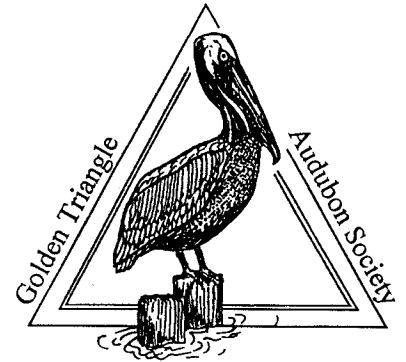


# *Brown Pelican*

**Scanned from Originals**

# The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 7 No. 5

May 2001

## Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 17, 2001

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

## Summer Birding Winnie Burkett

Migration is (almost) over, but don't put your binoculars away. Yes, it is hot and buggy but you can bird in comfort. Want to know how? Find out about the joys of summer birding at our next meeting. Our speaker will be the summer birding expert Winnie Burkett.

As many of you know, Winnie is both sanctuary manager for Houston Audubon Society, overseeing the sanctuaries in High Island and at Bolivar Flats, and also North Coast Steward for Texas Audubon Society, looking after the various colonial waterbird nesting islands in Galveston Bay.

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

## April Membership Meeting

Thank you Bessie Cornelius for being able to engage John P. O'Neill as the speaker for our meeting on April 19. Thank you also, Carol Lynn Loker for hosting John during his visit. I believe we had a record attendance of fifty-one people and no one should have left the meeting disappointed. John provided an excellent presentation about the *Great Texas Birds* and his life and research in Peru.

As we should all know, Texas has one of the most interesting ecological situations in the U.S. for birds. Its habitats are varied: mountainous, coastal beaches, deciduous and pine forest, short grass prairies with a little bit of long grass prairies and tropical thorn scrubs. Because of these varied habitats, Texas has tremendous amounts of birds including such tropical birds as the Green Jay and Kiskadee and vagrants such as Northern Shrikes and Snowy Owls.

Two incidents early in John's life left lasting memories. The first occurred in the early 1950's when he found one of the first Inca Doves to come into the Houston area. The other incident was when he was introduced to a fall-out. One day during school there had been a thunderstorm, and when he went home while he was tending his chickens he saw five Rose-breasted Grosbeaks sitting low in some oaks. John said, "He knew what they were immediately, but just could not believe he was actually seeing them." He later learned that if he would just look they came through twice a year with regularity.

There are two events that sparked John's interest in painting birds. The first was when he was about five years old when his father hunted ducks and brought them home intact. He was fascinated with the colors, the way the parts moved, the wings,

(continued on page 7)

## *The Brown Pelican*

Vol. 7, No.5 May 2001

Golden Triangle  
Audubon Society

**RARE BIRD ALERT AND  
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## 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.

**Saturday May 12 – International Migratory Bird Day.** As usual we will be conducting a county-wide migration count in Jefferson county. Contact John Whittle (409-722-4193) for more details or to indicate your participation. It is not necessary to count for the whole day. In fact, the more people we have counting in the critical early morning hours, the better. So please call, even if your help will be limited to a few hours.

## Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank the numerous people who helped in April. **Nancy and Don Fisher have volunteered for May, but we need additional volunteers.** We do not expect one person to bring everything. If you can just bring drinks and cookies or something similar, please call Jana Whittle at (409) 722-4193 or Nancy Fisher at (409) 751-0119 as soon as possible. Please help if you can!

## Subscription Renewal Reminder

Please check the mailing label on this issue. If the date on your label NOT prefixed by AU has passed, please remit your contribution of \$15 to Golden Triangle Audubon Society at P.O. Box 1292, Nederland, Texas 77627-1292. Although this contribution towards the cost of the Brown Pelican is voluntary for National Audubon Society members living in the official chapter territory, we will appreciate your support. Our official chapter territory is defined by zip codes, but is basically Jefferson, Hardin and Orange Counties and one or two localities close to those Counties.

## Our Education Activities

Everybody say “Coot”!! “Coot” say all our little second graders, so excited to be on the tour of Cattail Marsh. On Tuesdays January 30 and February 6, Joe Halbrook, Jeannie Lanclos, Rose Ann Jordan and Bob Collier took the Second Grade classes of Caldwell School to see the great sights of Cattail Marsh. One class at a time would load up on the open-air bus and off we’d go. “Look! Look! Look!” they yelled, what is that big white bird? We would tell them what parts of the bird to look at to decide what the bird was. See the long black legs and feet? And the yellow bill? It’s a Great Egret! Everybody say “Great Egret!!” “Great Egret” they yelled excitedly. We let them look through telescopes at a Red-shouldered Hawk and some ducks. They were surprised to see them so close.

The children loved seeing the birds in our field guides. They wanted to look through them and pick out birds they wanted to see. We tried to explain that not all birds live in this area but some of them just migrate through on their way home in another part of the world. We just got those blank stares. Then we told them there was lots to learn about these beautiful creatures and hoped they would be interested in learning more about them. They agreed that birdwatching was fun and exciting when you get out of school to go.

