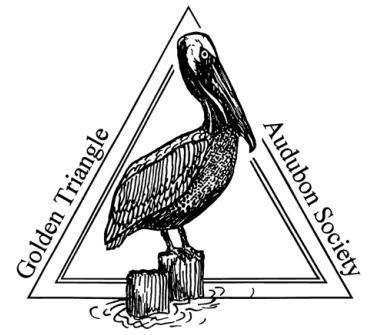


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 16 No. 11

November 2010

**Annual Meeting and Pot-luck Dinner
Thursday, November 18, 2010
7:00 PM
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont**

**Snakes of Southeast Texas
Cody Conway and Kelley Sampeck**

We will be discussing the key identification marks for the most commonly encountered snakes in the wild here in Southeast Texas. Topics covered will include how to observe snakes, how to identify venomous from harmless from a distance, what to do if a venomous snake is encountered, the truth behind the myths, and the importance of reptiles to our communities. We will have live examples and photographs of the animals will be welcomed and encouraged. Live venomous snakes will be present if available.

Cody Conway is a biology student from Lamar University completing his final hours on his degree plan. He started Reptile Experts, a non-profit organization giving advice to a world wide community, at the age of 16. Cody is an educator for various Texas Master Naturalist groups for Herpetology, and has appeared on KLVI on the More Outdoor show with Chester Moore. Serving as the live animal handler with Cody will be Kelley Sampeck. Kelley is a biology graduate from the University of Texas, and has participated in many reptile talks educating both children and adults with Cody. She has also been part of the cottonmouth relocation project at Sabine Woods.

This is our annual pot-luck dinner and those who are able are asked to bring a covered dish. Prior to the talk, we will be conducting our annual elections. We plan on having the doors open by about 6:00 p.m. and the proceedings will start at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

Reminder: GTAS Elections

We will hold our elections at the November Meeting. As noted last month, President Jim Armacost has appointed a Nominating Committee consisting of himself, Gerald Duhon and Rose Ann Jordan. Please contact any of these individuals with your offer to serve or suggestions for others who may be willing. Contact information can be found on page 2. All offices except President and all board positions are up for election. The terms of all officers (except the President) and board members are one year. We are always looking for new blood and fresh ideas. The duties are not onerous! The board typically meets for two hours in the evening about three times a year, and otherwise operates by email and telephone.

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Issue number 168

Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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Newsletter Distribution

Mary Stafford (409-962-8070)

Newsletter Editor

John Whittle (722-4193)

3015 Nashville Ave.

Nederland, TX 77627-6749

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Calendar of Events

Thursday November 18. Annual Meeting. Details on page 1.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank Jim and Jennifer Armacost, Sherry Gibson, Steve Mayes Dana Nelson, Jean Beavens, Paula Shaw, Christine Sliva, Gail Slocum, and Mary and Herb Stafford (and anyone we have accidentally omitted) for bringing or contributing towards refreshments for the October meeting. The November meeting will be our annual pot luck dinner when we ask those who are able to bring a dish. Please do not wait until the last minute to decide and please call Jennifer Armacost at (409) 790-7222 (or email her at armacostj@yahoo.com) **as far in advance as possible** so we can coordinate! However, we will also need volunteers to bring items for all the spring 2011 meetings.

Saturday November 20. Field Trip to West Jefferson County. Each successive year, the birding in west Jefferson County seems to get better and better. The recent Migration Count found some changes in the bird populations of that area, but mostly what we will be looking for on this trip are winter residents who never knew about hurricanes! The area is well known for its raptors, its Sandhill Cranes and its sparrows. In wet years, there can be lots of waterfowl also. However, this year so far has been rather dry, and with a *La Niña* this year, that may continue.

Meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of FM365 and Johnson Road (on the "north/west" side of Johnson Road at that intersection). From the intersection of Interstate 10 and FM365 in Fannett, proceed along FM365 (towards Nome) for about six miles. Shortly after you emerge out of the woodlands, South China Road goes to the right (east then north) and immediately afterwards, on the left, is Johnson Road. There is a green sign for the G and A Turf Farm on Johnson Road at the intersection.

Contact Steve Mayes, sgmayes@hotmail.com, or call 409-722-5807 for further information.

The arrival of the winter resident birds varies from year to year, so if you are out in the area in the days before the field trip, please let us know what you find. We are always especially interested in knowing where the Sandhill Cranes and other wintering birds can be found!

Saturday December 4. Sabine Woods Willow Planting Day. Jim Anding, who propagated the mulberry trees that are doing so well for us, has propagated a good number of willow trees. On December 4, we will plant these around the pond at Sabine Woods. All are invited to come and help. If you have them, bring trowels and small spades to assist in this process. Each time we work at the Woods we seem to need to remove yet another dead tree that has fallen in an inconvenient location, so if you own a chain saw, please call (409-722-4193) a day or two ahead to see if it might be needed!

