, Nancy and Don Fisher, Jana Whittle.

Seen on Sea Rim Christmas Count on salt grass prairie with trees in Sabine Pass. Large hawk. Tail light brown with very thin bands. Head light brown and white streaked. Brown and white streaked feathers on legs. In flight, white on the tail and white patches on the upper wings were seen.

American Oystercatcher - 2 January 2000 - Nancy and Don Fisher, Jana Whittle

Seen on rocks on edge of Sabine Neches Waterway during Sea Rim Christmas Count. Unmistakable with black and white pattern and long orange bill. Very rare in Jefferson County.

Solitary Sandpiper - 2 January 2000 - Carol Lynn Loker

Seen on the road to the Pilot Station at Texas Point during the Sea Rim Count. A smallish sandpiper, but larger than a "Peep", with greenish legs and a longish straight black bill. Medium gray back, streaked breast, white lower belly and vent.

Black-chinned Hummingbird - 2 January 2000 - John Whittle

An immature male hummingbird seen at the feeder in Sabine Woods during the Sea Rim Christmas count. "Normal" sized hummingbird with fairly long, thinnish, slightly curved bill. Upper parts bright metallic green. Underparts very dingy white with grayish-green flanks. Throat evenly marked with streaks a few enlarged. Streaks on throat were dark from numerous different angles. Wing tips did not quite reach the tip of the tail when perched. Outermost primary sharply curved at end and somewhat broad at tip.

February Meeting Report

(continued from front page)

Valley Bird Club built 115 boxes that Charles coordinates the monitoring of each year. The monitoring results are sent to the North American Bluebird Society, of which Charles is a member, and contributes to their nest-monitoring program.

Charles provided very good information concerning bluebird history, habitat, mating, eating, nesting, pests and predators, banding and monitoring boxes. Bluebird boxes are not only just for bluebirds but several other welcomed birds could use the boxes. These include tree swallows, chickadees, titmice, wrens, White-breasted Nuthatches, and flycatchers. Besides providing bluebird boxes, you might attract bluebirds to your yard by providing water. Charles' last slide was the sun setting on a bluebird box; but hopefully by continuing to put up bluebird boxes we will continue to have more and more bluebirds and the sun will never set on the last bluebird.

Charles, thank you so much for sharing with us your slides, interest and knowledge about bluebirds. Don and I are very lucky to have bluebirds in our neighborhood. We have had bluebirds at our birdbath and hopefully one day we will have some nesters. There was very good attendance and participation at this meeting and I hope to see everyone again on Thursday, March 16, 2000.

Field Trip to Sandyland Sanctuary 19 February 2000

Eleven members assembled at the Nature Conservancy's Sandyland Sanctuary between Silsbee and Kountze on a very pleasant morning. Although everything was very dry, there had been a shower or two in the area during the passage of the cold front during the night.

The Floodplain trail, which runs about two miles along the east bank of Village Creek, is not passable when the creek is high, but was readily negotiated on this occasion. A few White-throated Sparrows were along the bank, along with a somewhat secretive Winter Wren. Before very long, a Brown Creeper was located, and eventually seen well by all. Birding the Pineywoods does not produce birds in anywhere near the number that the coastal sites do, but a good representative selection of birds of the habitat was found. American Goldfinches were numerous. Woodpeckers were well represented by Downy, Red-bellied, Red-headed and Pileated Woodpeckers, Northern Flicker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

An electrical/pipeline right of way through the sanctuary provided an opportunity to look for open country birds. A few Dark-eyed Juncos were found in a large flock of Chipping Sparrows. A Brown-headed Nuthatch was found, and stayed visible for all to see well.

Thirty-five species were recorded in the Sanctuary itself. VULTURE, Black (1); VULTURE, Turkey (5); DUCK, Wood (2); HAWK, Red-shouldered (2); HAWK, Red-tailed (1); KINGFISHER, Belted (1); WOODPECKER, Red-headed (1); WOODPECKER, Red-bellied (10); SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (5); WOODPECKER, Downy (3); FLICKER, Northern (1); WOODPECKER, Pileated; VIREO, Blue-headed (2); CROW, American (20); CHICKADEE, Carolina (6); TITMOUSE, Tufted (10); NUTHATCH, Brown-headed (2); CREEPER, Brown (2); WREN, Carolina (3); WREN, Winter (1); KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (5); BLUEBIRD, Eastern (4); THRUSH, Hermit (1); ROBIN, American (6); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (1); THRASHER, Brown (2); WARBLER, Orange-crowned (1); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (20); WARBLER, Pine (10); SPARROW, Chipping (100); SPARROW, Swamp (1); SPARROW, White-throated (25); JUNCO, Dark-eyed (4); CARDINAL, Northern (1); GOLDFINCH, American (75)

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RARE BIRD ALERTS

Below is a listing of Rare Bird Alert telephone numbers for nearby areas. Transcriptions of current tapes are available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.petersononline.com/birds/hotline/birdcntr.htm>.

Detailed information (maps and text) on birding sites on the Upper Texas Coast is also available on the Web at <http://texasbirding.simplenet.com>.

This includes all the Jefferson County hotspots published in early issues.

Golden Triangle (409) 768-1340

Texas (Houston)	(713) 369-9673
Abilene	(915) 691-8981
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Lubbock	(806) 797-6690
N. E. Texas	(903) 839-4804
Rio Grande Valley	(210) 969-2731
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