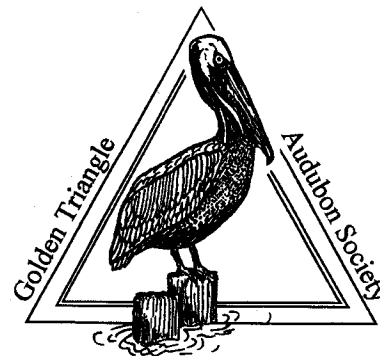


Brown Pelican

Scanned from Originals

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 8 No. 12

December 2002

Sea Rim State Park Christmas Bird Count Sunday December 29, 2002 Meet in Sabine Pass at 7:15 a.m.

at the Sabine Pass Battleground State Historical Park, near the restrooms. To reach the park, go south from Port Arthur on Texas 87 to the four-way stop in Sabine Pass. At the stop, proceed straight ahead on FM3322 for just under a mile, and turn left into the well marked park.

Countdown dinner at 6:00 p.m., location to be confirmed.

Please contact John Whittle 409-722-4193 (H), 409-880-8276 (W) or whittleja@hal.lamar.edu; or Robert Hurt 409-724-2202 (H) or rmhurt@aol.com and let us know you plan to attend.

Orange Christmas Bird Count Wednesday January 1, 2002 Meet in Orange at 7:15 a.m.

at the Conner Service Station at the intersection of Highway 105 and FM1442.

Please contact Ken Sztraky 409-385-2835 (H) or kens@ih2000.net

Please join us for what we hope will be two enjoyable birding days. All are invited, even if you are not an experienced birder or are only able to bird for part of the day. Feeder watchers are welcome to participate. Let us know in advance and we will find a suitable group for you to join. We normally bird in groups of three or four, with at least one experienced birder in each group. The more pairs of eyes in a group, the more birds will be seen.

Other local counts which will welcome your participation include the Bolivar Peninsula Count on December 22 (contact Bill Graber 409-866-5452), the Turkey Creek Count (in the Big Thicket north of Kountze) on December 14 (contact Merle King, Big Thicket NP at 409-839-2689 ext 233) and the Beech Creek Count (in the Steinhagen Lake area) on January 4 (contact Merle King).

The Brown Pelican

Vol. 8, No.12 December 2002

Golden Triangle
Audubon Society

**RARE BIRD ALERT AND
SOCIETY INFORMATION
TELEPHONE NUMBER
(409) 768-1340
[http://goldtriaudubon.
tripod.com](http://goldtriaudubon.tripod.com)**

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3015 Nashville Ave.

Nederland, TX 77627-6749

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

Calendar of Events

**Saturday December 14. Turkey
Creek Christmas Bird Count.** Meet
at 6:30 a.m. at the new Big Thicket
National Preserve Visitor Center
located on Highway 69 at FM 420
approximately seven miles north of
Kountze, Texas. For more information
call Park Ranger Merle King at (409)
839-2689 ext. 233.

**Sunday, December 22. Bolivar
Peninsula Christmas Bird Count.**
Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the old Birder's
Haven in High Island. For more details,
contact Bill Graber, (409) 866-5452.

**Sunday, December 29. Sea Rim State
Park Christmas Bird Count.** This is
the count that we sponsor. The meeting
place this year – **note new location** --
will be at the Sabine Pass Battleground
State Historical Park at 7:15 a.m. To
reach the park, proceed south from Port
Arthur on Highway 87 to the main
intersection in Sabine Pass (where
Highway 87 turns west). At this
intersection, go straight ahead on
FM3322 for about 3/4 of a mile, and
turn left into the park. Meet near the
restrooms. (There is no entry charge at
this park.)

**Wednesday, January 1, 2003 –
Orange County Christmas Bird
Count.** Meet at 7:15 a.m. at the
Conner Service Station at the corner of
Highway 105 and Highway 1442.
Everybody is welcome to help, whether
for half a day or all day. Feeder
watchers may also participate. Contact
Ken Sztraky at kens@ih2000.net or at
home 409-385-2835 for further
information.

**Saturday, January 4, 2003. Beech
Creek Christmas Bird Count.** Meet
at 6:30 a.m. at the Corps of Engineers
Town Bluff Dam picnic area located on
FM 92 just north of FM 1746. For
more information call Park Ranger
Merle King at (409) 839-2689 ext. 233.

Membership Meetings in 2003

Our tentative schedule is as follows:
January 16 – David Baker, retired chief
interpreter for the Big Thicket NP.

