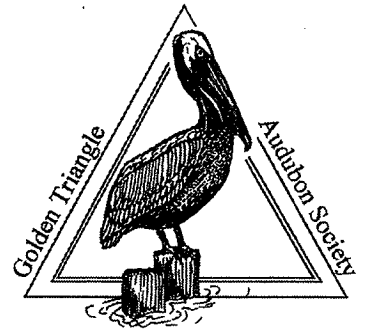


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 25 No 9

September 2019

Membership Meeting
Thursday September 20, 2019 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

Birding in Northern Minnesota

An illustrated account by Dana Nelson and Harlan Stewart

Eleven intrepid member birders set out on June 22 for what turned out to be a nine-day trip to Minnesota. The principal objective was to observe breeding Common Loons on Lake Vermilion and explore the birds in the nearby land areas. The headquarters were at the Spring Bay Resort on the northwest corner of the lake. The group had the full time use of a 13-passenger pontoon boat.

In common with most lakes in the northern tier of the middle part of the United States, there are lots of nesting Common Loons, and the trip was timed to coincide with the hatching of baby loons. The loons are reasonably tolerant of boats – the lake is a popular fishing destination – and allowed quite close approach. There are also nesting northern Bald Eagles and one memorable sight was to watch an eagle swimming! Common Goldeneye is a common nesting species, and Trumpeter Swans are present. On land, two of the sought after species are woodpeckers: the Three-toed Woodpecker, and the rarer Black-backed Woodpecker, also a species with only three toes, and both very restricted in their US range.

Other species that we see in Southeast Texas in migration only nest in the area, including many warblers, Bobolinks and other 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. We thank Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau for providing the refreshments for this meeting.

The Brown Pelican

Vol. 25, No. 9 September 2019
Issue number 264

Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2019)

President

Dana Nelson

Vice President

Sheila Hebert

Treasurer

Harlan Stewart

Secretary

John Whittle

Directors-at-Large

Edra Bogucki

Michael Cooper

Gerald Duhon

Sherry Gibson

John Haynes

Gary Kelley

Randy Lewis

Steve Mayes

Christine Sliva

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Program

Jana Whittle

Field Trips

Steve Mayes

Conservation

Gary Kelley

Membership, Publicity

Sheila Hebert

Education

Volunteer needed

Webmaster

Jeff Pittman (geojeff@geojeff.org)

Facebook Administrators

John Mariani

Jana Whittle

Newsletter Distribution

Mary Stafford

Newsletter Editor

John Whittle

(gtaudubon@aol.com)

The Brown Pelican is published monthly except July by the Golden Triangle Audubon Society, P. O. Box 1292, Nederland, Texas 77627-1292
email: gtaudubon@aol.com

Calendar of Events

*Important Note: GTAS Field Trip notices published here should always be regarded as needing confirmation just before the date. Changes will always be posted on the web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org. Confirmation of the location will also normally be available at the Membership Meeting that is usually, but **not always**, two days prior to each trip, or by contacting Field Trip Committee chair, Steve Mayes at gtaudubon@aol.com.*

Thursday September 19, 2019. Membership Meeting. Details on page 1

Saturday September 21, 2019. Fall Migration Count. A Jefferson-County wide all-day count. Contact John Whittle (gtaudubon@aol.com) for more details or to volunteer to help.

Saturday September 28, 2019. Field Trip to Smith Point Hawk Watch.

Our leaders will be there from about 8:30 a.m. Hopefully, this will be close to a peak in this year's Broad-winged Hawk migration, but there will always be some hawks. Any day from mid-September through mid or late October should produce a good number of migrating hawks.

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 1/2 miles until it meets FM562. Follow FM562 14 miles to Smith Point. Continue straight until almost reaching the bay, and turn left, bearing left again to the parking area next to the Hawk Watch Tower on the Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area. It takes at least 90 minutes from the Golden Triangle to reach the site. This Field Trip is much more a come and go as you wish trip, and help on hawk identification is always available on the tower during Hawk Watch season!