Saturday January 1, 2011. Orange County Christmas Bird Count. Our traditional way to celebrate the New Year. See the full details in next month's issue or contact Ken Sztraky (409-385-2835 or berrysheepfarm@att.net for more information.

Monday January 3, 2011. Sea Rim Christmas Bird Count. Contact John Whittle (409 -722-4193 or johnawhittle@aol.com or next month's issue for full details. This count includes Sabine Pass, Sea Rim State Park, Sabine Woods, Texas Point NWR and parts of Murphree WMA and McFaddin NWR.



EarthShare of Texas represents Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society in payroll contribution programs in workplaces throughout Texas. For more information about how you can support Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society at your workplace, call 1-800-GREENTX, or visit www.earthshare-texas.org.

Stephan Lorenz' talk on Birds of the Bering Sea

Our October meeting was wonderful with Stephan Lorenz telling us all about the birds and some mammals of the Bering Sea and the islands that ring it. He had several different maps in his powerpoint presentation to help us understand extremely good places to go and bird there.

Some of the birds he talked about were relatively familiar to us: Ruddy Turnstones, Lesser Sandhill Cranes, Common Snipe; others were not. The Short-tailed Albatross nests on one volcanic island off Japan and is nowhere more common than in the Bering Sea in summer. Northern Fulmars, (which sailors call rat birds), Short-tailed Shearwaters, Red-legged Kittiwakes (endemic to the Bering Sea although the Black-legged Kittiwakes also found there are more widespread), Crested, Parakeet and Least Auklets, Tufted and Horned Puffins, Thick-billed and Common Murres, Ancient Murrelets, Storm Petrels, especially Leach's Storm Petrel, Red-faced Cormorants, and Pigeon Guillemots are all common breeding birds of the area that are not often seen elsewhere. Cassin's Auklets nest in burrows on islands unlike other Auklet species. Less common are Laysan Albatross and Black-footed Albatross, both species that nest in islands of the Northwest Hawaiian chain. Larids are represented by Glaucous-winged Gulls, Common Tern, Mew Gull, Black-headed Gull, and Black-tailed Gull among others. Waterfowl common in the area include Aleutian Cackling Goose, Harlequin Duck, Oldsquaw, and all four North American species of Eider. Asian waterfowl seen quite often include Emperor Geese, Eurasian Wigeon, Tufted Duck, Bean Goose.

The tundra has its complement of songbirds. Song Sparrow, Pacific Wren, Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch are all common. Common Raven, Rock Ptarmigan, American Dipper, Rock Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpipers, Stilt Sandpiper, Pacific Golden Plover can all be found nesting on some of the islands. Not quite so common are some Asian and Eurasian species such as Temmick's and various other Stints, Gray-tailed Tattler, Common Sandpiper, Black-tailed Godwits, Common Greenshank, Bank and Barn Swallows, Eyebrowed Thrushes, Yellow Wagtails, and Brambling. Some of the rare birds that he saw were Siberian Rubythroat, Dusky Thrush, Siberian Flycatcher, Hawfinch and a Lanceolated Warbler (fourth record for North America). He stated that Bald Eagles, so symbolic of Alaska, are so abundant that there are like our crows.

The birds listed above were all pictured in his presentation. He gave interesting tidbits about many of them. Red-legged Kittiwakes just sat on his lap while banding them apparently because they are more nocturnal birds whereas the Black-legged Kittiwakes are very hard to handle while banding. Crested Auklets are social birds and smell like citrus. They have a habit of sniffing each other's necks. In a Murre Colony the female will lay an egg on the ground and she and the male take turns sitting on the egg because the eggs are so easy for predators to get. When the baby Murre is 15 days old it goes to sea. The Glaucous-winged Gulls are one of the main predators, and he has seen them eat a whole auklet. The Laysan Albatrosses seen in the summer fly 4,000 miles or 8,000 miles roundtrip to get food for their babies. Although

the Rock Ptarmigan has been reported on the open seas, but it is hard to understand how they got to these islands.

The mammals that he mentioned were Stellar Sea Lions, Porpoises, Sperm Whales, Killer Whales, Minke Whales, and, on the islands, Arctic Foxes, Fur Seals, and rats. The rat problem became so serious that poison was used on some islands. Unfortunately, it did kill some Bald Eagles, but it did help to control the rat population.

Mr. Lorenz stated that most of the land is tundra, with mosses and some flowers but hardly any trees.

At the end he told our group which islands in the Bering Sea had hotels, etc., and also some of the birds present on each island.

I would have loved to have a tape of this presentation so that I could have heard it again. He has offered to speak to us on other topics.