February 20 – R.A.F. (Bill) Hill on
behavior of Birds on the Coastal Bend
March 20– Gerald Duhon on Birding
Optics.

April 17 – Sandy Komito

May 15 – Victor Emanuel

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volun-
teers to provide the refreshments
at our membership meeting.
Volunteers are now solicited for
all 2003. We do not expect one
person to bring everything, but
please call so we can coordinate!
If you can just bring drinks and
cookies or something similar,
please call Jana Whittle at (409)
722-4193 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.

Volunteer Needed

Ken Sztraky has looked after our
telephone answering machine for more
than seven years, but is moving out of
the 768 exchange area (Vidor). Is their
a volunteer in Vidor or even someone
elsewhere who would like to provide
service to our members? We use the
recording to provide information as
well as receive messages. Most of the
information would reach the volunteer
by email. To volunteer, contact any
Board member – see panel opposite for
numbers.

Important Audubon Election Under Way in the Southwestern Election Region

Nominations are now open for, the Chapter-selected candidate from the Southwestern Election Region to the National Audubon Society Board of Directors. Any Chapter, in the Southwestern Region may nominate one candidate for the Board this fall and winter. The election choose the candidate will be held in the spring.

Nominees should be willing and able to

- * Help set overall national policies. Articulate the issues and concerns of our region.
- * Participate in fund raising; and maintain the fiscal integrity of National Audubon Society
- * Attend 4 Board meetings per year, each 3 days in length.
- * Fill the position for the next three years, beginning December 2003.

Contact a Chapter officer with your suggestions. The Board of Directors will select a nominee immediately after the Membership Meeting on January 17, 2003.

The nomination from the Chapter must be sent to the Chapter Services Office by January 31, 2003.

Report on Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society was held on Thursday November 21, 2002. in the Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont, Texas.

The amendments to the Bylaws printed in the November Brown Pelican were adopted. Copies of the revised Bylaws are available upon request from the Secretary in either hard copy of electronic format (Word document).

The two year term of President Steve Mayes continues to December 2003. The following officers and board members were elected to one-year terms beginning January 1, 2003: Vice-President: John Haynes; Treasurer: Don Jeane; Secretary: John Whittle; board members at large: Bob Collier, Joe Halbrook, Jeannie Lanclos, Sherrie Roden, Mary Stafford, Ken Sztraky, Jana Whittle.
John A. Whittle, Secretary

Nearby Christmas Bird Counts

Here is a listing of nearby Christmas Bird Counts for which information is available at press time. Information is presented as name of count (with additional geographic information where needed to identify the location), date, compiler/contact person with telephone number and email address as available, and finally, in parentheses, the count sponsor, if any.

Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR

December 18, 2002
Sumita Prasad, (979) 480-0999
sprasad@gcbo.org
(Gulf Coast Bird Observatory)

Beech Creek (Town Bluff-Martin Dies SP)

January 4, 2003
Merle King, (409) 839-2689 ext. 233
Merle.King@nps.gov
(Big Thicket NP)

Bolivar Peninsula (High Is-Anahuac NWR)

December 22, 2002
Bill Graber, (409) 866-5452

Buffalo Bayou (Houston)

January 4, 2003
Bob Honig, (713) 665-6963
TXBFCBC@aol.com

Cypress Creek/Katy Prairie

January 1, 2003
Fred Collins, (281) 304-6471, fax (281) 304-648
Fred_Collins@co.harris.tx.us

Freeport

December 15, 2002
Richard Peake,
rpeake1@hotmail.com
or Tom Collins,
thcollins@orbitworld.net
(Dow Chemical)

Galveston

December 17, 2002
Dwight Peake, (409) 740-4621
dpeake@flash.net,
or Gordon Nunn, (409) 740-0082

Houston

December 14, 2002
David Sarkozi, (713) 412-4409
david@sarkozi.net
(Outdoor Nature Club - Ornithology Group)

Lake Houston

January 4, 2003
Damien Carey, (281) 924-7546
dc@kingwoodcable.net
(Houston Area Nature Club)

Matagorda County/ Mad Island Marsh

December 16, 2002
Brent Ortego, (361) 576-0022
brent.ortego@tpwd.state.tx.us,

Orange County

January 1, 2003
Ken Sztraky, (409) 385-2835
kens@ih2000.net,

Sabine NWR CBC

Saturday, December 14, 2002
Marty Guidry, (225) 755-1915
guidryrm@cox.net

Sea Rim State Park

December 29, 2002
John Whittle, (409) 722-4193
whittleja@hal.lamar.edu or
Robert Hurt, (409) 724-2202
rmhurt@aol.com
(Golden Triangle Audubon Society)