Birds were not the only things that caught their eyes. There were cows, horses, nutria and there was much disappointment that the alligators were sleeping. They **all** wanted to see an alligator. But they were happy with the herons, egrets, ducks and hawks they saw.

*Jeannie Lanclos*

*(The editor apologizes to Jeannie for failing to include this report in an earlier Brown Pelican.)*

## Sabine Woods Work Day

The next Sabine Woods Work Day will be Saturday May 26, starting at 7:30 a.m. We anticipate a relatively short work day this time. Please come if you can!

## Where the Sky is Filled with Birds

Gerald Duhon

Next time the birding trip bug bites, stand in your front yard and mentally project yourself 13 hours or so down the road in each of the four avian compass points (note that these do not necessarily correspond to geographic North, South, East and West). Get out and look around. What do you see? Just a tad over that amount of time will put you in the neighborhood of Amarillo in the Texas panhandle. Birding is certainly not bad at locations like Palo Duro Canyon State Park, especially in the winter, when montane and high plains species invade the area. Traveling east of the Golden Triangle plops you down somewhere in central Florida, where you may see specialties like Limpkin, Short-tailed Hawk, and breeding Swallow-tailed Kite. By and large, however, for the most part the bird life of that region is comparable to our own. A shade over 13 hours and you're at Panther Junction in Big Bend, and there the avifauna is distinctly different. Ro Wauer, at the March meeting of Golden Triangle Audubon Society, gave an excellent overview of the habitats and birds of the region.

But what about south? Most of us who have been at this hobby/sport/obsession for a while could perform the exercise above, and often do when planning a birding vacation. We would have no trouble prophesizing the contents of our newly bloated life list, and could easily describe the additions in advance. But motoring south for thirteen hours either in our minds or in person is another matter. At about eight hours, we run into a mental road block and a physical reality called the Rio Grande. Sure, the Valley is a paradise for birds, and not a few GTAS members have made half a dozen visits or more over the years. But what lies beyond is Mexico, and we can't (or just don't) go there. The question then becomes WHY NOT?? The answers go something like this: roads, water, language, security, hassle, and lack of creature comforts, among others. Birding enticements and rewards of Mexico a scant four or five hours drive into the country, however, overshadow the inconveniences like a Brown Pelican overshadows a Ruby-throat.

For one thing, in the time it takes you to travel by car from Beaumont to Austin you will find yourself staring into a cloud forest. You read that correctly -- cloud forest. The state of Tamaulipas harbors the northernmost extension of this type habitat in the Americas. But it's when you start researching what you will find there in the way of lifers that the lure becomes irresistible. Birds like Gray Hawk, Red-billed Pigeon, Tropical Parula, Tropical Kingbird, Brown Jay, Clay-colored Robin and Audubon's Oriole that you often have to bird yourself into a tizzy to see in the Valley (if at all), you would expect to be more common. Then there are species whose names seem vaguely familiar (like those second cousins from Maine on your father's side of the family you met one Christmas) but who are otherwise totally exotic sounding and quite unfamiliar. Birds like Tamaulipas Crow, Bat Falcon, Crimson-collared Grosbeak, Squirrel Cuckoo, Blue Mockingbird, Blue Ground-Dove, Amazon Kingfisher, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Bronze-winged Woodpecker, Black-vented Oriole, Boat-billed Flycatcher, Bumblebee Hummingbird, Fan-tailed Warbler, White-throated Robin, and Bare-throated Tiger-Heron to name just a few. Birds that

never migrate, because they don't have to. Birds that live and die within a few miles of where they were hatched. Then there are those species that sound so foreign that certainly their inclusion in a list for the area must be some mistake. Birds that by all rights should be found on a continent half a world away, accessed only by helicopter, airboat or canopy walk. Entire families or subfamilies of birds who have very few or no representatives north of the border. Birds with even stranger sounding names, such as Scrub Euphonia, Elegant Trogon, Black-headed Saltator, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Brown-backed Solitaire, Gray-collared Becard, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Barred Antshrike, Military Macaw, Rufous-capped Brushfinch, Blue-black Grassquit, Masked Tityra and Blue-crowned Motmot. Surely such creatures of fantasy can not be found scant hours south of Texas, can they? Truth is, six members of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society found all those and more at a place "Where the Sky is Filled with Birds."

I first became aware of El Cielo ("the Sky", "firmament" or "atmosphere") and one of its major nearby drainages, the Rio Sabinas, many years ago when I read George Sutton's *At a Bend in a Mexican River*. This fascinating book details his studies of the region, and contains many wonderful stories of the birds he encountered. The mountains of the Sierra Madre Oriental send a spine-like extension to just south of Victoria, the area's largest city. In addition to high mountain environs, there are intermediate zones of tropical deciduous and thorn scrub, extensive stands of oak-bromeliad forest, mango and sugar cane orchards, and several riparian or river corridors in the lowlands. The mountains contain flora and fauna of both temperate and tropical as well as eastern and western biological affinities. As such, El Cielo is unique and has been designated by the United Nations as a "biosphere reserve", comprised of a number of adjacent zones. These zones are arranged in such a manner as to allow progressively less human activity as one approaches the core of the refuge.