Our leaders may lead a group into the nearby woods looking for migrants, but you may stay on the tower if you wish. Mosquitoes are not normally a problem on the tower. Availability of food and fuel is essentially non-existent in Smith Point, so bring your lunch!

Historically, the peak of Broad-wing Hawk migration was September

25, although in recent years at Smith Point, it has tended to be later and less uniform. The exact peak day probably depends more on the weather on the migration path from Pennsylvania down to east Texas, and particularly on the two or three days prior. Should a cold front pass through, the days immediately following usually have a north wind, and there tend to be more migrating hawks of all species on those days. For more information, contact Steve Mayes (gtaudubon@aol.com).

The Smith Point Hawk Watch is conducted every day from August 15 through the end of October by the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory. If you cannot make it on this day, you can always go yourself or with friends, as there will always be identification help on the tower.

The day after a late September cold front – often the first fall cold front of the season – often produces a good number of hawks.

Saturday October 5, 2019. Sabine Woods Work Day. 7:30 a.m. to noon. Contact John Whittle (409-722-4193 or johnawhittle@aol.com) to offer to help or for more details.

Thursday October 17 2019. Membership Meeting. See next month's *Brown Pelican* for details.

Saturday October 19, 2018. Field Trip to Sabine Woods. Leader Steve Mayes. Meet at Sabine Woods, which is 4.1 miles west of Sabine Pass on the north side of Highway 87 at 7:30 a.m. Further details in next month's issue. This trip should find some of the later fall migrants, but not be unpleasantly hot. Southbound migrants often move on the north winds that follow the passage of a cold front.



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

Issues at Local Birding Hotspots

Cattail Marsh

As many of you have seen, the cell over which the boardwalk runs (cell 2) has become choked with water hyacinth this summer. Generally speaking, birds will not use a cell covered in hyacinth, although Purple Gallinules sometimes will. Ducks, the prime attraction at Cattail Marsh, need open water. The Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau in conjunction with other City Departments including Water Utilities has arranged to have a contractor mechanically clear the hyacinth from the vicinity of the boardwalk. The contractor has a boat equipped with a blade to push the hyacinth to the edge of the cell from where it has to be raked onto the bank and allowed to dry out and die, a somewhat labor intensive process. The contractor hopes to complete the removal by October. We must always bear in mind that the primary function of Cattail Marsh is to serve as the final stage of Beaumont's waste-water treatment. However, hyacinth is not desirable for that process either, although the large area involved presents a very significant problem.

We are familiar with this problem on a much smaller scale at Sabine Woods. We constantly monitor the main pond for hyacinth, and immediately rake it to the side and out of the pond to dry and die. The hyacinth will spread over a large area if the first few plants are not caught within a week or two. We are careful to keep the Sabine Woods ponds clear of hyacinth in spring, but each year we seem to have a new infestation. We suspect small pieces of hyacinth (from which it will grow!) come in each year on the thick legs and feet of Night-Herons. Obviously, the issues at Sabine Woods are on a very much smaller scale than those at Cattail Marsh and therefore much more tractable. If the water level can be reduced to the point where hyacinth is in damp mud rather than water, it can be killed by spraying with glyphosate (Roundup or a generic equivalent). It can also be killed while floating with the aquatic formulation of glyphosate (Rodeo or a generic version or one or two other herbicides). However, at Cattail Marsh, the water leaving the facility has to meet TCEQ standards, and use of any herbicide is problematic.

It is also proposed to address other problems with the Education Center building, including pressure washing the exterior on a regular basis, and removing weeds from the garden and drip areas. Growth this year has been abnormally luxurious. Problems with dirt daubers and red wasps will be addressed.

Sabine Woods

We are always grateful for all the volunteer help we get on Work Days, which helps keep the Sanctuary accessible and birdable as well as attractive to the birds especially migrants. We are planning our fall Work Day for Saturday 5 October, but we would welcome individual help addressing some of the problems prior to that. We generally brush hog the areas

outside the main wooded area twice a year, typically in early May and late September. This year, growth has been greater than normal, although not particularly thick. We are hoping to use a heavy duty riding mower, preferably a zero turn type in the very near future to mow the area at the main entrance, the meadow area just east of the entrance, and the area around the newer trees in the eastern section. We expect to have to contract to have this done and later to have the north section brushhogged as usual in the fall. We would like to mow the paths outside the woods that are somewhat overgrown also.

