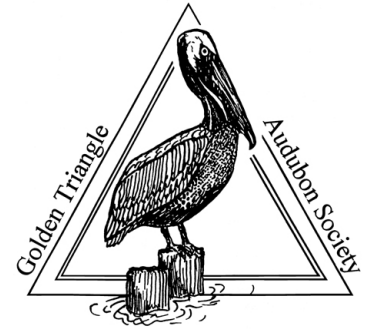


# The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

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Vol. 15 No. 9

September 2009

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**Membership Meeting  
Thursday, September 17, 2009  
7:00 PM  
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont  
Birds of the British Isles  
John and Jana Whittle**

**The program will describe the avifauna and bird habitats found in the British Isles, and will be illustrated by slides, some taken by the presenters, others not. It will focus on the more common birds and will cover garden and woodland birds as well as nesting seabirds, shorebirds ("waders" is the term used) and birds of the open upland areas. For the most part, the emphasis will be on Scotland and England, although there will be passing references to Wales and Ireland. Since the British Isles are at high latitudes, there are many more breeding (summer) birds than wintering species.**

**We will plan on having the doors open by 6:00 p.m. and the program will start at 7:00 p.m. sharp.**

## **Sabine Woods Work Days September 12 and later**

We are pleased to report that Gary Kelley has stepped forward to act as manager for the projects to be undertaken at Sabine Woods this fall and winter. We are deeply grateful to him, and hope that each of you will, to the maximum extent possible, assist him. We have two separate grants to help accomplish this work. We have a grant from Sempra Energy Foundation to assist with hurricane damage repairs. We plan to use this to replace the picnic shelter, and install new gates and nearby fencing. The Texas Ornithological Society has a grant from the 2008 Birding Classic to plant replacement and additional trees and to fully repair the water system.

We have scheduled a regular Work Day for Saturday, September 12. Our plan for this is to accomplish the usual trail and other general maintenance that is always required at the end of the summer. However, this year, because of the open canopy and probably some lingering effects from the storm surge, inside the woods have lush much growth, mostly giant ragweed, and will require more effort than normal. We are extremely grateful to Howard Davis for spending two afternoons brush hogging all the main trails and many of the open areas. We would like a good turn out for this work day! Come yourself, bring your children or commandeer your grandchildren!

## The Brown Pelican

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Issue number 155

### Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information  
[www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org)

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## Calendar of Events

**Saturday September 12: Sabine Woods Work Day.** We are planning a work day at Sabine Woods, mainly for the routine maintenance items; mowing trimming and pruning to keep the trails clear. We'd also like to cut down the giant ragweed in some areas of the woods, hopefully before seeds form. The more open canopy created by the hurricanes has led to much more growth than normal inside the woods.

We will plan to start around 7:30 a.m., and will probably work until noon or thereabouts. Sometimes on past fall work days, we have shortened the schedule because of the presence of migrants.

Please bring work gloves and insect repellent, and whatever hand tools or equipment you may have – heavy duty riding mower, DR trimmer, loppers (especially useful this time!) We have a few, but typically not enough. We will try to provide light refreshments.

We have two grants for projects at Sabine Woods this fall, so we will be looking for more volunteer hours later in the fall! See p. 1 for further details.

**Thursday September 17. Membership Meeting.** Birds of the British Isles. See page 1 for details.

### Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank Jennifer and Jim Armacost, Linda and Howard Davis, Mary and Herb Stafford and Joe Tibbs for refreshments or contributions.

**We need volunteers to bring items for all the remaining fall 2009 meetings.**

Please do not wait until the last minute to volunteer! We do not expect one person to bring everything, but please call so we can coordinate! Please call Jennifer Armacost at (409) 790-7222 (or email her at [armacostj@yahoo.com](mailto:armacostj@yahoo.com)) **as far in advance as possible.** Please help if you can!

**Saturday September 19. Jefferson County Fall Migration Count.** Contact John Whittle ([johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com) or 409-722-4193) to volunteer to help in this

county-wide count. Even help for only a few morning hours will be of great help.