For at least a year, Ken Strazky and myself had been kicking around the idea of visiting El Cielo, but could not locate a birding tour operator who serviced southern Tamaulipas. We felt it would be best to enlist a "turn key" package for a foray into Mexico. Then we ran up on Vamanos Nature Tours, a small but growing independent guide service that would arrange custom trips for as few as four participants. It was a bonus that the cost was about half that of the more widely publicized concerns, and included van transportation for the group, room, board and meals. Vamanos was familiar with the reserve, having made at least three or four trips down in the last six months.

So, on the morning of March 20th, the excited group of birders first met Michael Delasantros and Billy "70 mile-per-hour Tiger-Heron" Snyder (more on that later), our guides for the next five days. In short order we knew we were in for the adventure of our lives. Standing outside the van, having just disembarked at a very laid back free trade crossing south of Harlingen, Billy immediately announced "Tropical Kingbird -- hear that song?" Sure enough, we glassed the antennae over the customs building and there it was, on the very top rung,

offering up a burpy trill. Tick number one, the first of many. When you pay for something, you expect professionals, for that is one of professionalism's defining characteristics. These guys are pros! Michael Delasantros is one of those rare individuals that can stand on a mountainside during an absolutely stunning dawn chorus, composed of squawks, squeaks, flutes, whistles, trills, and hoots, and name a dozen birds in short order by song alone. Again and again we were to be treated to this kind of expertise, regardless of what habitat we found ourselves easing into. Birding with Mike and Billy is a dawn to dusk, no holds barred affair where there is one, and only one, simple objective -- to find and observe the maximum number of birds. Which, as turned out, was way over the top of what I had expected. Most of us had between 50 and 70 life birds!! Mike and Billy knew just what to expect and where. Micro-habitations, for example a mature reed bed in a ditch bordering an otherwise xeric lowland habitat, yielded Altamira Yellowthroat, because Mike knew that was where to look for one. Our headquarters for the 20th through the 25th was in the little hamlet of Gomez Farias, tucked right against the biosphere reserve. Here the pavement ends, literally, and the road into the interior high country is rough, but passable. Our accommodations at the small bed and breakfast were spartan, but clean and serviceable. I have nothing but the highest order of recommendation for Vamanos.

There were so many splendid, defining birding moments that it is quite impossible to include them all in a summary such as this. But I have to touch on a few. The word out was that these trips always got Bat Falcon. Sure enough, a pair was right at the expected location, a bird apiece perched on twin wooden high line poles, the first day on the way in to Gomez Farias. Previous groups had accused Vamanos of perpetrating some cruel ornithological joke, some Disneyesque animatronic farce, and simply stuffing the critters and mounting them in position. But when we observed the two engaged in amorous pursuits we doubted the technology existed to pull that off. (However, on the last day, after having observed the couple every day when we passed the site, Billy mumbled something about probably needing to change the batteries.)

The first full day we hit the flanks of the Sierra Madre in earnest, and I shall never forget that experience. As a clear golden light began to wax, we could hardly record the lifers fast enough, most if not all in full song. Tropical Parula, Brown-backed Solitaire, Western Tanager, Crimson-collared Grosbeak, Smoky Brown and Bronze-winged Woodpecker, Fan-tailed Warbler, and Military Macaw in flight overhead. A little later on we got brief but satisfying views of the astounding Blue Mockingbird, a luminous creature that in the words of John Haynes, "puts the fun back into mockingbirds!"

But the highlight of the morning for me, and in some ways the entire trip, was when the group slowly took an almost overgrown side trail that branched off the main road. We arrived at a place that will always remain indelibly etched in my consciousness as "Peppershrike Hollow". There, the jungle tangle opened into a second growth meadow. Slowly we became aware that each strata in the forest was literally crawling with birds of the most astounding variety and visage: Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Rose-throated and Gray-collared Becard. Stunning close up looks at Rufous-capped Warbler, Social and Boat-billed Flycatcher, and again both of the brown tropical woodpeckers. Olivaceous and Ivory-billed

Woodcreepers hitching their way from tree to tree. The bird with the beautiful, soft gray plumage of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and the grotesque bare skin of the Turkey Vulture -- the Masked Tityra. Clay-colored Robin and Greater Pewee were joined by the plaintive call of Dusky-capped Flycatcher. Black-headed Saltator rubbing shoulders with migrant or overwintering warblers, Black-and-white, Wilson's, Black-throated Green, Orange-crowned and Nashville. All in all one of the most exquisite moments in my 20 plus years of active birding.

