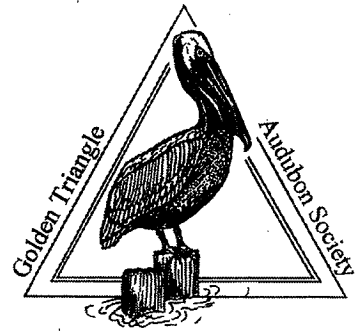


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 26 No 12

December 2020

2020-21 Christmas Bird Counts

Please note that Covid-19 safety precautions will be followed. Only the counts which normally have a small number of participants will meet in the morning; others will distribute all assignments in advance. For those that do meet, it is recommended that only one member of each birding group gather outside their vehicles for distribution of assignments. Audubon's guidelines require restricting carpooling to "within existing familiar or social 'pod' groups." All legal and constitutional orders applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which a count is conducted will be followed.

Please help the compilers in this difficult year by enabling them to plan in the week preceding the count, and avoiding any unnecessary last minute changes.

Beech Creek (TXBE): Tuesday, December 29, 2020

This count takes place in Tyler and Jasper Counties and includes Steinhagen Lake, the Beech Creek unit of Big Thicket National Preserve and Martin Dies State Park. Meet at the Corps of Engineers Picnic Area on FM92 immediately north of the intersection with FM1746 in Town Bluff at 6:30 AM. Sponsored by the Big Thicket National Preserve. Compiler: Sheila Hebert, sheilakhebert@hotmail.com (409-767-1216).

Bolivar Peninsula (TXBP): Thursday, December 17, 2020

This count circle in Chambers County includes High Island and Anahuac NWR. Newcomers are welcome to join! Compilers this year are Steve Mayes and David Sarkozi. If you are interested in participating, please contact Steve Mayes at sgmayes@hotmail.com.

Johnson Bayou - SW Louisiana (LAJB): Monday, December 14, 2020

Note: Audubon's CBC rules for Covid safety will be followed. Johnson Bayou CBC has a rich history beginning in 1976 to present. Though the count is located just across the state line in Louisiana, most participants are from Texas and everyone is welcome. While much of the area is private, local landowners have allowed access to their property for this count, areas rarely birded and normally inaccessible to birders at other times offering a good chance for rarities. Areas covered include beach, coastal cheniers, marsh and grasslands. Johnson Bayou is located off Hwy 82 in Louisiana just across from Pleasure Island, TX (east of Sabine Pass). From Port Arthur take Hwy 82 east for about 15 miles into LA. Please contact Gary Kelley (garymke@sbcglobal.net, telephone 409-679-1616) for more information, assignments and directions.

Orange County (TXOC): Friday, January 1, 2021.

Note: National Audubon's CBC rules for Covid safety will be followed. Habitat covers marsh, woodlands, and the Cow Bayou watershed. All are invited, even if you are not an experienced birder or are only able to bird for part of the day. Feeder watchers are welcome to participate. Let us know in advance and we will find a suitable group for you to join. The more pairs of eyes in a group, the more birds will be seen. Contact Gary Kelley (garymke@sbcglobal.net, telephone 409-679-1616), for more information.

Sea Rim State Park (TXSR): Tuesday December 22, 2020.

This count in Jefferson County includes Sea Rim SP, Texas Point NWR, and parts of J.D. Murphree WMA and McFaddin NWR as well as the Sabine Pass area. This year, all assignments will be made in advance; there will be no meeting in the morning and no countdown dinner. To participate, contact John Whittle (johnawhittle@aol.com, 409-722-4193) at least a week in advance. Be advised that public restrooms are very limited in the Sabine Pass area. If you are able to bring a boat for either shallow lake (Keith Lake area and Murphree) or the Sabine Neches Waterway, please contact John Whittle in advance. Sponsored by Golden Triangle Audubon Society. Check their website for any last minute updates. Contact John Whittle (johnawhittle@aol.com, 409-722-4193) for details.

Turkey Creek (TXTC): Saturday, December 19, 2020.

This count in Hardin and Tyler Counties includes the Turkey Creek and Hickory Creek Savannah Units of the Big Thicket National Preserve. Meet at the Big Thicket Visitor Center on US69 at FM420, about 7 miles north of Kountze at 6:30 AM. Sponsored by the Big Thicket National Preserve. Compiler: Sheila Hebert, sheilakhebert@hotmail.com (409-767-1216).

The Brown Pelican

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Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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Calendar of Events

Important Note: Field Trip notices published here are subject to last minute changes especially in the current Covid-19 situation. Changes will always be posted on the web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org.

Future Programs and Field Trips. (All events are TENTATIVE!).

The latest information is always available on the web site at goldentriangleaudubon.org.

Saturday, January 23, 2021.

Tentative Field Trip to Cattail Marsh, Beaumont.