**Saturday September 26 – Field trip to Smith Point Hawk Watch.** To coincide with the peak of Broad-winged Hawk migration, this trip will be one week later our normal schedule. Almost all the debris has been removed from the Candy Abshier WMA and the vicinity of the Hawk Watch tower. We understand the tower survived the hurricane in relatively good condition, and is in use for this season's Hawk Watch. This is a field trip that does not involve extensive walking, and the tower is handicap accessible.

To reach the Smith Point Hawk Watch site from Winnie, take Highway 124 south towards High Island. After 12 miles, turn right on FM1985 and follow it about 14 miles (two miles past the access road for Anahuac NWR) until it meets FM562. Follow FM562 (south) another 14 miles to Smith Point. At the end of FM562, there have been in past years signs to the Hawk Watch. Continue straight until almost reaching the bay, and turn left on a shell/limestone oilfield road, bearing left again to the parking area. It takes at least 90 minutes from the Golden Triangle to reach the site. Your leaders will be there by 8:30 a.m., but join us when you can. Be aware that debris removal from other areas in the vicinity of Candy Abshier is ongoing, and there are many heavy trucks using FM562.

We do not believe there is any gasoline for sale in Smith Point, and if there are any convenience stores or restaurants open, they will likely have very limited capacity and selection.

**Thursday October 15. Membership Meeting.** Details in next issue.

**Thursday November 14. Membership Meeting.** (Tentative) Birds of Ecuador: (Sherrie Roden, Gerald Duhon, Steve Mayes, John Haynes.) Details in next issue.



# Field Trip to Bolivar Flats August 22, 2009

Steve Mayes

Almost one year ago, Hurricane Ike ravaged much of the upper Texas coast. Damage was especially severe along the Bolivar Peninsula where many homes simply disappeared in the powerful storm surge. The changes for the wildlife were no less dramatic with much of the beach front lost and many habitats altered. In the past, the Golden Triangle Audubon Society has always taken a spring and often a summer trip to the Bolivar area every year. This year, the spring trip went elsewhere as the area continued to recover from the storm. So what would the birders find on the summer trip?

Arriving at the vehicle barrier of the Houston Audubon Society's Bolivar Flats Sanctuary, some of the changes to the area were obvious. First, there is a lot less "flats" than before the storm. This has, to some extent, compressed the mud flat areas most favored by many of the shorebirds. Another noticeable difference is the absence of the observation tower which was washed away by the storm surge. The flats are already healing however. The presence of the jetty causes sediment to accrete in this area creating the flats that the birds love. Already, more beach is being created here and it won't be long until the flats more closely resemble the birding paradise that all remember.

But what is there now? Still plenty of birds is what! Hundreds of Brown Pelicans loafed on the beach on the day of the field trip with many Royal and fewer Caspian Terns mixed in with them. Smaller Least Terns dotted the flats with a few Black Terns (mostly in their non-black winter plumage) here and there among them. Endangered Piping Plovers were quickly located working along the waters edge with the more numerous Sanderlings. Semipalmated Plovers were feeding farther out on the flats while a few Wilson's Plovers seemed to prefer to hide in the debris along the high tide line. A few Marbled Godwits were seen using their long up-curved bills to probe the mud for invertebrates while Long-billed Curlews used their even longer down-turned bills for the same purpose. A lone Horned Lark made a brief appearance for the birders.

Two of the most sought species on this trip are Reddish Egret and Magnificent Frigatebird. The birders on this trip were not disappointed on either count! Numerous Reddish Egrets worked the shallow water between the end of the flats and the jetty with a few even closer. Several of the birds were demonstrating the crazy-looking, staggering dance of a feeding style for which they are justifiably well known. One has to be careful using this feeding style as an identification method however, as other species (Great and Snowy Egrets, for example) will also sometimes feed this way. Luckily, good scope views were had at the Reddish Egrets (with both dark and white morphs present) so the identifications were not in doubt. Frigatebirds were also well represented on the day. The initial sightings were of extremely distant birds and only their unique silhouettes allowed for their identification. As the day went on, some of the frigatebirds came closer to the group and better looks were had. Unfortunately, the Frigatebirds did not demonstrate their own distinctive feeding style known as "kleptoparasitism". This is a fancy word meaning they steal their food from other birds, almost always other seabirds or

gulls. On this trip, the frigatebirds behaved themselves and just soared over sea and shore.