Of course, what is a birding visit to the tropics without parrots? In the evenings especially, flocks of raucous White-crowned, Red-lore and Red-crowned Parrots would dive into the fruit trees and clamor about, resembling for all the world a group of ill-behaved kids, squabbling over who would claim ownership of the most delectable fare. The "Oriole Tree" at the settlement of Alta Cima was likewise enjoyed by all. Billy remarked at times this tree looked like an Icterid plate out of the National Geographic field guide, with five species of Orioles feeding on the scarlet blooms. Alas, we could only muster three -- Black-vented, Altamira, and Audubon's. Several times we stumbled on a lek of Wedge-tailed Sabrewing, hummingbirds that sing with a bubbly, almost wren like quality. Twice we pulled over to bird the cane fires locals set to either clear land or prepare for the harvest. Plumes from these conflagrations can be noticed for many miles, and they attract raptors. Most were Swainson's -- we observed light and melanistic phases- but on both occasions participants were treated to thrilling flybys of Aplomado Falcon, birds that Mike said he could assure us were not hacked! A busy mango juice stand and garden center situated alongside a busy highway played host to Rose-throated Becard, both Boat-billed and Social Flycatcher, as well as dueling Roadside Hawk on the last day.

The final well documented lifer was one of those serendipitous moments that happens ever so often in the pursuit of this consuming avocation. We had chased Bare-throated Tiger-Heron at a number of river crossings. Up to this point we had only one fleeting glimpse of a bird in loping, lazy flight away from our position along a boulder strewn beach several days prior. Then, again on our final day, while racing past a small wet stream crossing at 70 plus miles per hour, Billy asked Mike to stop and reverse direction -- he had "seen something interesting" in a small cattail-choked stream we had just past. Sure enough, the group eased up on the position in question and there it was -- a juvenile Tiger Heron standing quietly and almost entirely hidden by the luxuriant growth. The bird subsequently flew to perch in full view on an overhanging branch -- affording long, leisurely ganders at what for most would be the last lifer of the trip.

Misses? Yeah, we had a few -- White-winged Tanager, Hooded Euphonia, Mountain Trogon (at least decent looks for most; however, Elegant was everywhere), Pale-billed Woodpecker (heard only), Tufted Flycatcher, Flame-colored Tanager, and some others. But it certainly was not for lack of effort on the guide's part. Personally, I am reluctant to rank or categorize birding vacations for fear of falling prey to selective memory or hyperbole, both of which tend to emphasize my most recent adventures as the preeminent ones. However, in reviewing over two decades of birding carefully in my mind, I can't really come up with one better. All of which begs the important question..... Veracruz, anyone???

## Bird Sightings - March 2001

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:** The beginning of spring migration is always an exciting time. This year, the last few days of March were exceptionally full of migrant sightings in the coastal migrant stopover sites. Another interesting sighting was a Yellow Rail on McFaddin NWR.

