

## Sea Rim SP CBC – 28 December 2017

A cold wind and cold temperatures greeted participants in the Sea Rim State Park count on December 28. Although this weather did not encourage birds to be active and visible, the count turned up an interesting list of species rare enough in the area to need details. A Great Kiskadee which has been seen regularly at Sabine Woods since April 2017 was recorded on the count, and others have been regularly recorded in nearby areas of Texas and southwest Louisiana. Groove billed Anis have now been seen on the count for three consecutive years. This year's seven individuals were in the parking area at Texas Point NWR. By December, most Swainson's Hawks are wintering in the pampas of Argentina. But each winter, one or two turn up in winter on the Upper Texas Coast, and an apparent second year bird was found near Backridge Road (just north of Sabine Pass). Lingered Warblers seen included a Northern Waterthrush and a Nashville Warbler in private wooded areas south of Backridge Road. Finally, two species that are reasonably common a short distance away from the coast, but not usually in the count circle were Wood Duck and Chipping Sparrow. Unfortunate circumstances prevented the interior of Texas Point NWR from being covered, and the northeast corner of McFaddin NWR from being other than from Clam Lake Road, but likely this will significantly impact only the numbers of some common water birds such as Green-winged Teal, Gadwall and American Coots. The Salt Bayou Unit of J D Murphree WMA was covered, so some individuals of most, but not all, expected species were counted. The tentative total number of species seen was 146.

Among the expected species, light geese (Snow and Ross's) were seen in small numbers, possibly reflecting their unwillingness of fly in the strong wind, rendering them less visible to the counters. Ring-necked Duck was the most prominent miss among the ducks, but Redhead and Greater Scaup were also not found. Although Greater Scaup tends to be a more seagoing species than Lesser Scaup, it is more often identified in ponds near the coast rather than in the Gulf of Mexico. So the reduced coverage may be responsible for the species not being seen. Red-breasted Mergansers seem to be scarce this winter, and was also not found.

The beach along Texas Point NWR was thoroughly covered, and that was just as well, because the beach birds were mostly there rather than along the Sea Rim beach. The plovers were there, but the Whimbrels that have been there in recent years were not, suggesting that the very small wintering contingent has moved to somewhere else. It should be noted, however, that beach conditions are such that the extreme western part near Texas Point itself has not been accessible for the past two or three years. This has been a good year for American Woodcock throughout the region, so finding two in separate locations was not completely unexpected. Terns were present in reduced numbers both along the Texas Point and Sea Rim beaches.

For the most part, woodlands in the count circle are limited to Sabine Woods, the woods at the end of Backridge Road and a few pockets elsewhere. The species normally found in woodlands were well represented, particularly warblers, including Northern Waterthrush and Nashville Warbler. The last mentioned two are species that do winter in very small numbers along the Upper Texas Coast. Gnatcatchers, kinglets, thrushes, and catbirds were all found in good numbers.