In the middle of August, the contractor mowing the edges of Highway 87 mowed over the water meter serving the Woods and essentially destroyed it. Fortunately, this is the city's responsibility, and they have replaced it and reattached our line. We had ourselves marked the meter with T-posts and flagging tape, but this was apparently not enough. Slightly nearer Sabine Pass, they mowed over a two inch fire hydrant, causing a massive leak there. This was likely what caused the city to address the problems quickly, as the line along the side of the highway serves Sea Rim State Park and McFaddin NWR as well as us. However, our back flow preventer, located well inside our property, now needs at the very least a new gasket and probably an overhaul, and that will be our responsibility. We are working on getting this functioning again. We are also considering additional measures to protect the water meter against future damage.

As we do each fall, we are working on cutting the giant ragweed to prevent it from going to seed. This is a manual process, as we do not want to use herbicide unless there is no practical alternative. Giant Ragweed is supposedly an annual species, but we never seem to be able to completely prevent seeding, so there are some areas to deal with each year. Ragweed pollen is a powerful allergen, and therefore highly undesirable.

Pilot Station Road (a.k.a. Jetty Road)

As many of you know, this road has deteriorated badly over the last couple of years, to the point that the huge hole near the start (just beyond the bridge over Texas Bayou) essentially swallowed a pick-up truck. The road is used extensively by fishermen year round, and they got together and forcefully brought it to the attention of the City Council in Port Arthur, and extracted a promise to work on the road. The Coast Guard has a radar tower and antenna site at the end of the road, so there is a greater public purpose in keeping the road passable, although presumably the Coast Guard has access to very large wheeled vehicles. Although we do not expect the road to be paved in its entirety, we hope it will be made passable at least along the first mile or so. The salt cedars that line the road towards its end provide good birding for migrants in the spring and fall, and for sparrows in the last fall. These salt cedars were significantly affected by the hurricanes and associated storm surges, but have recovered considerably.

Cattail Marsh Bird Count August 2019

Starting on August 6, we initiated a bird survey from the porch of the Education Building at Cattail Marsh in Beaumont each Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The porch provides an elevated vantage point with good visibility across the Marsh. It is planned to continue these surveys through to the end of October, and you are welcome to join the counters any Tuesday or Thursday. It is suggested that you bring a cup and ice; they do have a water fountain. We do have access to the bathroom in the Education Building. Also do bring binoculars and also a scope if you have one.

This is a pilot project to determine if such a survey could produce useful results. There is speculation that migrating raptors, possibly including Swallow-tail Kites, but also kettles of Broad-winged Hawks later in September may proceed along or close to Interstate 10 as they work their way westwards before turning south somewhere in the vicinity of Houston. The count will also give some insight into the movements of some of the water related species, most especially Anhinga, but possibly also Wood Storks.

The results of the August counts are in the adjacent table. While many of the species observed are taking advantage of the Cattail Marsh habitat, others are genuine overflying birds. It will be interesting to see if more kettles of Anhinga – the August 29 total includes a kettle of 300 – pass over. The Smith Point Hawk Watch sees many kettles of Anhinga each fall, as well as Wood Storks in addition to the hawks. The Laughing Gull and Vulture numbers are related to the attraction to them of the landfill that is just a short distance southwest of Cattail Marsh. The Golden Triangle Audubon Facebook page has the result each Tuesday and Thursday.