GREBE, Pied billed	JEF 5 reps(11)	MERLIN	JEF 3/1(2) JB; JEF-SRSP 3/4(1)
PELICAN, American White	JEF 1 rep(64)	JAW; JEF-SW 3/10(1) MW	
PELICAN, Brown	JEF-TX87 3/10(11) MW; JEF	RAIL, Yellow	JEF-MCFW 3/29(1) MCF
3/18(2) PW; JEF-SRSP 3/18(3) PW; JEF-TX87 3/18(2) PW;	JEF-TX87 3/24(1) JAW	RAIL, Virginia	JEF-MCFW 3/26(1) MCF
CORMORANT, Neotropic	JEF 7 reps(49)	SORA	JEF 2 reps(2)
CORMORANT, Double-crested	JEF 2 reps(5)	MOORHEN, Common	JEF 4 reps(18)
CORMORANT, Species	JEF 3 reps(7)	COOT, American	JEF 7 reps(1001)
BITTERN, American	JEF-MCFW 3/26(1) MCF	CRANE, Sandhill	JEF 3/1(300) JB; JEF 3/1(60) JB;
HERON, Great Blue	JEF 7 reps(19)	JEF 3/3(336) JAW; JEF 3/4(100) CLL; JEF 3/4(100) MM	
EGRET, Great	JEF 9 reps(82)	PLOVER, Black-bellied	JEF 2 reps(7)
EGRET, Snowy	JEF 7 reps(99)	GOLDEN-PLOVER, American	JEF 3/18(13) PW; JEF 3/24(5) JAW;
HERON, Little Blue	JEF 6 reps(54)	JEF 3/25(25) JAW	
HERON, Tricolored	JEF 4 reps(8)	KILLDEER	JEF 11 reps(41)
EGRET, Cattle	JEF 7 reps(37)	STILT, Black-necked	JEF 3 reps(27)
HERON, Green	JEF 3/28(27) KS; JEF-SW 3/29(10)	AVOCET, American	JEF 1 rep(15)
JAW		YELLOWLEGS, Greater	JEF 2 reps(25)
NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-crown.	JEF-SW 3/10(13) MW; JEF 3/18(8)	YELLOWLEGS, Lesser	JEF 4 reps(13)
PW; JEF-SRSP 3/18(3) PW; JEF-SW 3/29(5) JAW; JEF-SW	3/31(7) SM	SANDPIPER, Solitary	JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM
IBIS, White	JEF-TX87 3/4(14) JAW; JEF 3/11(5)	WILLET	JEF 2 reps(76)
MW; JEF 3/11(5) MW; JEF-SW 3/31(10) SM		SANDPIPER, Spotted	JEF 3/18(1) PW; JEF-TXPT 3/18(1)
IBIS, White-faced	JEF 3/4(75) JAW; JEF-TP 3/4(75)	PW	
JAW; JEF-TX87 3/4(20) JAW; JEF 3/10(1) MW; JEF-TX87	3/18(25) PW; JEF-TX87 3/24(4) JAW	SANDPIPER, Upland	JEF 3/25(4) JAW
IBIS, Plegadis	JEF 3/3(21) JAW; JEF 3/4(1) JAW;	SANDERLING	JEF 2 reps(15)
JEF-TP 3/4(75) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/4(5) JAW; JEF 3/10(65)	MW; JEF-SW 3/10(2) MW; JEF 3/11(7) MW; JEF 3/11(7) MW;	SANDPIPER, Pectoral	JEF 3/18(1) PW
JEF 3/18(1) PW; JEF-SW 3/24(10) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/24(21)	JAW; JEF 3/25(5) JAW JEF-SW 3/31(5) SM	DUNLIN	JEF 1 rep(40)
SPOONBILL, Roseate	JEF 3/3(1) JAW; JEF 3/4(1) JAW;	DOWITCHER, Short-billed	JEF 3/3(15) JAW
JEF 3/18(3) PW; JEF-SW 3/18(1) PW; JEF-TX87 3/18(8) PW;	JEF 3/24(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/24(4) JAW; JEF 3/25(1) JAW	DOWITCHER, Long-billed	JEF 1 rep(30)
VULTURE, Black	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 4 reps(6)	SNIFE, Common	JEF 3 reps(10)
VULTURE, Turkey	HAI 2 reps(21); JEF 8 reps(43)	GULL, Laughing	JEF 6 reps(90)
WHISTLING-DUCK, Black-bell.	JEF 3/30(65) JHH	GULL, Bonaparte's	JEF 2 reps(2)
WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous	JEF 3/10(4) MW; JEF 3/29(2) JAW	GULL, Ring-billed	JEF 9 reps(664)
GOOSE, White-fronted	HAI 1 rep(1)	GULL, Herring	JEF 3 reps(13)
DUCK, Wood	HAI-SNDY 3/4(3) KS	TERN, Caspian	JEF 3 reps(9)
GADWALL	JEF 3 reps(44)	TERN, Royal	JEF 2 reps(34)
MALLARD	JEF 1 rep(2)	TERN, Forster's	JEF 1 rep(15)
DUCK, Mottled	JEF 3/3(4) JAW; JEF 3/4(6) JAW;	DOVE, Rock	JEF 10 reps(79)
JEF-SW 3/10(1) MW; JEF 3/18(1) PW; JEF-TX87 3/18(1) PW;	JEF 3/21(2) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/24(4) JAW; JEF-SW 3/31(6) SM	COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	JEF 3/3(1) JAW; JEF 3/10(6) MW;
TEAL, Blue-winged	JEF 7 reps(814)	JEF 3/11(9) MW; JEF 3/11(9) MW; JEF 3/17(5) JAW; JEF	3/25(7) JAW
SHOVELER, Northern	JEF 3 reps(206)	DOVE, White-winged	JEF 3/9(1) JAW
SCAUP, Lesser	JEF 1 rep(10)	DOVE, Mourning	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 11 reps(283)
SCAUP species	JEF 2 reps(51)	DOVE, Inca	JEF 1 rep(1)
MERGANSEER, Red-breasted	JEF 1 rep(1)	WILL'S-WIDOW, Chuck-	SW 3/31(1) SM
OSPREY	JEF-TX87 3/10(1) MW; JEF 3/18(1)	SWIFT, Chimney	JEF-SW 3/18(1) PW
PW		HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-throated	JEF-NEDR 3/11(3) MW; JEF-NEDR
KITE, White-tailed	JEF 2 reps(4)	3/11(3) MW; JEF-NEDR 3/15(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/18(3) PW;	JEF-NEDR 3/20(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/22(3) JAW; JEF 3/24(6)
HARRIER, Northern	JEF 11 reps(37)	JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/24(4) JAW; JEF-SW 3/24(2) JAW; JEF-	NEDR 3/25(2) JAW JEF-NEDR 3/26(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR
HAWK, Red-shouldered	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 3 reps(5)	3/27(4) JAW; JEF 3/28(2) KS; JEF-NEDR 3/28(4) JAW; JEF-	NEDR 3/29(3) JAW; JEF-SW 3/29(3) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/31(1)
HAWK, Broad-winged	JEF 3/22(5) JAW	SM; JEF-SW 3/31(3) SM	
HAWK, Swainson's	JEF 3/24(1) JAW	KINGFISHER, Belted	JEF 7 reps(17)
HAWK, Red-tailed	HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 9 reps(84)	WOODPECKER, Red-bellied	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 6 reps(7)
HAWK, Red-tailed (Kridler's)	JEF 3/3(1) JAW; JEF 3/4(1) JAW;	SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 3 reps(8)
JEF 3/21(1) JAW		WOODPECKER, Downy	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 6 reps(16)
KESTREL, American	JEF 10 reps(178)	FLICKER, Northern	JEF 5 reps(8)
		WOODPECKER, Pileated	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(1)
		PHOEBE, Eastern	HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 2 reps(8)
		FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested	JEF-SW 3/18(1) PW