Thank you again to Stephan Lorenz for driving from Houston to speak to our group.

Jana Whittle

Spring Field Trip Program

Shortly, we will be developing our spring 2011 field trip schedule, and we would like to have your input. In past years, we have gone to west Harris County in either January or February. However, this trip has become less satisfactory and less popular. Houston continues to expand to the west, and more habitat is lost each succeeding year. Many of the birds that attracted us there can now be seen in our own "backyard" in west Jefferson County. We do usually go to west Jefferson County in November, when the raptors and Sandhill Cranes have arrived. In times past (before hurricanes), we sometimes did a trip to Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes in Louisiana, and this would be one possibility, looking for raptors, sparrows and waterfowl. Another might be a trip to the area around Steinhagen Lake, again with sparrows and waterfowl high on the target list, but also for the woodland birds of the area.

If you have any preference or other suggestions, please let us know soon.

Winter Finch Forecast

Each year, Ron Pittaway prepares a forecast of winter finch distributions and irruptions, based on the crops of their favorite seeds in Ontario and elsewhere. Here are the abridged forecasts for two finches of interest in our area.

PURPLE FINCH: This finch winters in the north when the majority of deciduous and coniferous seed crops are abundant, which is not the case this year. Most Purple Finches will migrate south of Ontario this fall.

PINE SISKIN: There are currently high numbers of siskins in southern Yukon attracted to a bumper white spruce cone crop. They could stay in Yukon for the winter. Siskins show a tendency for north-south migration, but are better considered an opportunistic nomad. Banding recoveries show that siskins wander from coast to coast searching for conifer seed crops. Some might winter in northern Ontario where the white spruce crop is heavy. However, siskins are currently uncommon in the Northeast so there are potentially only very small numbers that could irrupt south in eastern North America.

Bird Sightings – September 2010

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) 722-4193. 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: Fall migration does not get the attention from many local birders that it deserves. The sightings list below includes 28 species of warbler. Yes, there are some species, most notably Blackpoll Warbler, that are very rare in the fall, and a few others that are much less common in the fall than the spring, such as Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers. But equally there are others that, in normal years at least, are more common in the fall. Canada and Mourning Warblers come to mind in this category. (If they were more common in the spring this year, it was because they were much more numerous than normal then, not because they were in short

supply this fall, as the list below testifies!) Fall migration is much more drawn out than spring migration, both in terms of the overall passage and the migration window for individual species. That in turn means that the concentrations of individuals do not peak as sharply, and they may not qualify as abundant or even common in any week, because the chances of finding them on any given day will not be as good. Also, a few species will almost all have migrated by late-August, while others may be quite common through most of October. In spring, many of the wintering species are still around throughout most of April, while they do not return in numbers until the beginning of November, after almost all the Neotropical migrants have passed through.

Our local opportunities to see spring migrants are enhanced by geographic factors which concentrate the migrant in a few coastal locations in many weather conditions. While birds do build up along the coast at times in the fall, the effect is not so pronounced, nor as easily predicted.

Fall plumages for many species are not as colorful as the alternate plumage of the spring, sometimes increasing the identification challenges. Also, more than two thirds of the birds passing through in the fall are young birds approaching their first winter (which 80 percent of them do not survive).

This month's listing does not reveal any extraordinary sightings, but is a better than average showing, surprising in view of the drought locally and to our north. Included are sightings during the Migration Count.