Jana Whittle

Species	6Aug	8Aug	13Aug	15Aug	20Aug	22Aug	27Aug	29Aug
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck		14	1	14	11	8	6	
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	2	1		1	1	1	8	
Wood Duck				4	6	5	3	
Blue-winged Teal					5		2	
Pied-billed Grebe			2	2		2	1	
White-winged Dove								
Mourning Dove		2	2	1	3	2	1	3
Common Nighthawk				1				
Chimney Swift		2	2				1	
Rail species					1	1		
Common Gallinule		1		15	8	5	28	13
American Coot		1	3	1	2	1	1	1
Purple Gallinule	1		3	1	2	2	1	1
Gallinule species		2	2	2				
Black-necked Stilt					3	2		2
Laughing Gull	15	351	8	140	38	49	162	15
Black Tern		13	3	3	1	4	2	
Forster's Tern			1			2		
Wood Stork	1							
Anhinga	5	3	2	2	2	7		353
Neotropic Cormorant	54	40	30	16	20	38	54	7
Least Bittern	2	2		1				
Great Blue Heron	3	5	1	1	2	1	1	1
Great Egret	5	1	1	1	3	9	4	4
Snowy Egret		60	15	20	37	4	10	
Little Blue Heron	2	6	6	8	5	4	4	3
Tricolored Heron	3	1	2	15	1	2	6	4
Cattle Egret		11	20	30	9	41	8	21
Cattle/Snowy Egret	70							
Green Heron	2			1			1	
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron		1		1				1
White Ibis	6	47	8	8	1	119	51	5
White-faced Ibis							1	
Dark Ibis	5	13	17	2	13	6	6	15
Roseate Spoonbill		1			2	3		
Black Vulture			4	14		12	2	7
Turkey Vulture	3	23	11		1	12	1	31
Osprey							1	
Swallow-tailed Kite						1		
Mississippi Kite	10	12	8	11	1	20	1	3
Cooper's Hawk								1
Broad-winged Hawk	1						1	
Swainson's Hawk	2			2			1	
Red-tailed Hawk				2				
Unidentified hawk	4	4		1		5		
Crested Caracara								1
Fish Crow				3				2
Crow species							12	
Purple Martin		1						1
Barn Swallow			1				12	
Cliff Swallow								5
Swallow species			3	20	8	5		44
Carolina Wren								1
European Starling		1						
Red-winged Blackbird	9	2	4	2	11	3	7	5
Common Grackle		1		1	1	2	3	
Boat-tailed Grackle			4	3	3	3	2	
Great-tailed Grackle		2		1		2		
Grackle species				2				

Field Trip to Liberty County – 3 August 2019

Many years ago, Swallow-tailed Kites were fairly common birds with a breeding range across the southeastern United States and up the Mississippi River sometimes as far north as Minnesota. Then came deforestation, shooting and DDT and this magnificent raptor disappeared from most of its U.S. range, maintaining a stronghold in Florida. Not that long ago, it was a rare sight to have a Swallow-tailed Kite soaring overhead on a summer day in Texas. Then DDT was banned, more land was preserved and better protections were placed in wildlife and slowly, surely the Swallow-tailed Kite began a comeback. Now, the Swallow-tailed Kite is starting to reoccupy its former range and again nests in the swamps and forests of southeast Texas. The first real stronghold of the bird on its comeback in Texas was Liberty County. And this fact led to a field trip!

The August Liberty field trip is now a tradition for the Golden Triangle Audubon Society but it did not start out that way. It started when a few birders reported seeing Swallow-tailed Kites regularly in Liberty and a few of our local birders went to check it out. This was at a time when seeing even one Swallow-tailed Kite was a rarity in Texas so seeing several in a day was quite the spectacle. It became an unofficial field trip with just a few birders making the trip to see these charismatic raptors and eventually evolved into the regularly scheduled trip that we have today. Now, the group expects to see multiple kites on the trip including both Swallow-tailed and Mississippi. The 2019 version of the trip would be no different.