Meet at the parking lot for Cattail Marsh at 8:00 a.m. The parking lot is accessed from the loop road round the main picnic areas in Tyrrell Park. Many birds can be seen from the boardwalk and nearby roads with minimal walking, **but the group will probably make a leisurely three-or-so-mile hike round the various cells in the marsh. Be advised that, while you can turn around and retrace your steps at any point, there are no meaningful "shortcuts" after you start on the levee between cells 3 and 4.** If you don't want to walk that far, there will be someone on the boardwalk to help you identify the many birds in the near cells. Walking is on the levees; the main ones are graveled, but some of the interior ones are essentially mowed grass. This will be a good trip for beginning to intermediate birders, as most of the waterfowl and wading birds are relatively easy to study in the open water areas. We will try to have the Education Center open for those who do not want to make the hike.

Directions to Tyrrell Park From the South

Go "north" on US69/96/287 around the south side of Beaumont.

Take Texas 124 (south or west, whichever it is signed) towards Fannett (left turn under the highway).

Travel about 1/2 mile to the first light.

At the first light, turn left onto Tyrrell Park Road and go about 3/4 mile.

Turn left into the Park through the arch. Continue ahead and proceed about two-thirds of the way round the main loop and into the well-marked Cattail Marsh parking area.

From IH10

Exit at Walden Road on the west side of Beaumont.

Go south of Walden Road for about 1/2 mile to the first light.

At the light go straight over Highway 124 onto Tyrrell Park Road and go about 3/4 mile.

Turn left into the Park and as above.

Saturday February 20 2021. Tentative. Field Trip to Anahuac NWR.

We plan to meet at the Visitor Information Station just beyond the entrance at 8:30 a.m. There are toilets there, accessible even when the Information Station is not open. To reach Anahuac NWR from Winnie, take Highway 124 south to FM1985. (It is 11.0 miles from IH-10 and half a mile less from Highway 73.) Turn right (west) on FM1985 and proceed about **11 miles** to the **MAIN** Anahuac NWR Entrance Road on the left (south). As you drive along FM1985, check any cowbird/ blackbird flocks carefully for Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

The entrance to the Main Refuge is just over 3 miles down the Entrance Road. Obey the speed limits, especially the 15 mph limit in the information station area! Watch along the entrance road for Crested Caracaras, and nearer the entrance to the refuge on the east side for White-tailed Kites.

We will probably visit both the main unit ("Old Anahuac") and the Skillern Tract, looking primarily for waterfowl and other waterbirds but also raptors and sparrows. We may also bird some of the local rice field areas.

There are usually geese and Bald Eagles on the refuge in winter, and Shoveler Pond attracts large numbers of ducks. A Vermilion Flycatcher winters



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

near the Visitor Station. Say's Phoebe and Cinnamon Teal are possibilities.

While it is not anticipated that this field trip will necessitate extensive walking, some of the group will probably walk the 550 yard (one-way) Willows trail, and it is a 400 yard (1/4 mile) walk from the Skillern Tract parking area to the observation platform. All roads that we will use will be easily passable in ordinary vehicles. For most of the drive round Shoveler Pond the road is one-car wide but there are only a few pull-offs most of which, however, will accommodate only three or four cars. There is space to leave vehicles close to the meeting place, and there is parking and toilets at the Skillern Tract.

Golden Triangle Audubon Facebook

Join us on Facebook! There is a Golden Triangle Audubon group on Facebook, moderated by Jana Whittle and John Mariani. Our aim is to provide a space for people around the Golden Triangle to share pictures, sightings, and other information about birds, other nature, and local birding sites and habitats. All levels of pictures are welcome, especially of less common birds. If you are looking for help with identification, please include the location and date of the picture, as both are important in narrowing the possibilities. Send your contribution through a Facebook message or an email to gtaudubon@aol.com.

Membership Dues

To simplify our record keeping, all memberships now run from January through December. Membership dues are \$20 per year. We are now accepting 2021 dues. You may mail in with the form on page 8.

The memberships of new members joining in August or later in the year will extend to the end of the following calendar year. For new members joining National Audubon on line and selecting our Chapter code (W25), we receive a rebate of the entire first year's

national dues, and no Chapter dues are expected for that first year.

As a reminder, dues are voluntary for National Audubon Society (NAS) members living in the Chapter's official territory, which is defined by zip codes, but basically covers all of Jefferson, Orange and Hardin Counties and one or two zip codes adjacent to these counties. We do also welcome NAS members in other nearby counties. We would very much encourage you receive the Brown Pelican electronically. To start that, simply send an email to gtaudubon@aol.com from the address you want us to use.