Turkey Creek (Kountze-Village Mills)

December 14, 2002
Merle King, (409) 839-2689 ext. 233
Merle.King@nps.gov
(Big Thicket NP)

Compiled by Sherrie Roden

Bird Sightings – October 2002

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: A rather interesting month, even if no unusual species. Several late migrants towards the end the of month: cuckoos, and warblers, including Prothonotary, Hooded and Worm-eating .

GREBE, Pied-billed JEF 1 rep(1)
PELICAN, Amer. White JEF 2 reps(84)
PELICAN, Brown JEF-SRSP 10/13(70) JAW
CORMORANT, Neotropic JEF 10/8(13) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/8(4) JAW; JEF 10/12(46) JHW; JEF-TX87 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/12(2) JHW; JEF 10/13(37) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/13(2) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/13(25) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(29) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/16(2) JAW JEF 10/26(37) MW; JEF-TX87 10/26(4) MW; JEF-TXPT 10/26(35) MW; JEF 10/27(19) BEW; JEF-TX87 10/27(28) BEW; JEF-TXPT 10/27(5) BEW
CORMORANT, Double-crested JEF-TX87 10/13(2) JAW; JEF 10/26(2) MW; JEF-TXPT 10/26(1) MW
HERON, Great Blue JEF 5 reps(32)
EGRET, Great JEF 7 reps(154)
EGRET, Snowy JEF 7 reps(184)
HERON, Little Blue JEF 3 reps(3)
HERON, Tricolored JEF 4 reps(20)
EGRET, Reddish JEF 1 rep(1)
EGRET, Cattle HAI 1 rep(5); JEF 6 reps(225)
NIGHT-HERON, Black-cr. JEF 3 reps(3)
IBIS, White HAI 1 rep(4); JEF 6 reps(616)
IBIS, Plegadis JEF 10/12(20) JHW; JEF-TX87 10/16(32) JAW
SPOONBILL, Roseate JEF 10/12(3) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/12(4) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(28) JAW; JEF 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-TXPT 10/26(6) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(5) BEW; JEF-TXPT 10/27(1) BEW
VULTURE, Black HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 6 reps(40)
VULTURE, Turkey HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 5 reps(21)
GOOSE, White-fronted HAI 10/6(25) KS; JEF-SRSP 10/13(250) JAW; JEF-SW 10/13(250) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(102) JAW; JEF-SW 10/16(1) JAW
TEAL, Blue-winged JEF 1 rep(50)
OSPREY JEF-TX87 10/8(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-TX87 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/27(1) BEW
KITE, White-tailed JEF 2 reps(3)
HARRIER, Northern JEF-TX87 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(3) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEW; JEF-TX87 10/27(1) BEW
HAWK, Sharp-shinned JEF 1 rep(1)
HAWK, Cooper's JEF 4 reps(4)
HAWK, Red-shouldered HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 3 reps(3)
HAWK, Broad-winged JEF 1 rep(3)
KESTREL, American JEF 3 reps(8)
MERLIN JEF-TX87 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(1) JAW
RAIL, Clapper JEF 4 reps(16)
COOT, American JEF 1 rep(1)
PLOVER, Black-bellied JEF 2 reps(6)
PLOVER, Snowy JEF-SRSP 10/13(7) JAW
PLOVER, Semipalmated JEF 3 reps(5)
PLOVER, Piping JEF-SRSP 10/13(2) JAW
KILLDEER JEF 5 reps(35)
OYSTERCATCHER, Amer. JEF-TXPT 10/26(1) MW
STILT, Black-necked JEF 1 rep(10)
AVOCET, American JEF 1 rep(1)
YELLOWLEGS, Greater JEF 1 rep(1)