Moving to the Bolivar jetty, more birds were evident. Much of the best mudflat habitat is now that near the jetty and this is often the best place from which to observe shorebirds these days. American Oystercatcher was one of the unique birds spotted from this venue on the day. Short-billed Dowitchers were also evident as were more Marbled Godwits and Willets. Ring-billed and Herring Gulls joined the more numerous Laughing Gulls here and Forster's Terns were more easily seen. The jetty suffered little damage from Ike and remains a popular fishing/crabbing spot though many of the familiar structures around it are now gone.

Lunch was picnic style at Fort Travis Park. Some of the trees and the marsh habitat here were damaged along with the bathrooms but the park is open and the shelters and picnic tables seem to be mostly intact. Many other structures in the area were not so lucky and many of the familiar businesses are now gone. The large grocery store and a few restaurants (like the Stingaree) are now open but much work remains.

Rollover Pass has also experienced many changes with perhaps more to come. The current plans are to fill in the pass to avoid the expense of maintaining it. This might be bad for the fishermen (and birdwatchers) but could be better for the habitat in the long run. In any case, there are many birds present at the pass right now. The sand bars and shallows of the area were dotted with Brown Pelicans, Semipalmated Sandpipers and other familiar species on the day of the trip. Sandwich Tern was spotted here and many Black Skimmers sat on the mud, some lying prone and panting in the heat. A few Western Sandpipers worked the shoreline along with a few colorful Ruddy Turnstones.

The trip finished up at the Houston Audubon Society's Boy Scout Woods Sanctuary in High Island. It was spared much of the damage that Sabine Woods experienced during Ike as it was high enough to avoid the worst of the storm surge. There were plenty of birds present here as well, but they all seemed to be Blue-gray Gnatcatchers! Actually, a few other species were seen here including Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Eastern Kingbirds. In the heat of the day, the bird activity died down and the group decided to call it a day. It was a comfort for all present to see that despite the massive disaster of Hurricane Ike, the habitat is recovering and the birds are still present. The human structures will take a while to recover as well, but birding on the Bolivar Peninsula promises to continue to be one of the highlights of the area.

The following species were observed on the trip:  
(BF = Bolivar Flats; other locations should be obvious)  
TEAL, Blue-winged (10 BF; 1 F Rollover); PELICAN, American White (10 Rollover); PELICAN, Brown (225 BF; 10 Ft Travis; 200 Rollover); CORMORANT, Neotropic (3 BF; 15 N Jetty); FRIGATEBIRD, Magnificent (3 BF; 1 Ft Travis); HERON, Great Blue (2 BF); EGRET, Great (10 BF; 15 N Jetty; 1 High Is); EGRET, Snowy (1 BF; 10 N Jetty);  
*(continued on page 5)*

# Bird Sightings – July 2009

**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 johnawhittle@aol.com or call (409) 880-8276. For "very rare" birds, or very much out-of-season species, 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." The range of dates for which the species was reported is shown in parentheses in a column before the sighting details or report summaries.

**Commentary:** July is always the month with the least birding effort of the year. However, 101 species is a good showing. Included are some interesting, presumably lingering shorebirds. Mississippi Kites were almost certainly nesting in north Beaumont.