Big Sit 2020

The Visit Beaumont, Texas team, organized by Christine Sliva and Christina Lokey and sponsored by the Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau saw 58 species on October 10 from a 20 ft diameter circle centered on the first gazebo on the Cattail Marsh boardwalk. Weather conditions were good

The species seen were Cinnamon Teal , Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Fulvous Whistling Duck, Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Piled-billed Grebe, Chimney Swift, King Rail, Sora, Common Gallinule, American Coot, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Laughing Gull, Tern Species, Anhinga, Neotropic Cormorant, American White Pelican, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Little Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret, White Ibis, White-faced Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Mississippi Kite, Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Eastern Phoebe, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Blue Jay, Fish Crow, Tree Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Marsh Wren, European Starling, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Boat-tailed Grackle, Great-tailed Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting.

Conditions in Holly Beach and Cameron

Jay Huner posted an account (extracts below) on Hurricane Laura damage on LABIRD on 08 November 2020

I made a trip to Holly Beach and then went eastward to Cameron and north past Cameron Prairie NWR yesterday.

Road Conditions - There was considerable powerline restoration activity everywhere. One should not plan to get anywhere rapidly, even driving the speed limit!

Ferry - The Cameron ferry is open and operating on a regular schedule, at least in day time.

Damage - It appeared that about 1/3 of the camps/homes in the Holly Beach area were destroyed. I did not get to Johnson's Bayou. (*see below - Ed*). Cameron was damaged seriously by wind AND water. The home at Willow Island is gone. The three churches in Cameron are badly damaged as is the one in Creole. The Creole hospital is badly damaged. There was a sign on the highway intersection immediately before Willow Island stating "road closed" so I did not travel eastward and did not visit the Rutherford area.

Peveto Woods - Didn't look bad. Some work has been done on the trails and one could get around. Had a lack luster bird list for a 50-minute stay.

Birds - I did not see a duck or a goose, a coot, nor a pelican, simple as that. Sabine NWR and Cameron Prairie NWR are both closed but I would have expected to see an odd waterfowl or pelican here or there. I only saw one Common Gallinule. Wading birds were few and far between with the exception of some very large flocks of White Ibis immediately around Creole. There were reasonable numbers of gulls, terns, and sanderlings along Holly Beach. Chalkley Road was not especially birdy and I did not encounter any Vermilion Flycatchers reported there recently. I saw no Sandhill Cranes along Fruge Road. Bird lists for Holly Beach, Peveto Woods, and Chalkley Road are on eBird.

[*The two convenience stores in Johnson Bayou now have power and are open on a limited basis. Hackberry also suffered extensive damage.—Ed*]

Field Trip to West Jefferson County – 21 November 2020

The November field trip is the last official field trip of the year for the Golden Triangle Audubon Society. December is filled to the brim with Christmas Counts, family gatherings and many other obligations that make a regular field trip all but impossible so November is the last shot for the year. Throw in the chaos of COVID-19 and it makes for a weird end to the field trip year. But, even with trying to bring in some social distancing, there were plenty of people looking to end the field trip year right – with a birding trip to West Jefferson County.

And the field trip started off right – with lots of Sandhill Cranes! These stately birds are always one of the highlights of this trip and there were plenty to see. The first were seen flying overhead with their bugling calls heard even from far away. A little later, many were seen on the ground though not as close as the photographers in the group would like. Another nice bird at our first stop was a Palm Warbler. Palm Warblers are always present in this area in small numbers in the winter. Not all of the group saw this first bird but, luckily, several more were found on the day. An American Kestrel was present on nearby wires and this colorful little falcon was a common sight on the day. An Eastern Phoebe was also seen nearby and was another very common bird on the trip. The Phoebe is by far the most common winter flycatcher in our area but it would not be the only one seen.

A small wooded area near the trip starting point is always a good stop on this trip because it provides a chance at species not seen in open areas that dominate the northwestern part of the county. On this trip, it provided Golden-crowned Kinglet almost immediately. Though this tiny species was difficult to get a look at, it was easy to hear—as long as you can hear the really high-pitched call! A cooperative Hermit Thrush was much appreciated by the group while a Red-bellied Woodpecker was more heard than seen. A White-eyed Vireo called from a thicket while a few Carolina Chickadees were seen well by the group. Ruby-crowned Kinglet was easily found but the hoped-for Eastern Screech-Owl was a no show.

A trip down Thompson Road did not provide the Purple Finch that was sought but produced many great birds. Two Western Kingbirds were found in a spot that has produced this species several times in recent winters and at least one of the birds was pretty cooperative. While observing the kingbird, one of the group found a stunning male Vermilion Flycatcher nearby. This species is also often found in this area frequently in the winter but this particular individual's presence was unknown until it was discovered on the trip. A pleasant surprise to be sure! Moving a little further down the road to an area with a heavy hedgerow on one side produced plenty of White-crowned Sparrows. If not for the ubiquitous Savannah Sparrows seen at nearly every stop, these handsome birds would have been the most common sparrow seen on the day. Song Sparrow was also recorded in this area and at least one birder found a Vesper Sparrow in the area earlier in the day. Moving to an area with a large, wet field of bushy blue-stem grass, a different sparrow was sought – the LeConte's Sparrow. This elusive species likes these wet fields but rarely appears to birders. It was almost missed on this trip but patience was rewarded and, eventually, a few LeConte's Sparrows were found by the group and even posed for photos.