The day started with a trip to Liberty Municipal Park. Though kites are the main aim of this field trip, the trip has slowly evolved over the years to be a late breeding/early migration trip as well and this park can be excellent for songbirds. Heading into the woods, White-eyed Vireo was quickly heard calling though it proved harder to see. Carolina Wren was both heard and seen and Northern Cardinal was also fairly cooperative. Walking past a small pond produced several young Green Herons. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was heard in the distance and a Great Crested Flycatcher was seen. A few Blue-gray Gnatcatchers flitted through the trees and an Acadian Flycatcher was heard and eventually seen. Downy, Red-bellied and Pileated Woodpecker were recorded in the park but the group could not locate a Red-headed Woodpecker that is sometimes seen at this location. American Crows called from overhead and a mixed flock of Carolina Chickadees and Tufted Titmice fussed at the birders. A Red-eyed Vireo was seen high in the trees and a flock of White Ibis passed overhead. A few migrant warblers are usually found in the park on this trip but things were a bit quiet on this year's trip.

One Louisiana Waterthrush did eventually put in an appearance along the boardwalk over the creek but the usual Prothonotary Warbler was a no show. All in all, the birding was a little slow in the park on this trip but what did the group find? Swallow-tailed Kites of course! A couple of the black and white raptors cruised over the tree tops giving looks to the alert birders. There were some Mississippi Kites seen from the park as well.

Cruising Highway 90 between Liberty and Dayton is usually worthwhile and often produces good looks at kites. Several new birds were recorded on this part of the trip including a few Anhingas and Little Blue Heron. Soaring Black and Turkey Vultures were noted but there were few true raptors. The few that the group did have? Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites, of course! A very cooperative Swallow-tailed Kite or two hunted the tree tops along the roadside giving great looks to the assembled birders and great shots for the photographers among the group! Satisfied with these sightings, the group moved on to another tradition of this field trip: lunch at Jax in downtown Liberty! Swallow-tailed Kites and some of the best burgers in Texas? What more could a bunch of Texas birders ask for?

Swallow-tailed Kites are now much more common in Texas than they were when the Liberty field trip first started. In fact, this species is now regularly seen in Jefferson during spring migration and likely nests in the county at least some years. These magnificent birds can now be seen in numbers rarely dreamed of just a few years ago. A group of up to 50(!) Swallow-tailed Kites roosted together in one neighborhood in Dayton earlier in the summer. Given that the birds are now more common and easier to see, is there really still a need for the Liberty County trip? I think this group would ask if one really needs an excuse to drive to a nice wooded spot for a chance at migrant landbirds followed by a terrific lunch spot. And you can never have too many looks at Swallow-tailed Kites!

The following species were recorded by the trip leaders: Mourning Dove(4); Yellow-billed Cuckoo(2); Ruby-throated Hummingbird(1); Anhinga(3); Great Blue Heron(1); Great Egret(8); Snowy Egret(4); Little Blue Heron(1); Cattle Egret(30); Green Heron(3); White Ibis(20); Black Vulture(1); Turkey Vulture(9); Swallow-tailed Kite(5); Mississippi Kite(7); Red-bellied Woodpecker(2); Downy Woodpecker(1); Pileated Woodpecker(1); Acadian Flycatcher(2); Great Crested Flycatcher(2); White-eyed Vireo(2); Red-eyed Vireo(1); Blue Jay(1); American Crow(5); Carolina Chickadee(5); Tufted Titmouse(3); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher(3); Carolina Wren(3); European Starling(8); Northern Mockingbird(3); Louisiana Waterthrush(1); Northern Cardinal(7).

Steve Mayes

Field Trip to Bolivar Flats – 17 August 2019

Successful summer birding in southeast Texas often means just getting through it without heat stroke or too many bug bites and if you see a few birds along the way, well, that's a bonus. So, any spot that you can go this time of year that avoids deadly temperatures, copious biting insects and provides lots of birds too? That qualifies as a dream destination! Bolivar Flats is that dream and is as good an August birding spot as any Texas birder could ask for. It's not too bad at other times of year either!

It was not exactly a cool day on the beach for the Golden Triangle Audubon Society's field trip to Bolivar Flats but it was likely cooler there than at any of the inland birding spots. And birds were evident from the start of the trip like the Long-billed Curlew stalking around near the vehicle barrier. Walking away from the vehicles, the group immediately encountered more birds. Sanderlings are ever present on the beaches and were easily spotted on this day. Horned Larks are not so common on the upper Texas coast and Bolivar Flats is one of the best places to look for them. Even here it can often take some looking to find them but not on this trip. The larks were quickly found feeding along the vegetation line and some looks and photos were had as they ducked around the beach plants. Barn Swallows zipped low over the sand and Laughing Gulls called from overhead. A Roseate Spoonbill cruised by and a Ruddy Turnstone was spotted feeding on the beach nearby.