**WHISTLING-DUCK, Blk-bellied** (27-27) JEF-TP 7/27(75) SM  
**WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous** (1-27) JEF-TXPT 7/1(10) FWF; JEF-TP 7/27(425) SM  
**DUCK, Ruddy** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW  
**PELICAN, Amer. White** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(2) FWF  
**PELICAN, Brown** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(3) FWF  
**FRIGATEBIRD, Magnificent** (11-11) JEF 7/11(10) CSL  
**BITTERN, Least** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF  
**HERON, Great Blue** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF  
**EGRET, Great** (12-28) JEF 3 reps(3)  
**HERON, Little Blue** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF  
**HERON, Tricolored** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(2) FWF  
**EGRET, Cattle** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(20) FWF  
**HERON, Green** (1-28) HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 10 reps(13)  
**IBIS, White** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(5) FWF  
**IBIS, Glossy** (4-4) JEF-TP 7/4(1) RW  
**SPOONBILL, Roseate** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF  
**STORK, Wood** (17-17) HAI 7/17(1) JM  
**VULTURE, Turkey** (9-21) HAI 2 reps(2)  
**KITE, Swallow-tailed** (4-22) JEF-BMT 7/4(2) RW; ORA-BC 7/22(1) SBE  
**KITE, Mississippi** (4-27) JEF-BMT 7/4(4) RW; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ; JEF 7/12(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/16(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/23(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/25(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/26(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/27(1) JAW; JEF-TP 7/27(1) SM  
**EAGLE, Bald** (5-5) JEF 7/5(1) RHJ  
**HAWK, Cooper's** (28-28) HAI-SILS 7/28(1) MG  
**HAWK, Red-shouldered** (18-27) JEF 3 reps(3)  
**HAWK, Broad-winged** (27-27) JEF 7/27(3) CSL  
**HAWK, Swainson's** (27-27) JEF 7/27(1) JAW  
**RAIL, Clapper** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(6) FWF  
**GALLINULE, Purple** (4-27) JEF-TP 7/4(20) RW; JEF-TP 7/27(2) SM  
**GOLDEN-PLOVER, American** (4-4) JEF 7/4(1) RW  
**PLOVER, Wilson's** (1-4) JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF; JEF-PI 7/4(2) RW  
**KILLDEER** (27-28) JEF 3 reps(7)  
**STILT, Black-necked** (4-27) JEF 2 reps(215)  
**AVOCET, American** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(20) RW  
**YELLOWLEGS, Greater** (4-4) JEF 7/4(1) RW  
**WILLET** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(5) FWF  
**YELLOWLEGS, Lesser** (6-6) JEF 7/6(1) SM  
**WHIMBREL** (4-6) JEF 7/4(6) RW; JEF 7/6(13) SM  
**CURLEW, Long-billed** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(15) FWF  
**TURNSTONE, Ruddy** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF  
**SANDPIPER, Western** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(2) RW  
**SANDPIPER, Least** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(5) RW  
**SANDPIPER, Pectoral** (4-4) JEF 7/4(12) RW  
**GULL, Laughing** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(3) FWF  
**TERN, Least** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW  
**TERN, Gull-billed** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW  
**TERN, Caspian** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW  
**TERN, Black** (4-27) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW; JEF-TP 7/4(20) RW; JEF-TP 7/27(10) SM  
**TERN, Common** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(3) RW  
**TERN, Forster's** (4-27) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW; JEF-TP 7/27(8) SM