Moving over to South China Road, a scouted-out shorebird field was targeted. Long-billed Dowitchers were the most common bird present here and they were seen and heard in numbers. A few yellowlegs were also present and a handful of

Northern Shovelers also swam in the flooded field. Some White Ibis were found nearby along with a small flock of Cattle Egrets who had decided not to fly south (at least so far). There were not a great number of water birds on the day but some were recorded here and there. A Great Blue Heron was spotted by some birders while Great Egrets were likely seen by all. Killdeer (not exactly a waterbird I know) were easily found on the day though in the drier fields. Good numbers of noisy Black-necked Stilts were also seen in the flooded field adding to the shorebird tally.

Raptors are always looked for on the West Jefferson County trip and they were definitely around. The kestrels were already mentioned but Northern Harriers were also common on the day with brown females and immatures outnumbering the pale gray adult males as usual. Red-tailed Hawks were encountered often as expected but a Sharp-shinned Hawk was the only one of its species detected and it was only seen by some of the group. A single Merlin was also discovered on the trip by some as was a Crested Caracara. A few sharp-eyed birders spied out adult and immature Bald Eagles, once rarities in the county but now expected in this area in winter. After the trip was “officially” over, some of the group continued birding and managed to find adult and immature White-tailed Hawks – always a nice find! Red-shouldered Hawks were common on the day as they were both heard and well seen. One was observed flying away with a prey item though it was hard to determine what the prey was.

So, no earth-shattering rarities were discovered but all agreed that it was a fine day of birding. Beautiful weather greatly contributed to the good time but the birds were the stars. Lots of Sandhill Cranes, plentiful raptors and lots of sparrows all showed off for the assembled birders. And this is, luckily, a trip that can easily be done by a birder (or small family group) on their own which makes for easy social distancing. You cannot be too careful in these crazy days and it pays to stay safe but if you can combine that with Bald Eagle, Vermilion Flycatcher and LeConte's Sparrow? That's a win for everybody!

Species recorded by the trip leader:

Greater White-fronted Goose (22); Northern Shoveler (6); Sandhill Crane (500); Black-necked Stilt (45); Killdeer (30); Long-billed Dowitcher (300); Greater Yellowlegs (2); Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs (2); Laughing Gull (1); Great Blue Heron (1); Great Egret (18); Cattle Egret (10); White Ibis (55); White-faced Ibis (2); Black Vulture (1); Turkey Vulture (26); Bald Eagle (2); Northern Harrier (15); Sharp-shinned Hawk (1); Red-shouldered Hawk (4); Red-tailed Hawk (10); White-tailed Hawk (2); Red-bellied Woodpecker (3); Northern Flicker (2); Crested Caracara (1); American Kestrel (18); Merlin (1); Eastern Phoebe (20); Vermilion Flycatcher (1); Western Kingbird (2); White-eyed Vireo (2); Loggerhead Shrike (7); Blue Jay (4); American Crow (1); Carolina Chickadee (3); Tree Swallow (8); Golden-crowned Kinglet (3); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (4); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (4); House Wren (5); Sedge Wren (3); Carolina Wren (2); European Starling (150); Gray Catbird (1); Brown Thrasher (2); Northern Mockingbird (10); Hermit Thrush (4); American Robin (3); House Sparrow (2); American Pipit (1); American Goldfinch (3); White-crowned Sparrow (25); LeConte's Sparrow (3); Savannah Sparrow (200); Song Sparrow (3); Eastern Meadowlark (12); Red-winged Blackbird (250); Brown-headed Cowbird (250); Brewer's Blackbird (5); Blackbird sp. (1000); Palm Warbler (4); Yellow-rumped Warbler (8); Northern Cardinal (6).

Steve Mayes

Pine Siskins Have Taken Over the Country

By Andrew Del-Colle, Site Director and Editor, Audubon Magazine
From the Audubon Website, October 23, 2020

If you've never seen a Pine Siskin, this is your year. In the past month, the birds have invaded the United States in search of food, inundating backyard feeders across the country. Without question, it's one of the biggest irruption years in recorded history for the finches.

Brown and heavily striped with a flash of bright yellow on their wings and tails, Pine Siskins are typically found in abundance across Canada, and to a lesser extent in the U.S., in northern states and higher elevations of the west and northeast, as well as parts of Mexico. This year, though, they are everywhere in-between.