YELLOWLEGS, Lesser JEF 1 rep(1)
WILLET JEF 4 reps(17)
SANDPIPER, Spotted JEF 10/27(1) BEW; JEF-TXPT 10/27(1) BEW
CURLEW, Long-billed JEF 2 reps(2)
SANDERLING JEF 2 reps(146)
SANDPIPER, Western JEF 2 reps(4)
SANDPIPER, Peep JEF 1 rep(4)
SANDPIPER, Least JEF 2 reps(20)
SNIPE, Wilson's JEF 10/26(1) MW; JEF 10/27(6) BEW
GULL, Laughing JEF 5 reps(1127)
GULL, Franklin's JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW
GULL, Ring-billed JEF 2 reps(6)
GULL, Herring JEF 3 reps(5)
GULL, Lsr. Black-backed JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW
TERN, Gull-billed JEF-SRSP 10/13(4) JAW
TERN, Caspian JEF 2 reps(205)
TERN, Royal JEF 1 rep(48)
TERN, Common JEF 1 rep(1)
TERN, Forster's JEF 5 reps(145)
SKIMMER, Black JEF 1 rep(62)
DOVE, Rock JEF 2 reps(4)
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian JEF 10/4(1) JJW; JEF-TX87 10/8(1) JAW; JEF 10/11(2) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/12(1) JHW; JEF 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/13(2) JAW; JEF 10/24(2) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/26(9) MW; ORA 10/31(2) KS
DOVE, White-winged JEF-TX87 10/27(1) BEW
DOVE, Mourning HAI 2 reps(11); JEF 7 reps(140)
DOVE, Inca JEF 1 rep(1)
GROUND-DOVE, Common JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW
CUCKOO, Yellow-billed HAI-SNDY 10/20(1) KS; JEF-SRSP 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/16(2) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(8) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(4) BEW; JEF-TXPT 10/27(1) BEW
OWL, Barn JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW
OWL, Great Horned JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEW
WILL'S-WIDOW, Chuck- JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW
SWIFT, Chimney JEF-NEDR 10/7(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/11(2) JAW
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr. HAI 10/9(6) KS; JEF-SW 10/6(200) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(200) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(200) GD; JEF-NEDR 10/7(10) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/8(10) JAW; JEF-SW 10/8(25) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/11(30) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/12(15) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(50) JHW JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-NEDR 10/13(10) JAW; JEF-SW 10/13(50) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/14(10) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/16(12) JAW; JEF-SW 10/16(20) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/21(10) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/22(10) JJW; JEF-NEDR 10/23(10) JJW; JEF-NEDR 10/24(6) JAW JEF-NEDR 10/25(10) JJW; JEF-NEDR 10/26(4) MW; JEF-SW 10/26(18) MW; JEF-SW 10/27(20) BEW; JEF-NEDR 10/29(5) JJW
HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous JEF-BMT 10/2(2) RAJ; JEF-NEDR 10/11(1) JAW
HUMMINGBIRD species JEF-TXPT 10/13(2) JAW
KINGFISHER, Belted HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 6 reps(36)
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied HAI 2 reps(3); JEF 4 reps(4)

SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied HAI-SNDY 10/20(1) KS; JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEW

WOODPECKER, Downy HAI 2 reps(4); JEF 6 reps(9)

FLICKER, Northern HAI-SNDY 10/20(1) KS

WOODPECKER, Pileated HAI 2 reps(3)

WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern JEF 5 reps(39)

FLYCATCHER, Traill's JEF-SW 10/17(1) GD

FLYCATCHER, Least JEF-SW 10/8(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(1) GD

EMPIDONAX species HAI-SNDY 10/27(2) KS; JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW

PHOEBE, Eastern JEF-SW 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(3) JAW; JEF-SW 10/16(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/16(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-TX87 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(2) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEWPHOEBE, Say's JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW

KINGBIRD, Eastern JEF-SW 10/12(2) JHW

FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed JEF 10/8(1) JAW; JEF 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SRSP 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-TX87 10/12(10) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW; JEF 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/13(2) JAW; JEF 10/26(1) MW

SHRIKE, Loggerhead JEF 7 reps(64)

VIREO, White-eyed JEF 6 reps(72)

VIREO, Warbling JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW

VIREO, Philadelphia JEF-SRSP 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(1) BEW

VIREO, Red-eyed JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(3) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(4) BEW

JAY, Blue HAI 2 reps(12); JEF 6 reps(24)

CROW, American HAI 3 reps(21); JEF 1 rep(8)

SWALLOW, Tree JEF 2 reps(15)

SWALLOW, N. Rough-winged JEF 3 reps(10021)

SWALLOW, Barn JEF 3 reps(3)

SWALLOW species JEF 1 rep(1)

CHICKADEE, Carolina HAI 2 reps(20)

TITMOUSE, Tufted HAI 2 reps(23)