**TERN, Royal** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW  
**TERN, Sandwich** (4-4) JEF-PI 7/4(1) RW  
**SKIMMER, Black** (1-1) JEF-TXPT 7/1(6) FWF  
**PIGEON, Rock** (24-28) HAI-SILS 7/24(7) MG; HAI-SILS 7/28(12) MG  
**COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian** (6-27) HAI-SILS 7/20(4) MG; JEF-BMT 7/6(2) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/27(2) JAW  
**DOVE, White-winged** (1-31) JEF 25 reps(165)  
**DOVE, Mourning** (1-25) HAI 8 reps(31); JEF 1 rep(1)  
**DOVE, Inca** (4-21) HAI-SILS 7/7(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/21(6) MG; JEF-BTNP 7/4(2) RW  
**CUCKOO, Yellow-billed** (6-6) HAI-SILS 7/6(1) MG  
**OWL, Great Horned** (4-4) JEF-SW 7/4(1) RW  
**OWL, Barred** (6-6) HAI-SILS 7/6(1) MG  
**SWIFT, Chimney** (1-25) HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA; JEF-NEDR 7/1(2) FWF; JEF-BMT 7/6(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 7/6(2) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/19(15) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/25(5) RHJ  
**HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.** (2-31) HAI-SILS 7/2(4) MG; HAI-SILS 7/3(3) MG; HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA; HAI-SILS 7/10(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/11(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/12(3) MG; HAI-SILS 7/13(3) MG; HAI-SILS 7/18(3) MG; HAI-SILS 7/20(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/21(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/24(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/25(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/29(3) MG; HAI-SILS 7/31(3) MG; JEF-BMT 7/5(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/6(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ; JEF-GROV 7/7(1) SR; JEF-BMT 7/9(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/10(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/11(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/12(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/13(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/14(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/15(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/19(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/20(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/21(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/22(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/23(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/25(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/26(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/27(3) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/30(1) RHJ  
**WOODPECKER, Red-headed** (5-23) JEF 7/5(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ; JEF 7/12(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/17(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/23(1) RHJ  
**WOODPECKER, Red-bellied** (3-29) HAI 9 reps(27)  
**WOODPECKER, Downy** (2-26) HAI 3 reps(3); JEF 9 reps(9)  
**WOODPECKER, Pileated** (1-18) HAI-SILS 7/1(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/3(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/4(3) MG; JEF-BMT 7/16(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/18(2) RHJ  
**FLYCATCHER, Acadian** (9-9) HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA  
**FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested** (9-9) HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA  
**KINGBIRD, Eastern** (4-4) JEF-SW 7/4(1) RW  
**VIREO, White-eyed** (9-20) HAI-VCSP 7/9(3) JA; HAI-SILS 7/20(2) MG  
**VIREO, Red-eyed** (4-9) HAI-VCSP 7/9(3) JA; JEF-BTNP 7/4(1) RW  
**JAY, Blue** (3-29) HAI 11 reps(69)  
**CROW, American** (24-24) HAI-SILS 7/24(16) MG  
**MARTIN, Purple** (5-26) JEF 8 reps(111)  
**SWALLOW, Barn** (27-27) JEF-BMT 7/27(4) JAW  
**CHICKADEE, Carolina** (11-28) HAI 3 reps(8)  
**TITMOUSE, Tufted** (4-29) HAI 6 reps(14); JEF 1 rep(2)  
**WREN, Carolina** (6-29) HAI 4 reps(10)  
**GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray** (9-24) HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA; HAI-SILS 7/24(2) MG  
**BLUEBIRD, Eastern** (5-30) JEF 7 reps(27)

<b>THRUSH, Wood</b>	(9-9)	HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA
<b>ROBIN, American</b>	(1-27)	JEF-NEDR 7/1(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 7/3(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/4(2) RW; JEF-NEDR 7/4(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/5(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/5(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 7/6(3) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/18(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/27(1) JAW
<b>CATBIRD, Gray</b>	(3-25)	HAI-SILS 7/3(1) MG; JEF- BMT 7/4(2) RW; JEF-BMT 7/5(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/6(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/10(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/11(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/13(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/14(3) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/17(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/19(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/20(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/22(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/25(1) RHJ
<b>MOCKINGBIRD, Northern</b>	(6-28)	HAI 2 reps(8); JEF 1 rep(2)
<b>THRASHER, Brown</b>	(5-29)	HAI-SILS 7/5(1) MG; HAI- SILS 7/6(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/7(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/18(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/29(1) MG; JEF-BMT 7/5(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/10(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/11(1) RHJ; JEF 7/12(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/13(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/14(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/17(1) RHJ
<b>PARULA, Northern</b>	(4-4)	JEF-BTNP 7/4(2) RW
<b>WARBLER, Black-and-white</b>	(24-29)	HAI-SILS 7/24(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/29(1) MG
<b>WARBLER, Prothonotary</b>	(4-4)	JEF-BTNP 7/4(1) RW
<b>YELLOWTHROAT, Common</b>	(1-1)	JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF
<b>WARBLER, Hooded</b>	(4-4)	JEF-BTNP 7/4(1) RW
<b>CHAT, Yellow-breasted</b>	(9-9)	HAI-VCSP 7/9(1) JA
<b>TANAGER, Summer</b>	(4-4)	JEF-BTNP 7/4(1) RW
<b>CARDINAL, Northern</b>	(3-29)	HAI 8 reps(405); JEF 2 reps(4)
<b>BUNTING, Indigo</b>	(5-5)	HAI-SILS 7/5(1) MG
<b>BUNTING, Painted</b>	(27-27)	JEF 1 rep(3)
<b>BLACKBIRD, Red-winged</b>	(1-1)	JEF-TXPT 7/1(15) FWF
<b>GRACKLE, Common</b>	(1-1)	JEF-NEDR 7/1(2) JAW; JEF-TXPT 7/1(1) FWF
<b>GRACKLE, Great-tailed</b>	(1-5)	HAI 2 reps(16); JEF 2 reps(10)
<b>COWBIRD, Brown-headed</b>	(3-13)	HAI 4 reps(12)
<b>ORIOLE, Orchard</b>	(4-9)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(2)
<b>FINCH, House</b>	(2-31)	HAI 14 reps(36); JEF 3 reps(4)
<b>SPARROW, House</b>	(1-27)	JEF 6 reps(9)