As with a handful of other northern species, Pine Siskins can irrupt southward in years when there is a shortage of food in their home range. This year, a meager supply of conifer seeds across Canada's boreal forest has caused the birds to push south in mind-boggling numbers. Nick Lund, aka The Birdist, perfectly summed up on Twitter earlier this week what many birders across the country are experiencing.

This year's irruption is so strong, in fact, that Pine Siskins have also been recorded migrating at night—something highly unusual for the species and that has only been observed once before, during the last major irruption a decade ago. Ryan Mandelbaum provided a recap of this rare phenomenon over at the Finch Forecast Network:

"Passerine birds like warblers and sparrows typically migrate at night, but ornithologists consider Pine Siskins to be exclusively diurnal, or daytime migrants. However, from October 10 to October 16, 2008, scientists Michael Watson, Jeffrey Wells, and Ryan Bavis recorded 190 Pine Siskins migrating at three sites near Gardiner, Maine for the first time in published history. This year, Spahr's recording station in Middlesex County, Massachusetts once again picked up the

flight calls of Pine Siskins migrating from 11pm until dawn, totaling several hundred birds."

So, where can you see a siskin if you haven't already? Anywhere it seems. Looking at the map for recent eBird sightings of the birds, you'll see there isn't a single region the birds haven't been spotted, including around the Gulf of Mexico. A couple small flocks have even made it to Bermuda, where they are an extremely rare visitor. If you have an eBird account, find the closest and most recent sighting (lucky you if that's Bermuda), grab your binoculars, and give it a go.

Or you could try a little ole-fashioned birding. Pine Siskins feed on the seeds of a variety of trees and flowering plants, so stopping by a few of your local parks or preserves will likely turn up some birds. Keep an eye out for a flock of finches frantically feeding as if they might never eat again. Of course, if you want to make things easy and entertaining, siskins are not shy and will happily show up in droves to feeders with nyjer and sunflower seeds. If you go this route, just be prepared to have your feeders overrun by the birds. Here's how Chad Witko, an outreach biologist with Audubon's Migratory Bird Initiative, described the scene at his home in Vermont earlier this week.

"Over the last several days, we went from 2 to 12 to 50+ just this morning," he wrote in Audubon's Slack on Tuesday. "Interesting to watch how aggressive the siskins are at the feeders, quickly becoming the dominant species (too bad House Sparrows)." In the days after his initial post, the flock grew to 70-100 birds, Witko reports, though those numbers have come down since.

A scroll through Twitter finds much more of the same, with backyard birders sharing videos and photos of similar scenes from around the country.

Other Species to Look Out For

The article above focusses on one species, the Pine Siskin for which there was very early evidence of an irruption year. In times past, Pine Siskin was more common in winter in Southeast Texas than they have been in recent years, but they are not unknown, and most frequently are found in American Goldfinch flocks.

As we enter the winter season, it is perhaps useful to review other irruptive species. The poor crop of conifer seeds in the northern boreal forest may well send other seed eating species further south than usual and thus increase the chances of them showing up in Southeast Texas. Red-breasted Nuthatches are one such species. In recent years, it has not been uncommon for this species to show up at Sabine Woods in Jefferson County, sometimes as an "overshoot" of the Big Thicket, but one probably stayed the winter last year. There are not many pine cones at Sabine Woods, so perhaps they eat insects down here in winter. The appearance of five at Sabine Woods on September 29 this year was a startling event, but they did not stay

There was an "invasion" of Purple Finches two winters ago, and they are already being seen again this year in significant numbers in Southeast Texas. They eat mostly seeds, so look out where there are seeds to eat. The species was much more common in our area a decade or two ago, but apart from the winter of 2018-19 fewer have reached the area in recent years

Less likely to make it this far south are Evening Grosbeaks, last seen in the Big Thicket in December 1985, but reports are that they have already reached areas well south of their usual winter range.

Even less likely to make it this far south is the Common Redpoll. This is very much an Arctic species with a wintering range that does not extend south of Virginia.

In addition to the irruptions from the north, the extremely dry conditions from the four corners area westward may drive many western species further east than usual this winter. Many will show up first in the Texas Panhandle. These would include such species as Townsend's Warbler, Cassin's Vireo and Cassin's Finch.