Heading down the beach, many more shorebirds were easily found. The plover family was well represented with all of the expected species present. Large Black-bellied Plovers were found in a variety of plumages including many still in their stunning breeding plumage. Who says shorebirds can't be colorful? Some birders find the smaller plovers difficult to tell apart but Bolivar Flats is the perfect place to sort them out as many can be seen side by side with each other. The group first found numerous Wilson's Plovers with their heavy bills, dark brown backs and dull pink legs. Wilson's are also the largest of the small plovers. Piping Plovers were found next and, despite being endangered, are fairly common on our area beaches in the non-breeding season. Piping Plovers are smaller than Wilson's and have stubby bills, very pale tan/brown backs and orange legs. Piping Plovers might be confused with Semipalmated Plovers which were also seen on the flats as they share the stubby bill and orange legs and small size. Luckily, Semipalmated Plovers are much darker brown on the back and this is easily seen on the open beaches. Last is the Snowy Plover which was found on the day but probably in the smallest numbers. As the name "Snowy" might suggest, they are also a pale tan/brown on the back but are often not quite as pale as Piping Plovers. The Snowy also has a longer thinner bill than the Piping or Semipalmated though not nearly as large as the Wilson's. Snowy Plovers are long-legged and the legs are a dull, grayish color. Though there are other plumage differences in these species, the above characteristics are enough to easily separate them in the field, at least when you get to see as many of them as easily as you do at Bolivar Flats.

Other shorebirds became obvious as the group moved on. Tiny Least Sandpipers moved in small groups while longer billed Western Sandpipers were present in somewhat greater numbers. Willets were found without much trouble and some discussion went into whether the individuals seen were of the "eastern" or "western" varieties. "Eastern" Willets breed in our area but migrate south for the winter. They are a bit shorter and stockier than the "western" birds with shorter, heavier bills. "Western" Willets breed in the inland west but spend the winter on Texas beaches. They are taller and lankier than "eastern" birds with longer bills. The two types do overlap their time on our beaches for parts of the spring and fall so comparisons are possible. There is some thought among ornithologists that the two are actually separate species but that split has yet to be given an official blessing by the powers that be. And Willets were not the only birds to be seen as the group moved on. Short-billed Dowitchers worked a small pool away from the surf while tall Marbled Godwits stuck to the shallows along the shoreline. Single individual Black-necked Stilt and American Oystercatcher gave good representations of some of the more colorful and unusual looking shorebirds.

Of course, it's not all shorebirds at Bolivar. Huge Brown Pelicans were enjoyed by all but no White Pelicans made an appearance on this trip. Some careful scanning provided distant looks at soaring Magnificent Frigatebirds, always a treat. A few Clapper Rails were seen and heard as they crept along the edges of the marsh behind the flats while there was little trouble getting looks at the numerous Black Skimmers loafing on the beach near the water's edge. A few Ring-billed Gulls were scattered among the Laughing but no larger Herring Gulls could be found. Royal Terns were quite abundant on the day and a few big Caspian Terns were picked out of the crowd. Diminutive Least Terns stayed away from the larger terns and flocked on their own on the open beach sometimes with a few Black Terns nearby. Additional scanning eventually pulled a few Forster's Terns and at least one Sandwich Terns out of the flock. The heron/egret family was well represented with Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron all seen around the flats but none of those held the group's attention as much as the Reddish Egrets. A good number of Reddish Egrets were found on the day including both the typical dark-morph birds and a few white-morph birds. One particular bird however especially excited the photographers among the birders as it was quite tame, feeding and preening in a small pool with a few other nearby birds. It proved quite photogenic and was much appreciated by the group!