WHISTLING-DUCK, Black-bell.	(4-26)	JEF 7 reps(1137)	
WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous	(18-19)	JEF 2 reps(177)	
DUCK, Wood	(10-18)	JEF 9/10(2) MG; JEF-TP	
		9/18(1) MC05	
DUCK, Mottled	(4-19)	JEF 6 reps(512)	
TEAL, Blue-winged	(10-18)	JEF 7 reps(15546)	
TEAL, Green-winged	(13-18)	JEF 9/13(100) MG; JEF-TP	
		9/18(1) MC05	
DUCK species	(18-18)	JEF 1 rep(10)	
GREBE, Pied-billed	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC02; JEF-TP	
		9/18(7) MC05	
PELICAN, Amer. White	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(12) MC07	
PELICAN, Brown	(6-18)	JEF 4 reps(124)	
CORMORANT, Neotropic	(4-29)	JEF 11 reps(892)	
CORMORANT, Double-crested	(18-18)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
CORMORANT, Species	(18-18)	JEF 1 rep(545)	
ANHINGA	(13-28)	JEF 5 reps(36)	
BITTERN, Least	(18-18)	JEF-MCFW 9/18(1) MC12;	
		JEF-MURW 9/18(1) MC09	
HERON, Great Blue	(18-19)	JEF 7 reps(16)	
EGRET, Great	(6-29)	JEF 16 reps(1994)	
EGRET, Snowy	(4-29)	JEF 18 reps(3080)	
HERON, Little Blue	(18-18)	JEF 3 reps(546)	
HERON, Tricolored	(18-18)	JEF 6 reps(1130)	
EGRET, Reddish	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(9) MC11	
EGRET, Cattle	(6-29)	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 15	
		reps(2436)	
HERON, Green	(18-18)	JEF 6 reps(14)	
NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned	(18-18)	JEF 2 reps(10)	
NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-crown.	(18-26)	JEF 4 reps(17)	
IBIS, White	(4-28)	JEF 17 reps(1613)	
IBIS, White-faced	(18-18)	JEF 2 reps(6)	
IBIS, Plegadis	(18-26)	JEF 3 reps(34)	
SPOONBILL, Roseate	(6-27)	JEF 9 reps(76)	
STORK, Wood	(2-5)	JEF-BMT 9/2(100) RHJ;	
		JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW	
VULTURE, Black	(18-29)	JEF 11 reps(57)	
VULTURE, Turkey	(4-29)	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 14	
		reps(141)	
KITE, Mississippi	(5-18)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF	
		9/18(1) MC06; JEF-SW 9/18(11) MC10	
EAGLE, Bald	(13-13)	JEF-BMT 9/13(1) CSL	
HAWK, Sharp-shinned	(18-29)	JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10;	
		JEF 9/19(1) JAW; JEF 9/26(1) JAW; JEF 9/29(1) JAW	
HAWK, Cooper's	(18-30)	JEF 9/18(1) MC06; JEF	
		9/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/27(1) RHJ; JEF-	
		BMT 9/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH	
HAWK, Red-shouldered	(2-30)	JEF 10 reps(15)	
HAWK, Broad-winged	(4-30)	JEF 10 reps(18)	
HAWK, Swainson's	(18-26)	JEF 9/18(1) MC06; JEF	
		9/18(4) MC07; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF 9/26(1) JAW	
HAWK, Red-tailed	(18-26)	JEF 5 reps(10)	
CARACARA, Crested	(5-28)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF	
		9/19(1) JAW; JEF 9/28(1) JAW	
KESTREL, American	(18-26)	JEF 4 reps(7)	
MERLIN	(16-30)	JEF-SW 9/16(1) CC; JEF-	
		SW 9/30(1) JHH	
FALCON, Peregrine	(18-26)	JEF 9/18(1) MC09; JEF	
		9/26(1) JAW	
RAIL, Clapper	(11-18)	JEF 6 reps(39)	
SORA	(18-18)	JEF-TP 9/18(1) MC05	
MOORHEN, Common	(18-18)	JEF-MCFW 9/18(2) MC12;	
		JEF-MURW 9/18(2) MC09; JEF-TP 9/18(35) MC05	
PLOVER, Black-bellied	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(14) MC11	
PLOVER, Snowy	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(25) MC11	
PLOVER, Semipalmated	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(3) MC11	
PLOVER, Piping	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(17) MC11	
KILLDEER	(4-28)	JEF 12 reps(119)	
STILT, Black-necked	(13-18)	JEF 4 reps(81)	
SANDPIPER, Spotted	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC06; JEF	
		9/18(4) MC09; JEF-MCFW 9/18(2) MC12; JEF-TP 9/18(1)	
		MC05	
YELLOWLEGS, Greater	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(5) MC11	
WILLET	(18-18)	JEF 3 reps(23)	
TURNSTONE, Ruddy	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(7) MC11	
SANDERLING	(18-18)	JEF 2 reps(95)	
SANDPIPER, Western	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(5) MC11	