Bird Sightings – November 2020

For this column, we review, looking for rare and very rare species, all credible eBird and other records reported to us from 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: Faced with an increasing number of reports of spring migrants in the days before the checklist we use shows them no longer rare and fall migrants in the days after they are first shown to have become rare, we are making some

adjustments for 2021. In 2021, we will no longer be listing spring migrants in the week before they are shown as changing from rare to uncommon nor fall migrants in the week after they are shown as changing from uncommon to rare. In essence, we are extending the "normal" migration window to include one week earlier in the spring and one week later in the fall. We hope this will draw attention to the really early or really late birds. We continue to use the Birder's Checklist of the Upper Texas Coast (Houston Outdoor Nature Club OG), with adjustments for species that have expanded into the areas since the checklist was compiled in 2008

Our coverage area includes some counties north of the coast in which some species common along the shore areas are rare and noteworthy, and also Cameron and Calcasieu Parishes'. These counties are not included in the UTC Checklist. We will include reports that we in our best judgment believe will be considered rare or very rare by birders in those areas.

Seen in our Core Counties (listed above)

Blue-winged Teal	Nov 8-11	JEF-TP (1) HS
Surf Scoter	Nov 1	JEF-PI S Levee impoundment (1) SM, JAW, SH
	Nov 15-17	ANG-Ellen Trout Park (2) Liam Wolff, Gary Hunter, mult obs
White-winged Scoter	Nov 1	JEF-PI S Levee (lake side) (1) SM
Black Scoter	Nov 22	ORA-Shangri-La (3) Clyde McKee
Chuck-will's-widow	Nov 19	HAI-BTNP Kirby Trail (1) B&J Neumann
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	Nov 7	HAI-Sour Lake (1 fem) Susan Keefer
	Nov 10	HAI-Silsbee (1) Jana Winberg
Buff-bell. Hummingbird	Nov 13-14	JEF-Nederland (1) SM
Purple Gallinule	Nov 12-13	JEF-S end of cell 2 (1) Jason Leifester, HS
Solitary Sandpiper	Nov 25	JEF-TP (1) HS
Sandhill Crane	Nov 14	HAI-Old Sour Lake Rd (1) Bob Friedrichs, Brian Berry, Indie Dirk (unusual in NW Hardin County)
Brown Booby	Nov 1-26	JEF-PI (up to 35+) mult obs
Purple Finch		
Nov 4		ANG-Ellen Trout Park (1) Gary Hunter
Nov 11		JEF-Thompson Rd (1 fem) SM
Nov 12		JEF-WJC Thompson Rd (1+) JJW
Nov 13		HAI-NW of Kountze (1) Nancy Angell
Nov 13		ANG-Ellen Trout Park (3) Gary Hunter
Nov 14		JEF-WJC League Rd (1 fem) JAW
Nov 23		TYL-FM2900 Area N of Colmesneil (1) Charles Smith
Nov 23		HAI-Old Sour Lake Rd (1) John Mariani
Nov 26		SAB-Hemphill 2) David Bell
Nov 28		ANG-Ellen Trout Park (1) Gary Hunter
Nov 28-29		ANG-SE Lufkin (1) Donna Beck
Nov 30		GAL-W of Jamaica Beach (1) Richard Liebler
Nov 30		GAL-Clear Creek Nature Park (1) Dennis Cooke
Nov 30		GAL-Galveston IS SO (1) Robert Becker
Baltimore Oriole	Nov 26	HAI-Sour Lake (1) John Park
Tennessee Warbler	Nov 8	JEF-TP along Cell 1 (1) SM
Yellow Warbler	Nov 25	TYL-Colmesmeil (1) Doretta Remy
Blue Grosbeak	Nov 4	ANG-Ellen Trout Park (2) Gary Hunter

Nearby Counties

Surf Scoter	Nov 1-4, 19	CHA-ANWR-Shoveler Pond (1) Phyllis & Tony Frank. mult obs
Horned Grebe	Nov 6	CAM-Lacassine NWR-Pool (1) Phillip Wallace

Band-tailed Pigeon	Nov 26	GAL-Artist Boat Preserve (1) Richard Liebler
Common Ground Dove	Nov 11, 15	HAS-El Franco Lee Park (1) Robert Rogillio, mult obs
Chuck-will's-widow	Nov 30	GAL-Galveston Is SP (1) Kyle O'Haver

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Nov 1		GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Rylee Gonzales, Andrew Orgill
Nov 3		GAL-Lafitte's Cove (1) Rohit Agarwal
Nov 5		GAL-Apfel Pk (1) Richard Liebler
Nov 6		CHA-ANWR Willow Trail (1) James Barnes
Nov 26		CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Nick Ramsey
Broad-tailed Humm'bird	Nov 1	HAS-Kleb Woods (1 imm male) Fred Collins, mult obs
Calliope Hummingbird	Nov 1	HAS-Kleb Woods (1 imm male), mult obs
Broad-bill. Hummingbird	Nov 15-25	CHA-Mont Belvieu (1) Paul Fagala, Mickey Redus, mult obs (location is right on Liberty-Chambers county line)
	Nov 24-30	CHA -Baytown (1) David Hanson
Wilson's Phalarope	Nov 25	HAS-Warren Ranch Lake (1) Timothy Whire, Stephen Gast
American Golden-Plover	Nov 5	CAM-Long Beach area (3) Gary Kelley
	Nov 11	GAL-Bolivar Flats (1) Jason Leifester
Semi-palmat. Sandpiper	Nov 3	GAL-Moody Gdns (1) Jackie Farrell
California Gull	Nov 12	GAL-Beach Pocket Park 1 (1) Jane Murtishaw
	Nov 29-30	GAL-Apfel Park (1) James Rieman, Dennis Cooke
Least Tern	Nov 4	CHA-Cove (3) David Hansen
Black Tern	Nov 7, 23	CHA-ANWR-Shoveler Pond (1) Shawn Miller, John Berner