**Number of Species** 101  
**Number of Individuals** 4480

#### County Abbreviations:

HAI – Hardin; JEF – Jefferson; ORA – Orange.

#### Location Codes:

BC – Bridge City; BMT – Beaumont; BTNP – Big Thicket NP; GROV – Groves; NEDR – Nederland; PI – Pleasure Island, Port Arthur; SILS – Silsbee; SW – Sabine Woods; TP – Tyrrell Park incl. Cattail Marsh; TXPT – Road to Pilot Station at Texas Point; VCSP – Village Creek State Park.

#### Observer Abbreviations:

CSL – Christine Sliva; FWF – Jana Whittle, Ross and Seth Foreman; JA – Jim Armacost; JAW – John Whittle; JM – John Mariani; MG – Melanie Goetsell; RHJ – Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; RW – Ron Weeks; SBE – Sheri Bethard; SM – Steve Mayes; SR – Sherrie Roden.

### Field Trip *(continued from page 3)*

10 Rollover); HERON, Little Blue (1 BF); HERON, Tricolored (1 BF; 1 N Jetty; 10 Rollover); EGRET, Reddish (7 BF; 11 N Jetty; 1 Rollover); HERON, Green (1 Bobs Rd); NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-crowned (1 BF); IBIS, White (3 BF; 6 N Jetty); IBIS, Plegadis (10 BF); SPOONBILL, Roseate (4 BF; 1 N Jetty); VULTURE, Black (3 High Is); VULTURE, Turkey (1 High Is); HAWK, Cooper's (1 Ft Travis); HAWK, Red-tailed (1 AD N Jetty); RAIL, Clapper (1 N Jetty; 2 Bobs Rd); PLOVER, Black-bellied (25 Rollover); PLOVER, Wilson's (5 BF; 2 Rollover); PLOVER, Semipalmated (1 BF; 10 N Jetty; 50 Rollover); PLOVER, Piping (10 BF; 2 Rollover);

OYSTERCATCHER, American (1 N Jetty; 4 Rollover); STILT, Black-necked (1 N Jetty); SANDPIPER, Spotted (1 BF); YELLOWLEGS, Greater (1 BF); WILLET (2 Yacht Basin Rd); WHIMBREL (4 BF); CURLEW, Long-billed (5 BF; 2 N Jetty); GODWIT, Marbled (4 BF; 20 N Jetty; 10 Rollover); TURNSTONE, Ruddy (1 BF; 1 Bobs Rd; 3 Rollover); SANDERLING (50 BF; 50 Rollover); SANDPIPER, Western (10 Rollover); SANDPIPER, Least (1 BF); DOWITCHER, Short-billed (20 BF; 50 N Jetty; 25 Rollover); GULL, Laughing (250 BF; 100 N Jetty; 10 Ft Travis); GULL, Ring-billed (1 BF; 2 N Jetty; 1 Rollover); GULL, Herring (2 N Jetty); TERN, Least (100 BF; 50 N Jetty; 200 Rollover); TERN, Caspian (10 BF; 2 N Jetty; 10 Rollover); TERN, Black (1 BF; 12 Yacht Basin Rd); TERN, Forster's (10 N Jetty; 10 Yacht Basin Rd; 100 Rollover); TERN, Royal (50 BF; 50 N Jetty; 300 Rollover); TERN, Sandwich (2 Rollover); SKIMMER, Black (2 BF; 15 N Jetty; 25 Rollover); CUCKOO, Yellow-billed (2 High Is); NIGHTHAWK, Common (3 Bobs Rd); EMPIDONAX species (1 High Is); KINGBIRD, Eastern (1 BF; 5 High Is); SHRIKE, Loggerhead (1 Ft Travis); JAY, Blue (2 High Is); LARK, Horned (1 BF); SWALLOW, Cliff (2 Ft Travis); SWALLOW, Barn (1 BF); GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (25 High Is); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (2 High Is); GRACKLE, Great-tailed (4 BF); ORIOLE, Orchard (2 High Is).