SANDPIPER, Least	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC09; JEF-SRSP 9/18(2) MC11; JEF-TP 9/18(120) MC05
DUNLIN	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC07
DOWITCHER, Short-billed	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC09
DOWITCHER, Long-billed	(18-18)	JEF-MURW 9/18(45) MC09
GULL, Laughing	(4-19)	JEF 10 reps(1439)
GULL, Ring-billed	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(1) MC11
GULL, Lesser Black-backed	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(1) MC11
TERN, Least	(12-18)	JEF-SW 9/12(20) SM; JEF-SRSP 9/18(13) MC11
TERN, Gull-billed	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(17) MC11
TERN, Caspian	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC06; JEF 9/18(5) MC09; JEF-SRSP 9/18(87) MC11
TERN, Black	(18-18)	JEF-MCFW 9/18(3) MC12; JEF-TP 9/18(7) MC05
TERN, Common	(18-18)	JEF-SRSP 9/18(1) MC11
TERN, Forster's	(18-29)	JEF 7 reps(189)
TERN, Royal	(18-18)	JEF 2 reps(191)
TERN, Sandwich	(18-18)	JEF-MURW 9/18(2) MC09; JEF-SRSP 9/18(6) MC11
PIGEON, Rock	(2-28)	JEF 15 reps(967)
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	(2-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 9 reps(60)
DOVE, White-winged	(1-30)	JEF 20 reps(308)
DOVE, Mourning	(4-29)	HAI 5 reps(44); JEF 18 reps(664)
DOVE, Inca	(2-20)	HAI 2 reps(5); JEF 5 reps(7)
CUCKOO, Yellow-billed	(4-15)	JEF 6 reps(20)
CUCKOO, species	(5-5)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW
OWL, Barn	(4-28)	JEF-SW 9/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/18(2) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(3) JAW; JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH
OWL, Great Horned	(5-26)	HAI 9/26(2) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(2) MHW
OWL, Barred	(4-18)	HAI-SW 9/4(1) MG; JEF-TP 9/18(1) MC05
WILL'S-WIDOW, Chuck-	(5-28)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/18(2) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(3) JM; JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH
SWIFT, Chimney	(2-30)	JEF 10 reps(459)
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.	(1-30)	HAI 8 reps(17); JEF 53 reps(1154)
HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous	(18-18)	JEF-BMT 9/18(3) MC03
HUMMINGBIRD species	(18-19)	JEF 2 reps(4)
KINGFISHER, Belted	(4-29)	JEF 8 reps(12)
WOODPECKER, Red-headed	(7-30)	JEF 7 reps(10)
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied	(2-30)	HAI 2 reps(3); JEF 16 reps(51)
WOODPECKER, Downy	(2-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 39 reps(64)
FLICKER, Northern	(18-30)	JEF-BMT 9/18(1) MC03; JEF-BMT 9/24(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
WOODPECKER, Pileated	(1-29)	HAI 3 reps(3); JEF 6 reps(13)
FLYCATCHER, Olive-sided	(12-19)	JEF-SW 9/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/16(1) CC; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JAW
WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern	(4-30)	JEF 17 reps(61)
FLYCATCHER, Yellow-bellied	(4-26)	JEF-SW 9/4(3) JAW; JEF-SW 9/4(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/12(2) SM; JEF-SW 9/15(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/18(3) MC10; JEF-SW 9/26(2) JAW
FLYCATCHER, Acadian	(5-18)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF 9/18(1) MC02
FLYCATCHER, Traill's	(4-30)	JEF-SW 9/4(6) JAW; JEF-SW 9/4(2) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(5) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(10) MHW; JEF-SW 9/11(1) JR; JEF-SW 9/12(3) SM; JEF-SW 9/15(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/18(4) MC10; JEF-TP 9/18(1) MC05; JEF 9/19(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/19(4) JAW; JEF-SW 9/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
FLYCATCHER, Least	(4-30)	JEF 10 reps(19)
EMPIDONAX species	(4-28)	JEF 9 reps(97)
FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested	(4-30)	JEF 14 reps(49)
KINGBIRD, Eastern	(4-26)	HAI 1 rep(20); JEF 12 reps(68)
FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed	(18-29)	JEF 12 reps(102)
SHRIKE, Loggerhead	(12-29)	JEF 16 reps(103)
VIREO, White-eyed	(5-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 10 reps(33)
VIREO, Yellow-throated	(18-27)	JEF 9/18(1) MC07; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/27(1) RHJ
VIREO, Blue-headed	(16-27)	JEF-SW 9/16(1) CC; JEF-BMT 9/27(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 9/27(2) RHJ
VIREO, Warbling	(5-19)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/18(2) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JAW
VIREO, Philadelphia	(26-30)	JEF-SW 9/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/30(2) JHH
VIREO, Red-eyed	(4-27)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 9 reps(18)
JAY, Blue	(4-26)	HAI 8 reps(72); JEF 12 reps(102)
CROW, American	(18-26)	JEF 5 reps(35)
CROW, Fish	(18-18)	JEF-BMT 9/18(10) MC03
CROW, species	(18-18)	JEF 2 reps(6)
SWALLOW, Tree	(4-18)	JEF-SW 9/4(2) JAW; JEF 9/18(6) MC07; JEF-SW 9/18(7) MC10; JEF-TP 9/18(5) MC05
SWALLOW, N Rough-winged	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(4) MC07; JEF-TP 9/18(1) MC05
SWALLOW, Bank	(11-11)	JEF-SW 9/11(1) JR
SWALLOW, Cliff	(18-18)	JEF-BMT 9/18(1) MC03; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10
SWALLOW, Barn	(6-29)	JEF 17 reps(240)
SWALLOW species	(28-28)	JEF 9/28(2) JAW
CHICKADEE, Carolina	(1-24)	HAI 11 reps(26); JEF 7 reps(30)
TITMOUSE, Tufted	(1-22)	HAI 4 reps(10); JEF 2 reps(11)
WREN, Carolina	(1-26)	HAI 5 reps(11); JEF 10 reps(44)
WREN, House	(28-30)	JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/30(3) JHH
WREN, Marsh	(18-18)	JEF 9/18(1) MC09
KINGLET, Ruby-crowned	(19-30)	JEF 5 reps(17)
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray	(4-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 14 reps(129)
BLUEBIRD, Eastern	(18-18)	JEF 2 reps(19)
ROBIN, American	(18-29)	JEF 4 reps(18)
CATBIRD, Gray	(4-30)	HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 8 reps(15)
MOCKINGBIRD, Northern	(4-29)	HAI 6 reps(20); JEF 17 reps(294)
THRASHER, Brown	(2-30)	HAI 4 reps(4); JEF 9 reps(23)
STARLING, European	(18-29)	JEF 14 reps(1288)
WARBLER, Blue-winged	(5-27)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/16(1) CC; JEF-SW 9/27(1) RHJ
WARBLER, Tennessee	(12-30)	JEF 6 reps(8)
WARBLER, Orange-crowned	(27-27)	JEF-BMT 9/27(1) RHJ
WARBLER, Nashville	(5-30)	JEF 11 reps(47)
PARULA, Northern	(5-30)	JEF 13 reps(21)
WARBLER, Yellow	(4-30)	JEF 15 reps(52)
WARBLER, Chestnut-sided	(5-30)	JEF-SW 9/5(1) HM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
WARBLER, Magnolia	(5-30)	JEF 8 reps(14)
WARBLER, Black-thr. Green	(5-28)	JEF 7 reps(8)
WARBLER, Blackburnian	(4-19)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JM
WARBLER, Yellow-throated	(15-19)	JEF-SW 9/15(1) JHH; JEF 9/18(1) MC07; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JM
WARBLER, Pine	(4-18)	JEF 4 reps(12)
WARBLER, Prairie	(4-28)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(2) MHW; JEF-SW 9/15(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH
WARBLER, Palm	(30-30)	JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
WARBLER, Cerulean	(11-16)	JEF-SW 9/11(1) JR; JEF-SW 9/16(1) CC
WARBLER, Black-and-white	(4-30)	JEF 14 reps(46)