KINGBIRD, Eastern JEF 3/21(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/24(2) JAW; JEF 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/29(4) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/31(4) SM; JEF-SW 3/31(4) SM

SHRIKE, Loggerhead JEF 12 reps(197)

VIREO, White-eyed JEF 6 reps(251)

VIREO, Yellow-throated JEF-SW 3/10(2) MW; JEF-SW 3/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(3) SM

VIREO, Blue-headed JEF 3 reps(5)

VIREO, Red-eyed JEF-SW 3/29(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM

JAY, Blue HAI 1 rep(4); JEF 9 reps(46)

CROW, American HAI 2 reps(26); JEF 4 reps(9)

CROW, Fish JEF-TX87 3/24(1) JAW

CROW, species JEF 5 reps(16)

MARTIN, Purple JEF 7 reps(76)

SWALLOW, Tree JEF 6 reps(116)

SWALLOW, N. Rough-winged JEF-SW 3/10(1) MW

SWALLOW, Barn HAI 3/21(3) JAW; JEF 3/17(22) JAW; JEF 3/18(4) PW; JEF-SRSP 3/18(5) PW; JEF-TX87 3/18(2) PW; JEF-TXPT 3/18(5) PW; JEF 3/21(3) JAW; JEF 3/24(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/24(25) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/24(3) JAW; JEF 3/25(4) JAW; JEF-SW 3/29(5) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/31(4) SM; JEF-SW 3/31(2) SM

SWALLOW species JEF 1 rep(1)

CHICKADEE, Carolina HAI 1 rep(12); JEF 1 rep(1)

TITMOUSE, Tufted HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 1 rep(1)

NUTHATCH, Brown-headed HAI-SNDY 3/4(3) KS

WREN, Carolina HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(1)

WREN, House JEF-SW 3/24(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) SM

KINGLET, Golden-crowned JEF-SW 3/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/10(5) MW

KINGLET, Ruby-crowned HAI 1 rep(4); JEF 6 reps(22)

GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray JEF 4 reps(64)

BLUEBIRD, Eastern HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 3 reps(30)

THRUSH, Hermit HAI-SNDY 3/4(1) KS; JEF-SW 3/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/24(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(5) SM

THRUSH, Wood JEF-SW 3/29(5) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(3) SM

ROBIN, American HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 15 reps(271)

CATBIRD, Gray JEF-SW 3/4(1) JAW

MOCKINGBIRD, Northern HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 10 reps(100)

THRASHER, Brown JEF 5 reps(15)

STARLING, European HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 7 reps(159)

WAXWING, Cedar HAI 1 rep(20)

WARBLER, Blue-winged JEF-SW 3/30(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM

WARBLER, Tennessee JEF-SW 3/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(7) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(2) SM

WARBLER, Orange-crowned JEF 4 reps(10)

PARULA, Northern JEF-SW 3/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/10(1) MW; JEF-SW 3/18(4) PW; JEF-SW 3/24(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(8) KS; JEF-SW 3/29(10) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(18) JHH; JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/31(8) SM

WARBLER, Yellow-rumped JEF 7 reps(146)

WARBLER, Black-thr. Green JEF-SW 3/30(1) JHH; JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) SM

WARBLER, Yellow-throated JEF-SW 3/18(1) PW; JEF-MCFW 3/26(2) MCF; JEF-SW 3/30(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(2) SM

WARBLER, Pine HAI 1 rep(12)

WARBLER, Black-and-white JEF-SW 3/10(3) MW; JEF-SW 3/18(3) PW; JEF-SW 3/24(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/29(5) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(12) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(10) SM

WARBLER, Prothonotary JEF-SRSP 3/18(4) PW; JEF-SW 3/18(12) PW; JEF-SW 3/24(2) JAW; JEF 3/26(1) MCF; JEF-MCFW 3/26(1) MCF; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) KS; JEF-SW 3/28(12) KS; JEF-SW 3/29(10) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(35) JHH; JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) SM JEF-SW 3/31(15) SM

WARBLER, Worm-eating JEF-SW 3/29(3) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(21) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(3) SM

WARBLER, Swainson's JEF-SW 3/30(2) JHH

OVENBIRD JEF-SW 3/30(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM

WATERTHRUSH, Northern JEF-SW 3/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM

WATERTHRUSH, Louisiana JEF-SW 3/10(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 3/18(1) PW; JEF-SW 3/18(2) PW; JEF-SW 3/24(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(2) KS; JEF-SW 3/28(1) KS; JEF-SW 3/29(8) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(7) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(2) SM

WARBLER, Kentucky JEF-SW 3/29(5) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(22) JHH; JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/31(7) SM

YELLOWTHROAT, Common JEF 4 reps(12)

WARBLER, Hooded JEF-SW 3/18(4) PW; JEF-SW 3/24(1) JAW; JEF 3/26(1) MCF; JEF-MCFW 3/26(1) MCF; JEF-SW 3/29(30) JAW; JEF-SW 3/30(42) JHH; JEF-SRSP 3/31(2) SM; JEF-SW 3/31(20) SM

TANAGER, Summer JEF-SW 3/28(1) KS; JEF-SW 3/30(1) JHH

TANAGER, Scarlet JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM

TOWHEE, Eastern JEF-SW 3/10(1) MW; JEF-SW 3/24(1) JAW

SPARROW, Chipping HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 1 rep(4)

SPARROW, Field HAI-SNDY 3/4(2) KS

SPARROW, Savannah JEF 7 reps(35)

SPARROW, Seaside JEF 1 rep(3)

SPARROW, Fox JEF-SW 3/29(1) JAW

SPARROW, Song HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 6 reps(15)

SPARROW, Lincoln's JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM

SPARROW, Swamp HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 2 reps(3)

SPARROW, White-throated HAI 1 rep(7); JEF 7 reps(34)

JUNCO, Dark-eyed HAI-SNDY 3/4(12) KS

CARDINAL, Northern HAI 1 rep(12); JEF 9 reps(47)

BUNTING, Indigo JEF-SW 3/29(2) JAW; JEF-MCFW 3/30(1) MCF; JEF-SW 3/30(7) JHH

BLACKBIRD, Red-winged JEF 11 reps(831)

MEADOWLARK, Eastern JEF 8 reps(60)

MEADOWLARK species JEF 6 reps(40)

BLACKBIRD, Brewer's JEF 3/10(5) MW; JEF 3/11(14) MW; JEF 3/11(14) MW; JEF 3/25(4) JAW

GRACKLE, Common JEF 11 reps(944)

GRACKLE, Boat-tailed JEF 4 reps(36)

GRACKLE, Great-tailed JEF 10 reps(313)

COWBIRD, Brown-headed JEF 7 reps(323)

BLACKBIRD species JEF 1 rep(400)

ORIOLE, Orchard JEF-SW 3/30(4) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(5) SM

FINCH, House JEF-NEDR 3/3(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/28(1) JAW

GOLDFINCH, American JEF 2 reps(2)

SPARROW, House JEF 3 reps(5)

Number of Species 162

Number of Individuals 11679

County Abbreviations:  
HAI - Hardin; JEF - Jefferson

Location Codes:  
MCFW - McFaddin NWR; NEDR - Nederland; SNDY - Nature Conservancy Sandlyland Sanctuary; 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:  
CLL - Carol Lynn Loker; JAW - John Whittle; JB - Jack Baugh; JHH - John H. Haynes; KS - Ken Sztraky; MCF - McFaddin and Texas Pt NWRs (Patrick Walther); MM - Marilyn McClelland; MW - Steve Mayes and John Whittle; PW - Royce Pendergast, John Whittle; SM - Steve Mayes.

## Bird Alerts

It is always a challenge to write this section during migration. However fast the production process, it does take an absolute minimum of one week from the time this is written until the time you receive it, and depending on the available time of the editor and Mary Stafford, who sees to the copying

and mailing processes, it may take several days longer than that. Therefore anything we write is likely to be of historical concern more than anything else.

Certainly, the highlight of the month was the first winter Little Gull, which was discovered at the Beaumont Sewage Treatment Plant on Lafin Road by Nick Block on April 8. It was seen there on April 10, but then was not seen again until Nick Block found it again on April 15 by Nick Block. After that, it was seen by hundreds of observers, including many attending the ABA convention, through about April 21, when it (and the four or so Bonaparte's Gulls it has been associating with) apparently left for points north.

After the flurry of activity during the last few days of March, migrants were relatively few in number as the winds remained stubbornly southerly and strong. There was a respectable showing during the week of April 16-22, with increasing numbers as the week progressed, and then a slow fall off over the following week. Thrushes, tanagers, grosbeaks and especially Gray Catbirds were very prominent for most of this period. Scarlet Tanagers were conspicuously present in numbers throughout the period. A good variety of warblers was seen in Sabine Woods, although overall numbers were not high for most of the period. It is too early to analyze the season, but a few highlights can be mentioned and a few generalizations made. A male Black-throated Blue Warbler was seen for several days at Sabine Woods at the beginning of the active two weeks referred to above. Towards the end of the two-week period, at least two male Cape May Warblers were conspicuous along the road to the Pilot Station at Texas Point, and more were reported May 1. Golden-winged and Blackpoll Warblers were unusually common, while some other species such as Ovenbirds were scarce. As of the date this was written, it would appear that the main wave of later warblers (Bay-breasted, Chestnut-sided and Magnolia) may not yet have passed through. And, of course, Canada and Mourning Warblers have not yet been seen, except for one very early Canada.