NUTHATCH, Brown-headed HAI-SNDY 10/20(6) KS; HAI-SNDY 10/27(4) KS

CREEPER, Brown JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEW

WREN, Carolina HAI 2 reps(5); JEF 4 reps(6)

WREN, House JEF-SRSP 10/26(1) MW

WREN, Sedge JEF-TX87 10/27(2) BEW

WREN, Marsh JEF-TXPT 10/27(1) BEW

KINGLET, Golden-crowned HAI 10/31(2) KS; JEF-SRSP 10/27(2) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(10) BEW

KINGLET, Ruby-crowned HAI-SNDY 10/20(2) KS; JEF-SRSP 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(3) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(2) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(3) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(1) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(2) BEW

GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray HAI 1 rep(7); JEF 7 reps(52)

BLUEBIRD, Eastern HAI 3 reps(8)

THRUSH, Swainson's JEF-SW 10/17(2) GD

THRUSH, Hermit JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW

THRUSH, Wood JEF-SW 10/12(3) JHW

ROBIN, American JEF-NEDR 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-NEDR 10/13(1) JAW

CATBIRD, Gray HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 5 reps(50)

MOCKINGBIRD, Northern HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 7 reps(83)

THRASHER, Brown HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 8 reps(146)

STARLING, European JEF 4 reps(155)

WARBLER, Blue-winged JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW

WARBLER, Golden-winged JEF-SW 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW

WARBLER, Tennessee JEF 6 reps(103)

WARBLER, Orange-crowned JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/16(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(1) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEW

WARBLER, Nashville JEF-SW 10/6(5) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(5) GD; JEF-SW 10/8(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(3) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/16(1) JAW

PARULA, Northern JEF-SW 10/6(4) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(4) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(4) GD; JEF-SRSP 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) GD; JEF-TXPT 10/17(1) GD; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(1) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEWWARBLER, Yellow JEF-SW 10/6(4) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(4) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(4) GD

WARBLER, Magnolia JEF 9 reps(64)

WARBLER, Black-thr. Green JEF 6 reps(12)

WARBLER, Blackburnian JEF-SW 10/12(1) DPJ

WARBLER, Pine HAI 2 reps(20)

WARBLER, Palm JEF-SW 10/12(1) DPJ; JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) GD

WARBLER, Bay-breasted JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW

WARBLER, Black-and-white JEF 8 reps(73)

REDSTART, American JEF-SW 10/6(3) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(3) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(3) GD; JEF-SW 10/8(3) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/12(4) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(12) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(9) JAW; JEF-SW 10/16(5) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(10) GD; JEF-SW 10/26(2) MW JEF-SRSP 10/27(4) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(9) BEW

WARBLER, Prothonotary JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(1) BEW

WARBLER, Worm-eating JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW

OVENBIRD JEF-SW 10/12(5) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) BEW

WATERTHRUSH, Northern JEF-SW 10/16(1) JAW

WARBLER, Kentucky JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(1) GD

WARBLER, Mourning JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW

YELLOWTHROAT, Common JEF 8 reps(67)

WARBLER, Hooded JEF-SRSP 10/12(3) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/13(6) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) GD; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW; JEF-SW 10/27(2) BEW

WARBLER, Wilson's JEF-SW 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW

WARBLER, Canada JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW

CHAT, Yellow-breasted JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/17(1) GD

TANAGER, Summer HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(1)

SPARROW, Chipping HAI-SNDY 10/20(25) KS; HAI-SNDY 10/27(1) KS

SPARROW, Field JEF-TXPT 10/12(2) GD

SPARROW, Vesper JEF 10/27(1) BEW

SPARROW, Savannah JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) GD; JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/17(1) GD; JEF 10/26(1) MW

SPARROW, Nelson's Sharp-tail. JEF-TXPT 10/12(5) GD; JEF-TXPT 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/13(8) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/17(5) GD; JEF-TXPT 10/27(1) BEW

SPARROW, Seaside JEF 2 reps(10)

SPARROW, Lincoln's JEF-TXPT 10/17(6) GD

SPARROW, Swamp JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) GD; JEF-TXPT 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-TXPT 10/17(6) GD; JEF-SRSP 10/26(3) MW

CARDINAL, Northern HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 5 reps(21)

GROSBEAK, Rose-breasted JEF-SW 10/8(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/12(2) JHW; JEF-SW 10/12(4) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(2) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(4) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(3) BEW

GROSBEAK, Blue JEF-SW 10/12(3) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(5) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(6) MW; JEF-SRSP 10/27(6) BEW; JEF-SW 10/27(5) BEW