Wood Stork

Nov 1		CAM-Lacassine NWR (2) Derek Hameister
Nov 1		HAS-F M Law Park (1) James Rieman
Nov 30		CHA-Smith Point HW (2) David Hanson
Magnificent Frigatebird	Nov 27	CAM-Peveto Woods (1 fem) Nick Ramsey
	Nov 27	CAM-Mae's Beach (1) Nick Ramsey; perched on ship at 12:30 p.m.
Brown Booby	Nov 2-28	HAS-Baytown Nat. Ctr (up to 15) Hunter Hammil, mult obs
	Nov 30	CHA-ANWR (4) Garrett Hodne
Mississippi Kite	Nov 26	HAS-Spring Branch area (1) Fred Collins

	Nov 27	HAS-E of Cypress (1) Darren Hoyland
White-tailed Hawk	Nov 29	CAL-AL397/Lincoln (1) Nick Ramsey
Broad-winged Hawk	Nov 16	CHA-Smith Pt Hawk Watch (5) David Hanson
Short-eared Owl	Nov 1	HAS-IH-10 nr Park 10 (1) Serena Ross
Red-naped Sapsucker	Nov 1	GAL-Hitchcock (1) Kris Cannon, Sandy Kroeger, mult obs
	Nov 26	HAS-Cypress (1) Marla & Troy Hibbitts
Great Kiskadee	Nov 26	CHA-JJ Mayes Trace)2) Paul Fagala
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Nov 8	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Paul Conover
Gt Crested Flycatcher	Nov 4	GAL-Sportsman's Rd (1) David Thompson
Western Kingbird	Nov 1	HAS-El Franco Lee Park (1) Bryce Caughton
	Nov 6	CAL-LA397 (1) Charlotte Chehotsky
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Nov 21	CAL-LA397 (1) Charlotte Chehotsky
Fork-tailed Flycatcher	Nov 8-24	CAL-LA108/Fabacher Rd (1) mult obs
	Nov 8-10	Fruge Rd S of LA14 (1) Charlotte Chehotsky David Booth
Warbling Vireo	Nov 17, 19	HAS-Houston Gtr Heights (1) Justin Leahy
Red-eyed Vireo	Nov 1-3	HAS-Friendswood (1) Chris Bick
	Nov 18	HAS-Greens Bayou nr Ella (1) Vicki Crutchfield
Cliff/Cave Swallow	Nov 17	CHA-ANWR Shoveler Pond (2) Heidi Belinsky
Bewick's Wren	Nov 18	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Letha Slagle
Mountain Bluebird	Nov 20	HAS-John Paul Landing Park (1) Jim Hinson, Howard Smith
Swainson's Thrush	Nov 1	HAS-Willow Waterhole Greenspace (1) Mark Meyer
Wood Thrush	Nov 26	HAS-White Oak Park (1) Wendy Wrighte
Cedar Waxwing	Nov 1	HAS-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty Lee
Henslow's Sparrow	Nov 20, 26	HAS-John Pau Landing Park (1) Jerry Chen, Jim Hinson
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Nov 3	GAL-Ft Travis Park (1) Richard Liebler
Western Meadowlark		
	Nov 7-8, 22	HAS-John Paul Landing Park (1) Letha Slaigle, Bill Schneider, mult obs
	Nov 14-19	HAS-Greens Bayou nr Ella (1) Vicki Crutchfield
	Nov 14-25	HAS-John Paul Landing Park (1) Angela & Chris Bailey, mult obs
Bullock's Oriole		
	Nov 1	GAL-Galveston Is SP (1 1st yr fem) Kyle O'Haver mult obs
	Nov 8	HAI-Bear Creek Park (1) Mary Goldsby
	Nov 23	HAS-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty Lee
Baltimore Oriole	Nov 8	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Letha Slaigle
Purple Finch		
	Nov 11-12	HAS-San Jacinto Battleground (6) James Rieman, Mike Austin
	Nov 11	GAL-HI-Smith Oaks (8) mult obs
	Nov 12-20	HAS-Bear Creek Park (4) Jim Hinson, mult obs
	Nov 13	HAS-Addicks Reservoir (1) Drew Dickert
	Nov 13	GAL-League City (1) Anonymous
	Nov 15	HAS-Bella Vista (4) Mike Austin
	Nov 16	CHA-ANWR Willows Trail (4) Sonny Bratz
	Nov 16	CHA-ANWR Skillern (3) Sonny Bratz
	Nov 16, 25	Kleb Woods (4) Kendra Kocab, Bayard Nicklow
	Nov 17	CHA-ANWR (1) Kyle Lima and Serena Ross
	Nov 19	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Daniel Horton, Jackie Farrell
	Nov 20	LIB-Texaco Rd, Liberty (1) Gary Yoder