Passerine migrants seem to have occupied all our observers time, and we have very few reports of shorebird or hawk migration. A Swallow-tailed Kite flew over Sabine Woods on April 26 from east to west. It proceeded a little further west and then headed back northeast, passing a quarter mile north of the woods.

## 101st Christmas Count Results

This year's issue of AMERICAN BIRDS with the full results of the 101st CBC will go to press on May 14, 2001. The discounted price is \$10.00 (US), plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Send check payable to "National Audubon Society" to: 101st Christmas Bird Count Subscriptions, National Audubon Society, PO Box 689, Lahaska, PA 18931.

Notice: Discount good only to May 14. Orders for limited inventory after May must be prepaid at \$35 (US) plus \$10 shipping and handling (U.S. and Canada only). No late shipments overseas will be allowed.

In the memo line of your check, please write "for 101st CBC issue", and make sure to include your name and current address.

## April Membership Meeting *(cont. from p. 1)*

the feet and everything else. He can remember getting really upset when he learned that his father was going to pull all the feathers off of the ducks. The second event that sparked his interest in painting birds was receiving his first copy of Roger Tory Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds. His first artwork was of a bantam chicken that he copied from something at about five years old. His mother fortunately saved this picture for him and John now treasures it. Therefore, he grew up with a tremendous interest in birds and an interest in painting them.

An experience that he had in the Rio Grande Valley made him really want to know about the tropics. About 5 p.m. at Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, he heard a tremendous commotion of birds. His friends were not even paying any attention, which made him upset and so he left the group. He went over to where the commotion was coming and crawled around under the brush getting right under all the birds. When he looked up he saw two little yellow eyes of a Ferruginous Pygmy Owl. He said, "He would always treasure that experience." This was one of the experiences that made him turn toward leaning more about the tropics.

His slide presentation began in Texas, continued with Peru and ended back in Texas viewing some of the paintings from his book, Great Texas Birds. Some of the birds of Texas depicted in his slides included the Brown Pelican, Wild Turkey, Green Jay, White-tipped Dove, Cardinal, Eastern Bluebird and Vermilion Flycatcher. In 1961, John made his first of many trips to Peru. Through John's slides, he depicts many different aspects of Peru: geographical location, modes of transportation, people, living arrangements, important commodities and food items, cooking including baking, ecology, habitats and beautiful sunsets. In Peru, John has seen many beautiful birds and has described thirteen species of birds new to science. Let me mention just a few of Peru's beautiful birds: Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, Hooded Mountain-Tanager, Blue-capped Tanager, Turquoise Jay, Andean Screech-Owl, Green-and-black Fruiteater, a new species of barbet, Brown-capped Parakeet, Purple-throated Fruitcrow, Orange-throated Tanager, Golden-backed Mountain-Tanager, Long-whiskered Owlet (*Xenoglaux loweryi*, named after George Lowery), Pardusco or Bird of the Clouds (*Nephelornis oneillei*, named after John P. O'Neill), and Cinnamon Screech-Owl (*Otus petersoni*, named after Roger Tory Peterson). Living in Peru appears to be exciting and challenging.

Thank you, John, for sharing your knowledge and experiences of Texas and Peru. I am so excited to have a signed copy of your book Great Texas Birds. I have already enjoyed the 48 full-page paintings of birds that epitomize the birds of Texas. I am anxious to read the accompanying short essays. Don't forget about John's other books - they would make excellent gifts. If you missed this meeting, you missed another excellent program. Hope to see you at the next membership meeting on Thursday, May 17, 2001.

*Nancy Fisher*

## Fall Programs

Later this month, we will begin planning our Fall programs and field trips. Contact us with your suggestions!



## NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

### Membership Form

To join the National Audubon Society, please complete this form and return with Introductory Membership fee of \$20 (payable to the National Audubon Society, or indicate you wish to be billed) to Golden Triangle Audubon Society, P. O. Box 1292, Nederland, TX 77627-1292. To use this form to give a membership as a gift, please complete the form and indicate your name in the appropriate space. Payment should accompany gift memberships.

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## RARE BIRD ALERTS

Below is a listing of Rare Bird Alert telephone numbers for nearby areas. Transcriptions of some current tapes are available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.stat.wharton.upenn.edu/~siler/hoturls.html>

Detailed information (maps and text) on birding sites on the Upper Texas Coast is also available on the Web at <http://www.texasbirding.net>. 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
Austin	(512) 926-8751
Ft. Worth (N. Cent)	(817) 329-1930
Lubbock	(806) 797-6690
N. E. Texas	(903) 839-4804
Rio Grande Valley	(210) 969-2731
San Antonio	(210) 308-6788
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