BUNTING, Indigo JEF 9 reps(220)

BUNTING, Painted JEF-SW 10/6(2) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(2) DQ; JEF-SW 10/6(2) GD; JEF-SW 10/8(5) JAW; JEF-SW 10/12(5) JHW; JEF-SW 10/13(11) JAW; JEF-SW

10/17(2) GD; JEF-SW 10/26(1) MW	
DICKCISSEL	JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHW; JEF-TXPT
10/12(5) GD	
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	JEF 6 reps(348)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	JEF 1 rep(3)
MEADOWLARK species	JEF 2 reps(3)
GRACKLE, Common	JEF 2 reps(125)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	JEF 6 reps(332)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	JEF 6 reps(396)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	JEF 1 rep(1)
BLACKBIRD species	JEF 1 rep(25)
ORIOLE, Orchard	JEF-SW 10/12(4) JHW
ORIOLE, Baltimore	JEF-SRSP 10/13(1) JAW
SPARROW, House	HAI 1 rep(4); JEF 1 rep(1)
Number of Species	165
Number of Individuals	18803

County Abbreviations:
HAI - Hardin; JEF - Jefferson; ORA - Orange

Location Codes:
BMT - Beaumont; NEDR - Nederland; SNDY - Nature Conservancy Sandyland Sanctuary; SRSP - Sea Rim State Park; SW - Sabine Woods; TX87 - Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim; TXPT - Road to Pilot Station at Texas

Observer Abbreviation:
BEW - Josh Berman and John Whittle; DPJ - Don and Pat Jeane; DQ - Don Quaintance; GD - Gerald Duhon; JAW - John Whittle; JHW - John Haynes and John Whittle; JJW - John and Jana Whittle; KS - Ken Sztraky; MW - Steve Mayes and John Whittle; RAJ - Rose Ann Jordan.

Notes on Very Rare Species

Black-headed Grosbeak – 8,9+ Sep. 2002 – Bob Davis

The bird usually fed with Cardinals and was the same length but chunkier with a slightly larger bill. The breast and belly were pale orange with slight streaking down the sides. It had two white wing bars and a partial third wing bar. It had three white spots on the outer primaries that showed when the wings were folded. The bird had a dark head with white eye stripes that begin at the upper mandible and a white median line. It had a dark upper mandible and slightly lighter lower mandible. The bird also showed some yellow feathers on the shoulder.

The bird continued to be seen after 9 Sep and it was determined that the wing linings were yellow (ruling out a first fall male Rose-breasted Grosbeak). The fine and slight streaking down the side and the “pale orange” coloration suggest a first year male Black-headed Grosbeak.

This report was delayed from last month awaiting the additional details.

Bird Alerts

This is a rather more comprehensive report this month, as there seems to be much to remark on. Perhaps the only rare species that might still be around when you receive this is a Townsend’s Solitaire in the oaks in front of the Sabine NWR headquarters complex on Louisiana Route 27 between Holly Beach and Hackberry. The bird is usually found in the oaks just above the mailbox. (Check the Holly Beach water tower for the wintering Peregrine Falcon as you pass!) Both an Ash-throated Flycatcher at Sabine Woods on November 2 and a

Bell’s Vireo on November 10 on Todd Road in far west Jefferson County were apparently both one-day wonders.

Although the October report above indicated a number of late migrants (and next month’s report will detail more in early November), it also hints at a number of “trends” in wintering species that may presage an interesting winter season. These trends have continued through the better part of November. Sparrows have reached the coastal areas in good variety and in some numbers. Dark-eyed Juncos – a species rarely seen south of Interstate 10 – have been found in many places including the Pilot Station at Sabine Pass. Sharp-tailed Sparrows are especially numerous this winter in the *Spartina* grass marshes in that same location, with 25 to 30 usually visible with a little “pishing.” Seaside Sparrows are also present. There are certainly two or three Towhees – almost certainly Eastern Towhees – present in Sabine Woods, although they are being very secretive and are heard many more times than they are seen. Savannah Sparrows seem less plentiful than usual, but it may be early yet.

“Overshooting” by winter residents of woodlands in the Big Thicket – reaching the coast but not being genetically programmed to cross the Gulf, and concentrating in the small patches of woodland habitat – is an annual phenomenon, but usually very short lived as the birds quickly retreat back north. This year, Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers have been particularly well represented and they have stayed near the coast for longer than usual. To some extent, this is probably what has happened with grassland sparrow species as well.