Leaving the flats, the group headed for lunch at the "Big Store" in Crystal Beach or, at least, at the Taco Truck next door. But even this stop had its bird highlights with Great-tailed Grackles and European Starlings stealing peanuts from the counter and (more importantly) with a close group of three Magnificent Frigatebirds flying overhead. Moving on to Yacht Basin Road did not provide the hoped for Whimbrel but did

Continued on page 7.

Bird Sightings –August 2019

For this column, we review, looking for rare and very rare species, all credible eBird and other records for nearby Texas counties– Angelina, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Sabine, San Augustine and Tyler. We also review records for Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Liberty Counties in Texas, and Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes in Louisiana.

The format of the listing is Species – Date – County-and brief location information if available – (number) – Observer(s). If more precise location information is needed, it

can often be obtained by using the bird species map feature to find the sighting in eBird, opening the checklist, and using the map function to display the location as precisely as the observer provided.

Commentary: A short list this time. Southbound migration of most shorebirds occurs normally in August, and for many passerine migrants, a few early birds is not particularly rare. One comment is that it seems it will not be long before we remove Brown Booby from the rare category!

Seen in our Core Counties (listed above)

Ring-necked Duck	Aug 24	JEF-TP (1) SH
Scaup species	Aug 5	JEF-TP (1) SH
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Aug 4	ANG-Angelina NF (2) David Sarkozi
White-rumped Sandpiper	Aug 26	JEF-Hwy 87 betw Keith Lake and Sabine Pass (1) Timothy Freiday
Bewick's Wren	Aug 29	ANG-Lufkin (1) Gary Hunter (unconfirmed)
Ovenbird	Aug 22	JEF-SW (1) JHH
American Redstart	Aug 10-22	JEF-SW (up to 3) SH, JHH
Blk-thr. Green Warbler	Aug 22	JEF-SW (1) JHH

Nearby Counties

Snow Geese	Aug 3,17	HAS-Addicks Res. (1) Nathaniel Pylant
Gadwall	Aug 3	HAS-Terry Hershey Park (2) Sur Orwig
Mandarin Duck	Aug 3	HAS-Addicks Res. (1) Nathaniel Pylant
Least Grebe	Aug 14-17	GAL-Bayside Reg Park (2) Greg Hall
Black-chinned H'bird	Aug 31	GAL-Stevenson Woods, Jamaica Beach (1) Greg Hall
Brown Booby	Aug 1-25	GAL-Sportsman's Rd (1) cont. bird mult obs
	Aug 9-29	GAL-West Bay N 29 12--26 W94 56.47-96 (1) mult obs
	Aug 26	GAL-Bolivar Ferry (1) mult obs
Couch's Kingbird	Aug 31	HAS-Pine Forest Country Club (1) Timothy White

American Goldfinch	Aug 6	HAS-Briarforest area (1) Bill Wright
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Aug 31	GAL-Shaman Rd, Jamaica Beach (1) Greg Hall
Ovenbird	Aug 25	HAS-Robt C. Stuart Park (1) James Rieman
	Aug 31	HAS-Armand Bayou Nature Ctr (1) Farokh Jamalyaria
Worm-eating Warbler	Aug 27-28	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Jim Hinson
Blue-winged Warbler	Aug 18	CAM-Peveto Wds (1) Paul Conover
Tennessee Warbler	Aug 12	GAL-private land approx. 5 mi E of San Luis Pass (1) Greg Hall
Kentucky Warbler	Aug 19	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Timothy Freiday, Iliana Mock

Abbreviations used: ANG – Angelina County; ANWR – Anahuac NWR; BF – Bolivar Flats; BTNP – Big Thicket National Preserve; CAL – Calcasieu Parish; CAM – Cameron Parish; CHA – Chambers County; GAL – Galveston County; HAI – Hardin County; HAS – Harris County; HI – High Island; HS – Harlan Stewart; JAS – Jasper County; JAW – John Whittle; JEF – Jefferson County; JHH – John Haynes; JJW – Jana and John Whittle; LIB – Liberty County; MC – Michael Cooper; NEDR – Nederland; NEW – Newton County; ORA – Orange County; PI – Pleasure Is, Port Arthur; RL – Randy Lewis; SAA – San Augustine Co.; SAB – Sabine County; SH – Sheila Hebert; SM – Steve Mayes, SRSP – Sea Rim State Park; SW – Sabine Woods; TH – Thomas Hellweg; TP – Tyrrell Park including Cattail Marsh; TXPT – Texas Point NWR; TYL – Tyler County; WJC – West Jefferson County.