REDSTART, American	(4-30)	JEF 15 reps(34)
WARBLER, Prothonotary	(4-28)	JEF 10 reps(12)
OVENBIRD	(4-30)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/16(1) CC; JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
WATERTHRUSH, Northern	(4-19)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 8 reps(20)
WATERTHRUSH, Louisiana	(4-4)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JAW
WARBLER, Kentucky	(4-4)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JAW
WARBLER, Mourning	(4-30)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/4(2) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) JM; JEF-SW 9/5(1) MHW; JEF-SW 9/15(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/19(2) JM; JEF-SW 9/28(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
YELLOWTHROAT, Common	(5-30)	JEF 10 reps(37)
WARBLER, Hooded	(4-30)	JEF 9 reps(10)
WARBLER, Wilson's	(4-30)	JEF 8 reps(15)
WARBLER, Canada	(4-19)	JEF 8 reps(16)
CHAT, Yellow-breasted	(4-30)	JEF 14 reps(52)
SPARROW, Clay-colored	(18-19)	JEF-SW 9/18(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/19(1) JAW
SPARROW, Savannah	(12-15)	JEF-SW 9/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/15(1) JHH
SPARROW, Seaside	(18-18)	JEF 4 reps(52)
SPARROW, Lincoln's	(28-28)	JEF-SW 9/28(4) JHH
TANAGER, Summer	(1-30)	HAI 5 reps(5); JEF 4 reps(4)
CARDINAL, Northern	(1-29)	HAI 16 reps(960); JEF 11 reps(83)
GROSBEAK, Rose-breasted	(4-4)	JEF-SW 9/4(1) JAW
GROSBEAK, Blue	(4-26)	JEF 8 reps(32)
BUNTING, Indigo	(4-30)	JEF 11 reps(39)
BUNTING, Painted	(4-30)	JEF 12 reps(45)
DICKCISSEL	(4-19)	JEF 8 reps(24)
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	(4-26)	JEF 11 reps(212)
GRACKLE, Common	(5-29)	JEF 10 reps(197)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	(4-29)	JEF 11 reps(185)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	(4-29)	JEF 14 reps(785)
GRACKLE, Gt./Boat tailed	(4-29)	JEF 3 reps(35)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	(18-28)	JEF 4 reps(128)
BLACKBIRD species	(19-29)	JEF 2 reps(200)
ORIOLE, Orchard	(4-27)	JEF 8 reps(35)
ORIOLE, Baltimore	(4-30)	JEF 12 reps(69)
FINCH, House	(2-27)	HAI 4 reps(5); JEF 9 reps(47)
SPARROW, House	(1-26)	HAI 1 rep(100); JEF 10 reps(230)
Number of Species		182
Number of Individuals		88134