## Bird Alert

The lag between the *Brown Pelican* "closing for press" and your being able to read it often makes Bird Alerts here of limited value. When there is some noteworthy to report, we distribute a message to our email list and put a News Item onto the website at [www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org).

Late August is prime time for southward shorebird migration, but this year, the very dry conditions have made finding shorebird habitat very difficult. There was a good collection of shorebirds in a field with standing water on the east side of South China Road, about a half mile north of Lawhon Road, on August 29. Included were many Pectoral Sandpipers and both yellowlegs species, along with smaller numbers of Stilt Sandpipers, Western, Semi-palmated and Baird's Sandpipers. An Upland Sandpiper was on the grassy levee. There were a few shorebirds, including five Buff-breasted Sandpipers on "Aggie Drive" between Highway 90 and the A&M buildings. It is interesting to note that in both locations, the water has been added for agricultural purposes! Although most parts of the area have had enough rain to prevent a crisis, the rainfall has been below normal, and many normally wet or marshy areas are dry, and the water levels in the coastal marshes are low in a year when it would have been better to have had a lot of water to flush out the salt from Ike.

Apart from any shorebirds, the western part of the county is always on the quiet side the second half of August and early September, as the birds exhibit "post-breeding dispersal." This year, the effect is much magnified. Since most of the birds alive today had to deal with Rita and/or Humberto and/or Ike in the last four years, we wonder if a precautionary trip north in mid August might now be genetically imprinted into these species!

Sabine Woods is also very dry, with no water in the ponds. But most of the oaks are in relatively good shape, although there are some casualties. The trails have been cleared and the Woods are easily birded. In late August, there were a good number of Empidonax flycatchers. Warblers will become more numerous in September and October.

# Spring 2009 Migration Summary

Once again, we present, largely in tabular form, a summary of the sightings of passerine neotropical migrants. This year, we have again combined all the species into a single table. The methodology employed was as follows. We considered four "locations": Sabine Woods, the Willows at Sea Rim State Park, the road to the Pilot Station at Texas Point, and points elsewhere along Texas 87 west of Sabine Pass. If there were multiple reports for any given location on any given day, the highest count for each species submitted by any of the observers was used. The counts for each of the four locations were added to determine the total of that species reported on that day. As usual, there were many more reports from Sabine Woods than for any other sites. This year, there were fewer reports submitted, reflecting reduced birding by observers, especially after mid April.

We thank the following observers who submitted reports for multiple days: Gerald Duhon, John Haynes, Steve Mayes, and John and Jana Whittle. Others whose reports were used included Lynn Barber, Merri and Steve Dillinger, Rose

Ann and Harrison Jordan, Royce Pendergast, Sherrie Roden, Christine Silva, Don Verser, Ron Weeks, Tex Wells, and others who posted on **TEXBIRDS**. Our apologies to anyone we may have omitted.

There were also a few sightings that do not fit into the normal category of migrant. These included an Ash-throated Flycatcher on March 14, 26, 28, April 2, 5, 18 and 19, a Black-whiskered Vireo on April 17, and a Lesser Nighthawk on April 5.

To save space, the following were not shown on the table: a Chuck-will's-Widow on April 19 (the only one reported this year), a Prairie Warbler on April 5 (again, the only one reported), and single Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warblers on April 5 and 9.