Bolivar Flats *(continued from page 6)*

add Spotted Sandpiper to the day list. The tide was too high at Rollover Pass and the birds there were not that numerous or easy to see so the group did not stay for long. Some of the group moved on to Boy Scout Woods but did not have much luck there while a couple of others had better luck at Smith Oaks. All headed home after these stops, the afternoon just getting hotter.

The group not only made it through the day without succumbing to the Texas heat or the mosquitos but had a lot of great birds to boot. Being a birder on the upper Texas coast in summer may be a little frustrating sometimes but days like this show that it is still worthwhile to keep at it. One quick trip to Bolivar Flats and all the frustrations are washed away in a sea of fantastic birds!

The following species were recorded by the trip leaders: White-tailed Kite(1); Clapper Rail(3); Black-necked Stilt(1);

American Oystercatcher(1); Black-bellied Plover(12); Snowy Plover(8); Wilson's Plover(30); Semipalmated Plover(40); Piping Plover(20); Long-billed Curlew(3); Marbled Godwit(12); Ruddy Turnstone(8); Spotted Sandpiper(1); Sanderling(75); Least Sandpiper(10); Western Sandpiper(60); Short-billed Dowitcher(5); Willet(30); Laughing Gull(250); Ring-billed Gull(5); Least Tern(15); Caspian Tern(4); Black Tern(10); Forster's Tern(6); Royal Tern(400); Sandwich Tern(1); Black Skimmer(65); Magnificent Frigatebird(5); Neotropic Cormorant(25); Brown Pelican(60); Great Blue Heron(2); Great Egret(6); Snowy Egret(5); Reddish Egret(12); Yellow-crowned Night-Heron(4); White Ibis(5); Roseate Spoonbill(2); Crested Caracara(1); Blue Jay(3); Horned Lark(5); Barn Swallow(5); Purple Martin(1); Blue-gray-Gnatcatcher(2); European Starling(10); Red-winged Blackbird(2); Great-tailed Grackle(15); Northern Cardinal(5).

Steve Mayes

Golden Triangle Audubon Society
P. O. Box 1292
Nederland, Texas 77627-1292

FIRST CLASS MAIL

NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Form

To join the National Audubon Society, please complete this form and return with Introductory Membership fee of \$20 (payable to the National Audubon Society, or indicate you wish to be billed) to National Audubon Society, Memberships, PO Box 97194, Washington, DC 20090-7194. 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.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Gift from: _____

Check enclosed Please bill me

Golden Triangle Audubon C9ZW250Z

Brown Pelican SUBSCRIPTION/ MEMBERSHIP FORM

Mail to Golden Triangle Audubon Society (GTAS), P. O. Box 1292, Nederland, Texas 77627-1292 or bring to any Membership Meeting. National Audubon Society (NAS) members with addresses within our official territory are automatically GTAS members without further payment, but are asked to contribute \$20 if they are able since we only receive a very small amount from NAS after the first year.

Subscriptions from NAS Members with mailing addresses outside our official territory, and others wishing to subscribe are \$20 per year (Jan-Dec).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No: _____

RARE BIRD ALERTS

Unfortunately, almost all the local and regional telephone Rare Bird Alerts have been discontinued in favor of various forms of Internet 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 www.freelists.org/archive/texbirds. It is not necessary to subscribe to the listserv to view the archives, which include all recent postings.

Detailed information/maps on birding sites in Texas is available on the Web at <http://www.texasbirds.org/birdingLocations.php>. This leads you to the maps of the various eBird hotspots. You can also subscribe (free) on eBird for email alerts for all rare birds reported in a specific county.