County Abbreviations

HAI — Hardin; JEF — Jefferson

Location Codes

BMT — Beaumont; MCFW — McFaddin NWR; MURW — J. D. Murphree WMA, west of Taylor Bayou; NEDR — Nederland; SILS — Silsbee; SRSP — Sea Rim State Park; SW — Sabine Woods; TP — Tyrrell Park incl. Cattail Marsh; TX87 — Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP

Observer Abbreviations

CC — Cody Conway; CSL — Christine Sliva; HM — John Haynes and Steve Mayes; JAW — John Whittle; JHH — John H. Haynes; JW — John and Jana Whittle; JM — John Mariani; JR — Janet Rathjen; MC01 — Migration Count Area 1; MC02 — Migration Count Area 2; MC03 — Migration Count Area 3; MC04 — Migration Count Area 4; MC05 — Migration Count Area 5; MC06 — Migration Count Area 6; MC07 — Migration Count Area 7/8; MC09 — Migration Count Area 9; MC10 — Migration Count Area 10; MC11 — Migration Count Area 11; MC12 — Migration Count Area 12; MG — Melanie Goetsell; MHW — Steve Mayes, John Haynes, John Whittle; RHJ — Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; SM — Steve Mayes

Request for Loggerhead Shrike Sightings

Loggerhead Shrikes are declining across much of their range. In Canada, the *migrans* subspecies is considered critically endangered, with less than 25 pairs found in 2010. The vast majority of pairs now breed in Ontario. An extremely active and multi-faceted recovery program is underway for this species in Ontario, including a captive breeding and release program. This program has been releasing approximately 100 juvenile shrikes annually since 2006. While much is known and has been learned about this species, a critical piece of the puzzle is still missing: where exactly do these birds spend the winter? To maximize our chances of locating wintering areas and better define migration routes we will be coloring the breast of released young produced from the captive breeding program, to make them more detectable by birders. Birds have been released in July and August. Birds will have an extensive area of their breast colored in green, blue or purple. All released birds, and a large proportion of the wild population, are also color banded. If you see a shrike with a colored breast and/or wearing bands, please report it to Wildlife Preservation Canada at (email: jessica@wildlifepreservation.ca, tel.: 519-836-9314, fax: 519-836-8840). We will need details about specific location (GPS coordinates are ideal, but not essential) and color(s) (breast and/or bands) seen.

Request for Participants

We are wondering if you would be able to help us out with a research study being conducted this semester at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Many birds are killed each year by various forms of human technology and activity. Some of these human-made hazards attract much more attention than do others. We are interested in how various factors that have been shown to influence people's perceptions of the risks posed by nuclear power or sources of water pollution (e.g., is it a 'new' hazard, how 'natural' does the hazard seem) may also contribute to peoples' perceptions of various hazards to birds. This information will be useful in helping us strategize in campaigns to raise awareness with regards to different kinds of threats to birds and other natural systems.

We would greatly appreciate it if you could fill out the survey found at the following link:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22BDFEJWXT>

Your participation will remain anonymous and confidential. The survey takes about 25 minutes to complete.

At the end of the survey, you will be re-directed to a separate page upon which you can request a summary of what we find. This research project has met Muhlenberg College's Institutional Review policy requirements.

If you have any questions about the project, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Jeffrey Rudski at rudski@muhlenberg.edu

Jeffrey Rudski, Ph.D

Professor of Psychology

Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA 18104

Field Trip to Sabine Woods – 23 October 2010

Unpredictability is the hallmark of migration whether it is in the spring or fall. Our local weather can greatly affect what you see as can the weather far away. Much as in spring, in fall migration birders wait for cold fronts to reach the area. The conventional wisdom is that the fronts will push migrating birds down to the coast allowing for them to concentrate in our coastal woodlots. There are times when, after a front, a fall day can be just as birdy as a spring migration day – though the species seen might be slightly different. But sometimes, lots of birds can show up even without benefit of a frontal passage. This is what was experienced by more than a dozen birders from the Golden Triangle Audubon Society on the October field trip to Sabine Woods.

It was immediately obvious that hummingbirds would be easy to see on the day. Several of these tiny birds zipped around in front of the group and hummingbirds feeding on the sweet sap around acorn caps in the live oak trees would be a common sight on the day. All of the hummers that could be seen well were Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers flitted around the woods and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were everywhere! A flock of White-winged Doves zipped over the woods while a Carolina Chickadee called from inside the woods. Both departing Eastern Wood-Pewees and arriving Eastern Phoebes hawked for insects from tree tops. Recently arrived House Wrens had already started fussing while a lingering Common Nighthawk searched for a quiet place to sleep the day away.