We now have data for each year since 1996 compiled under the same procedure. It may already be possible to detect if any species are migrating earlier! Copies of all previous compilations are available.

## Spring 2009 Migration -- Coast of Jefferson County

Species/No. of reports	MARCH										APRIL										MAY										GRAND TOTAL							
	13	14	15	17	26	28	29	31	TOT	2	4	5	7	9	10	11	12	14	15	17	18	19	21	23	25	26	30	TOT	2	4		11	17	18	19	24	26	TOT
<b>Cuckoos</b>	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	3	1	4	1	3	3	1	1	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	3	9	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	4	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo																	1	2	1								3	9								7	16	27
Black-billed Cuckoo																		1		1							3	3	1								4	
<b>Flycatchers</b>																																						
Eastern Wood-Pewee																																						
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher																																						
Acadian Flycatcher																																						
Traill's Flycatcher																																						
Least Flycatcher																																						
Empidonax species																																						
Ash-throated Flycatcher																																						
Great Crested Flycatcher																																						
Western Kingbird																																						
Eastern Kingbird																																						
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher																																						
<b>Vireos</b>																																						
White-eyed Vireo																																						
Yellow-throated Vireo																																						
Blue-headed Vireo																																						
Warbling Vireo																																						
Philadelphia Vireo																																						
Red-eyed Vireo																																						

## Spring 2009 Migration -- Coast of Jefferson County (cont)

Date	MARCH							APRIL							MAY							TOT	GRAND TOTAL																
	13	14	15	17	26	28	29	31	TOT	2	4	5	7	9	10	11	12	14	15	17	18			19	21	23	25	26	30	1	2	4	11	17	18	19	24	26	TOT
Species/No. of reports	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	3	1	4	1	3	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
<b>Thrushes</b>																																							
Veery																																							
Gray-cheeked Thrush																																							
Swainson's Thrush																																							
Wood Thrush																																							
Gray Catbird																																							
<b>Warblers</b>																																							
Blue-winged Warbler																																							
Golden-winged Warbler																																							
Tennessee Warbler																																							
Nashville Warbler																																							
Northern Parula																																							
Yellow Warbler																																							
Chestnut-sided Warbler																																							
Magnolia Warbler																																							
Cape May Warbler																																							
Black-throated Blue Warbler																																							
Black-throated Green Warbler																																							
Blackburnian Warbler																																							
Yellow-throated Warbler																																							
Bay-breasted Warbler																																							
Blackpoll Warbler																																							
Cerulean Warbler																																							
Black-and-white Warbler																																							
American Redstart																																							
Prothonotary Warbler																																							
Worm-eating Warbler																																							
Swainson's Warbler																																							
Ovenbird																																							
Northern Waterthrush																																							
Louisiana Waterthrush																																							
Kentucky Warbler																																							
Common Yellowthroat																																							
Hooded Warbler																																							
Wilson's Warbler																																							
Yellow-breasted Chat																																							
Summer Tanager																																							
Scarlet Tanager																																							
<b>Tanagers</b>																																							
Rose-breasted Grosbeak																																							
Blue Grosbeak																																							
<b>Grosbeaks</b>																																							
Indigo Bunting																																							
Painted Bunting																																							
<b>Blackbirds</b>																																							
Bobolink																																							
Orchard Oriole																																							
Baltimore Oriole																																							

## NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

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## *Brown Pelican*

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## RARE BIRD ALERTS

Unfortunately, almost all the local and regional telephone Rare Bird Alerts have been discontinued in favor of various Internet based means of distribution.

The Texas-wide Rare Bird Alert, maintained by Houston Audubon Society, is available on their web-site at <http://www.houstonaudubon.org/> Email alerts are also available for a small fee. Most rare bird sightings in Texas are posted on the TEXBIRDS listserv. Archives of the listserv are at <http://lists.texbirds.org/texbirds.html> It is not necessary to subscribe to the listserv to view the archives, which include postings up to the most recent..

Transcriptions of many current and recent email alerts are available on the 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>.

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