	Nov 21-25	HAS-Sharp Rd area (2) Jim Hinson, mult obs
	Nov 26	HAS-NRG Stadium area (1) John O'Brien
	Nov 30	CHA-JJ Mayes Trace (1) SH
Lark Bunting	Nov 24-29	HAS-John Paul Landing Park (1) Jim Hinson, mult obs
Clay-colored Sparrow	Nov 19-22	HAS-John Paul Landing Park (1) John Paul, mult obs
Northern Waterthrush	Nov 21	HAS-El Franco Lee Park (1) Brad Lirette
Ovenbird	Nov 1	HAS-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty Lee
Tennessee Warbler		
	Nov 3	HAS-F M Law Park (1) James Rieman
	Nov 3, 21-22	HAS-Friendswood (1) Chris Bick
	Nov 3	HAS_Memorial area (1) Sue Orwig
	Nov 4	HAS-Space Ctr area (1) Janet Rathjen
	Nov 9	HAS-Mitchell Nature Preserve (1) Krien VanBerkmoes, Joanne Bradberry, Diana Philpot
	Nov 11-12	HAS-Kleb Woods (1) Bayard Nicklow, mult obs
	Nov 13	HAS-Friendswood (1) Dale Wolck
Hooded Warbler	Nov 8	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Paul Conover
American Redstart		
	Nov 8	HAS-Sheldon Lake SP (1) Cameron Kirkpatrick, Lindsey Hieb
	Nov 8	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Paul Conover
	Nov 18	HAS-W 11th St Park (1) Dan Coleman
	Nov 26	GAL-Dickinson (1 male) Jane Murtishaw
Northern Parula	Nov 1-6	HAS-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty Lee, mult obs
	Nov 16	HAS-S of Ella at Tidwell (1) Travis Ly
Magnolia Warbler		
	Nov 8	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Paul Conover
	Nov 10	HAS-Bellaire-Evergreen Park (1) Gerard del Junco
	Nov 10	HAS-Russ Pitman Park (1) Mary Ann Beauchemin
Blackburnian Warbler	Nov 1	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Aidan Healy
Black-thr. Blue Warbler	Nov 26-27	CAM-Peveto Woods (1 male) Nick Ramsey
Black-thr. Gray Warbler	Nov 19, 21	HAS-Friendswood (1) Chris Bick
	Nov 30	HAS-Deerfield Greenbelt (1) Margaret Farese
Black-thr. Green Warbler	Nov 18	HAS-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty Lee
Yellow-throated Warbler	Nov 2	CAL-Lake Charles (1) J. G. Miller
Western Tanager	Nov 7-8	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Jim Hinson, Drew Dickert, John Berner, mult obs
	Nov 25-30	HAS-Memorial area (1) Sandi Templeton
Black-headed Grosbeak	Nov 17	GAL-Artist Boat Preserve (1) Richard Liebler
	Nov 25	GAL-Dickinson (1) Jackie Farrell, Jane Murtishaw
Blue Grosbeak	Nov 2	HAS-Memorial Park (2) Jim Highberger
Painted Bunting	Nov 2	CHA-Fairview Rd (1 fem) Mary Anne Weber
	Nov 2	GAL-LaFitte's Cove (1 male) Richard Liebler
Dickcissel	Nov 3	HAS-Exploration Green-1 (1) Audrey Nguyen
	Nov 22	Has-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty Lee

Abbreviations used: ANG – Angelina County; ANWR – Anahuac NWR; BF – Bolivar Flats; 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; NEW – Newton County; ORA – Orange County; PI – Pleasure Is, Port Arthur;; PW – Phillip Wallace; SAA – San Augustine Co.; SAB – Sabine County; SH – Sheila Hebert; SM – Steve Mayes, SRSP – Sea Rim State Park; SW – Sabine Woods; TP – Tyrrell Park including Cattail Marsh; TYL – Tyler County; WJC – West Jefferson County.

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

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Many rare bird sightings in Texas are posted on Facebook Texbirds or on the TEXTBIRDS listserv. Archives of the listserv are at www.freelists.org/archive/texbirds. It is not necessary to subscribe 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.