Migration and warblers go hand in hand on the upper Texas coast and this day proved to be a good one for these colorful little birds. Nashville Warblers were abundant in the weedy areas outside the woods while a Tennessee Warbler worked the tree tops. American Redstarts actively chased insects while Black and White Warblers deliberately inspected the tree trunks and branches. A few of our common wintering warblers were present on the day including secretive Orange-crowned Warblers and vocal Yellow-rumped Warblers. A Yellow-throated Warbler was a nice bonus. Northern Parulas, Magnolia Warblers and Hooded Warblers were all seen on the day but the most numerous warbler was definitely the Palm Warbler. Individuals of this species displayed their tail-pumping behavior in every corner of the property from tree top to ground level! Perhaps the most unusual warbler seen was a spectacular adult male Canada Warbler. This warbler showed off for the group and was well appreciated especially considering that most of his species are already in Latin America!

Raptors were also well represented on the day. A distant Osprey was not well seen by the group but a cooperative Merlin made up for it by perching in a dead willow tree for everyone to admire. A Cooper's Hawk made several passes through the woods hunting for unwary song birds to snack on! Broad-winged Hawks also patrolled the woods, flying over it and perching in trees inside. A Northern Harrier cruised low over the grassy areas north of the woods. A pair of Crested Caracaras perched in a dead snag behind the woods. These birds have been seen in the same area on a number of

occasions and one of the birds appeared to be carrying nesting material. *Birdlife of Houston, Galveston and the Upper Texas Coast* indicates that Caracaras may lay eggs as early as February so perhaps these birds are planning to build a nest in the sanctuary soon! Nocturnal raptors were also easily seen with several Barn Owls flushed (repeatedly) from trees in the western section of woods.

Seed-eating birds made a good showing as well. A very green young or female Painted Bunting was seen by many while mostly brown Indigo Buntings were seen by everyone as they inhabited all the weedy areas near the pond in good numbers. Blue Grosbeaks lingered just outside the woods while a Rose-breasted Grosbeak (more a fruit-eater than a seed-eater) hung out near the small pond. A lone Dickcissel made an appearance. Sparrows arrived in small numbers including Lincoln's, Swamp and White-crowned Sparrows. A single Vesper Sparrow made an appearance at the sanctuary, not the common location for this bird.

Throw in abundant Brown Thrashers, shy Gray Catbirds and a Baltimore Oriole and it's easy to see what a great day it turned out to be for a field trip. Even though there was no clear weather event to precipitate such an abundance of birds, the birders were happy to take advantage of the bounty of birds however they ended up at Sabine Woods. It just goes to show that a trip down to the coast during migration (whether spring or fall) is always worthwhile because you never know what you might find!

The following species were recorded at (and near) Sabine Woods by the trip leaders:

Great Egret (1); Black Vulture (2); Osprey (1); Northern Harrier (3); Sharp-shinned Hawk (1); Cooper's Hawk (2); Red-shouldered Hawk (1); Broad-winged Hawk (2); Red-tailed Hawk (1); Crested Caracara (2); Merlin (1); Greater Yellowlegs (1); Long-billed Curlew (1); Rock Pigeon (25); White-winged Dove (35); Mourning Dove (2); Inca Dove (2); Barn Owl (6); Common Nighthawk (3); Chuck-will's-widow (1); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (50); Red-bellied Woodpecker (1); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1); Downy Woodpecker (2); Northern Flicker (1); Eastern Wood-Pewee (3); Eastern Phoebe (2); Loggerhead Shrike (1); White-eyed Vireo (1); Blue Jay (4); Tree Swallow (100); Northern Rough-winged Swallow (10); Carolina Chickadee (2); Carolina Wren (1); House Wren (2); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (25); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (20); Gray Catbird (3); Northern Mockingbird (2); Tennessee Warbler (2); Orange-crowned Warbler (2); Nashville Warbler (8); Northern Parula (2); Magnolia Warbler (4); Yellow-rumped Warbler (4); Black-throated Green Warbler (2); Yellow-throated Warbler (1); Palm Warbler (30); Black-and-white Warbler (1); American Redstart (4); Common Yellowthroat (1); Hooded Warbler (2); Canada Warbler (1); Vesper Sparrow (1); Swamp Sparrow (2); White-crowned Sparrow (2); Northern Cardinal (2); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (1); Indigo Bunting (30); Painted Bunting (1); Dickcissel (1); Red-winged Blackbird (10); Common Grackle (20); Great-tailed Grackle (5); Baltimore Oriole (1); 65 Species.

Steve Mayes

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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 National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250. 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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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 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>.

-8-

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