The number of Belted Kingfishers in the area seems exceptional this year. Perhaps the wet September and October left more habitat, as the number along the Louisiana 82 and Louisiana 27 in Cameron Parish – where there is water every year – seems normal. Some may have to find new wintering quarters later in the season unless we have a wet winter, but that wet winter may come to pass as it is the usual result of an *El Nino*. Although it is not usual to see all of them on a single trip, there are at least six Kingfisher territories on Highway 87 between the Intracoastal Waterway and Sabine Pass.

We were very worried by the very low numbers of American Kestrels that reached the coastal plains in September. However, the numbers have since increased, and the Smith Point Hawk Watch recorded more Kestrels this year than ever before. Perhaps it was too wet on the coastal plain, or alternatively unusually wet just north of us. Kestrels eat mainly insects and small reptiles. Red-tailed Hawks are late migrants and are still coming through the Hawk Watches in the Northeast, but already we have an impressive number.

Now that duck season is open, the ducks are starting to concentrate in Cattail Marsh in Tyrrell Park – it doesn’t take them long to find out where the hunters aren’t allowed to go! Unfortunately, the cells near the entrance at Cattail Marsh have only a little water in them. The ducks are mainly in cells 4 (especially), 3, 1 and 5. See the map at www.cattailmarsh.org for cell numbering. It is a longish walk to view these ducks, however. A bicycle may help – the levee surfaces have recently been graded and rolled. Ducks there include Shoveler, both Teal, Gadwall, Ring-necked, a few Wigeon, some Mallards, Ruddy and many Scaup.

Field Trip to Sabine Pass – November 23, 2002

Sparrows are a much under appreciated group of birds. They have a reputation as being difficult to get a look at and even more difficult to identify if you do manage a look plus being generally dull colored and visually unimpressive. But this reputation is undeserved (at least to an extent). After all, the Savannah Sparrow is pretty easy to observe as it perches on wires and weeds in pretty much any suitable habitat during a typical Jefferson County winter. And the song of the White-throated Sparrow is a welcome sound of winter in our area, a pretty whistle to brighten gray winter days. And not all sparrows are dull. Any one who has seen the “red” race of the Fox Sparrow that graces our area in some winters knows that sparrows can be quite colorful. It was to dispel the myths about sparrows and get some looks at these unappreciated birds that more than dozen birders participated in the Golden Triangle Audubon Society’s November field trip to Sabine Pass.

The day started out cold but warmed up nicely. The group met at the Dick Dowling-Sabine Pass Battleground Park and picked up a few birds there. American Pipits chirped as they passed overhead while a Loggerhead Shrike watched for prey from a weedy perch. American White Pelicans could be seen floating in the ship channel and an Eastern Phoebe, our familiar winter flycatcher, zipped after insects from the top of a bush. But the aim of this trip was sparrows and around Sabine Pass that brings to mind one place above others...

Call it what you will, Pilot Road, Texas Point Road, or something else, this dead end road attracts sparrows (and other birds) like a magnet. The combination of the open gravel road and grassy margin, lined with a row of Saltcedar and Willow trees surrounded by coastal marsh brings a variety of habitats close together and this attracts the birds. Migrant and wintering sparrows love this spot so it was the obvious first stop on our sparrow trip and it did not disappoint. A Song Sparrow popped up from the weeds while some got a brief look at a Lincoln’s Sparrow as it zipped over the road and into dense cover. White-crowned Sparrows might seem out of place near the marsh but it was not unexpected here when several were seen feeding on the road side. The Dark-eyed Junco feeding in the road was a little more unusual as not many make it all the way to the coast. The Chipping Sparrow also usually stops a little north of the coast but most of the group got good looks at this bird among the Saltcedars. The star attractions (among sparrows) on the Pilot Road are marsh dwelling sparrows. A little “pishing” in the right habitat at the right time can bring up hordes of these birds and that is just what the group did. It took a little while, but a little persistent calling brought up a (surprisingly) few Seaside Sparrows. Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrows were more cooperative as these brightly colored sparrows responded well to the pishing and gave all the birders good looks.