GOOSE, Snow (65); GOOSE, Snow (White) (5); GOOSE, Gtr White-fronted (1); GOOSE, species (125); DUCK, Wood (1); TEAL, Blue-winged (15); SHOVELER, Northern (43); GADWALL (288); WIGEON, American (50); DUCK, Mottled (4); PINTAIL, Northern (125); TEAL, Green-winged (71); CANVASBACK (75); SCAUP, Lesser (209); SCAUP, Species (30); BUFFLEHEAD (10); MERGANSER, Hooded (18); DUCK, Ruddy (124); LOON, Common (3); GREBE, Pied-billed (36); GREBE, Horned (2); GREBE, Eared (2); CORMORANT, Neotropic (153); CORMORANT, Double-crested (112); CORMORANT species (36); ANHINGA (11); PELICAN, American White (413); PELICAN, Brown (136); HERON, Great Blue (52); EGRET, Great (254); EGRET, Snowy (90); HERON, Little Blue (1); HERON, Tricolored (19); HERON, Green (1); NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned (28); IBIS, White (499); IBIS, White-faced (4); IBIS, Plegadis species (402); SPOONBILL, Roseate (39); VULTURE, Black (19); VULTURE, Turkey (35); OSPREY (11); KITE, White-tailed (8); HARRIER, Northern (20); HAWK, Sharp-shinned (1); HAWK, Cooper's (3); HAWK, White-tailed (1); HAWK, Red-shouldered (1); HAWK, Swainson's (1); HAWK, Red-tailed (35); RAIL, King (2); RAIL, Clapper (10); RAIL, Virginia (2); SORA (2); GALLINULE, Common (36); COOT, American (293); STILT, Black-necked (23); AVOCET, American (247); PLOVER, Black-bellied (42); PLOVER, Snowy (6); PLOVER, Semipalmated (15); PLOVER, Piping (7); KILLDEER (126); CURLEW, Long-billed (2); GODWIT, Marbled (7); SANDERLING (159); DUNLIN (1179); SANDPIPER, Least (11); SANDPIPER, Western (44); DOWITCHER, Short-billed (22); DOWITCHER, Long-billed (5); DOWITCHER, species (25); WOODCOCK, American (2); SNIPE, Wilson's (23); SANDPIPER, Spotted (4); YELLOWLEGS, Greater (10); WILLET (30); YELLOWLEGS, Lesser (3); GULL, Bonaparte's (4); GULL, Laughing (134); GULL, Ring-billed (122); GULL, Herring (34); TERN, Caspian (12); TERN, Forster's (33); TERN, Royal (55); PIGEON, Rock (39); COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian (7); DOVE, Inca (2); DOVE, White-winged (26); DOVE, Mourning (34); ANI, Groove-billed (7); OWL, Barn (1); OWL, Great Horned (2); KINGFISHER, Belted (30); WOODPECKER, Red-bellied (7); SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (2); WOODPECKER, Downy (10); FLICKER, Northern (3); CARACARA, Crested (3); KESTREL, American (17); MERLIN (2); FALCON, Peregrine

(2); PHOEBE, Eastern (32); FLYCATCHER, Vermilion (3); KISKADEE, Great (1); SHRIKE, Loggerhead (29); VIREO, Blue-headed (3); JAY, Blue (17); SWALLOW, Tree (38); CHICKADEE, Carolina (2); CREEPER, Brown (1); WREN, House (12); WREN, Sedge (13); WREN, Marsh (5); WREN, Carolina (1); GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (27); KINGLET, Golden-crowned (11); KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (46); THRUSH, Hermit (8); ROBIN, American (10); CATBIRD, Gray (11); THRASHER, Brown (13); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (39); STARLING, European (299); PIPIT, American (1); WATERTHRUSH, Northern (1); WARBLER, Black-and-white (2); WARBLER, Orange-crowned (32); WARBLER, Nashville (1); YELLOWTHROAT, Common (17); WARBLER, Palm (5); WARBLER, Pine (3); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (21); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) (111); WARBLER, Wilson's (10); SPARROW, Nelson's (2); SPARROW, Seaside (12); SPARROW, Chipping (1); SPARROW, White-crowned (1); SPARROW, White-throated (3); SPARROW, Savannah (152); SPARROW, Song (17); SPARROW, Lincoln's (2); SPARROW, Swamp (38); CARDINAL, Northern (21); MEADOWLARK, Eastern (42); BLACKBIRD, Red-winged (823); GRACKLE, Common (73); GRACKLE, Boat-tailed (236); GRACKLE, Great-tailed (230); COWBIRD, Brown-headed (135); GOLDFINCH, American (3); SPARROW, House (3); SPECIES, total (146); INDIVIDUALS, total (9231)

Observers (20); Parties (10); Party-hours total (31.30); Party-miles total (46.50); Party-hours on foot (23.00); Party-miles on foot (11.90); Party-hours by car (29.30); Party-miles by car (46.30); Party-hours by 4-wheeler (5.00); Party-miles by 4-wheeler (5.00)

Participants:

Mary Carter, Howard Davis, Liz Dennis, Ashley Fuselier, Sherry Gibson, Stephanie Goehring, Bill Graber, John Haynes, Sheila Hebert, Thomas Hellweg, Steve Mayes, Karen McCormick; Frank Ohrt, Sherrie Roden. T. J. Senters, Jenny Shuffield, Monique Slaughter, Harlan Stewart, Jana and John Whittle.