Sparrows were not the only birds to be seen here however. A White-winged Dove perched quietly at the back of one of the roadside trees. Greater Yellowlegs and Willets fed in shallow water and Belted Kingfishers and a couple of Tern species wheeled overhead. A group of Red-breasted Mergansers, all female plumaged, flew past while a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker probing a bushy tree seemed a little out of place. A cloud of Black Skimmers could be seen in the distance while Northern Harriers stirred up birds closer to the road. Clapper Rails are usually fairly easy to see on the Pilot Road but the birds took that to the extreme on this day. Several of these reclusive birds walked, waded or swam right out into the open and the birders got numerous unusually good looks at these birds.

After a brief bathroom stop, the group moved on to highway 87. An old road off of 87 leading to a small cemetery has produced nice finds in the past, so it was explored. A startled Green Heron was the first nice find of the day for the spot. Also interesting were several Pine Warblers working the (non-pine) trees. A “Myrtle” Yellow-rumped Warbler and a nearby Field Sparrow were also nice to see.

Moving on to Sabine Woods the birders continued their quest. Most famous for migrating warblers, this patch of oaks, scrub and grass also produces good numbers of sparrows every year. White-throated Sparrows were more easily heard than seen but the more persistent birders did both hear and see them at the Woods. A Swamp Sparrow or two was turned up but the normally common Savannah Sparrow remained absent. Although only briefly glimpsed, it appears that there may be as many as three Eastern Towhees currently occupying the *Lantana* thickets of the sanctuary.

Other winter species put in appearances at Sabine Woods including Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, American Robin and Orange-crowned Warbler. Pine Warblers showed up here as well and a female Black-throated Green Warbler was a nice surprise. Several Blue-headed Vireos were about along with at least four species of woodpecker. Golden-crowned Kinglets persisted at the woods with their Ruby-crowned cousins while several Barn Owls were flushed from the young oaks in the western part of the preserve.

The trip ended with eleven species of sparrows being seen. This is an impressive number for any trip and considering that several possible species were missed, it’s easy to see how a winter day in Jefferson County could produce some of the best sparrow counts around. Join us for our next Sparrow Hunt and maybe you too will get a better appreciation of those frustrating little brown birds, the sparrows.

Species list: American White Pelican (21); Brown Pelican (10); Neotropic Cormorant (20); Double-crested Cormorant (1); Anhinga (2); Great Blue Heron (5); Great Egret (4); Snowy Egret (5); Cattle Egret (1); Green Heron (1); Black-crowned Night-Heron (2); Roseate Spoonbill (4); Black Vulture (2); Turkey Vulture (2); Mottled Duck (4); Northern Pintail (12); Lesser Scaup (5); Red-breasted Merganser (6); Duck Species (200); Northern Harrier (3); Sharp-shinned Hawk (1); Cooper’s Hawk (1); Red-shouldered Hawk (1); Broad-winged Hawk (1); Red-tailed Hawk (1); American Kestrel (1); Merlin (1); Clapper Rail (5); Killdeer (1); Black-necked Stilt (10); American Avocet (5); Greater Yellowlegs (2); Willet (6); Ruddy Turnstone (1); Dowitcher species (25); Ring-billed Gull (1); Herring Gull (1); Forster’s Tern (7); Black Skimmer (200); Eurasian Collared-Dove (1); White-winged Dove (1); Mourning Dove (2); Barn Owl (3); Belted Kingfisher (1); Red-bellied Woodpecker (1); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (2); Downy Woodpecker (3); Northern Flicker (1); Eastern Phoebe (6); Loggerhead Shrike (1); Blue-headed Vireo (3); Blue Jay (17); Tree Swallow (6); Marsh Wren (1); Golden-crowned Kinglet (5); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (6); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (8); Hermit Thrush (3); American Robin (26); Gray Catbird (2); Northern Mockingbird (1); Brown Thrasher (5); European Starling (10); Cedar Waxwing (11); American Pipit (1); Orange-crowned Warbler (2); Yellow-rumped Warbler (9); Black-throated Green Warbler (1); Pine Warbler (3); Common Yellowthroat (1); Eastern Towhee (3); Chipping Sparrow (3); Field Sparrow (2); Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow (18); Seaside Sparrow (4); Song Sparrow (3); Lincoln’s Sparrow (1); Swamp Sparrow (5); White-throated Sparrow (8); White-crowned Sparrow (2); Dark-eyed Junco (1); Northern Cardinal (3); Red-winged Blackbird (50); Boat-tailed Grackle (4); Great-tailed Grackle (3); American Goldfinch (7).

Steve Mayes

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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 on Siler's Birding on the Net at <http://birdingonthe.net/hotmail.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
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N. E. Texas	(903) 839-4804
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