

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 29 No. 1

January 2023

Membership Meeting
Thursday January 19, 2023 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

Iceland – Land of Fire and Ice
Paul Gregg

In 2011 Paul and Carol Gregg took a photographic journey to Iceland. The trip left such an impression upon them they would put a second visit to Iceland on their bucket list before going to a number of other desirable locations. The land is unforgettable with its unworldly beauty and variety of landscapes as well as having a variety of birds to possibly add to one's life list.

Paul Gregg is an avid, amateur photographer, he retired from the Adult Probation Department of Harris County, Texas and before that he retired from the United State Air Force with a little over 29 years' service, active and reserve.

He describes his photography interests as

#1 – Birds; #2 -- Wildlife; #3 -- Travel/Landscape; #4 -- Just about anything else; #5 – Will reluctantly photograph weddings and other activities.

He has given presentations to a number of wildlife and photography groups. Paul presented basic photography lessons to Lone Star College's "Adult Lifelong Learning" classes.

We plan to have the doors open no later than 6:00 p.m., the meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. sharp

Note about Highway 124 Bridge

The Highway 124 bridge over Hillebrandt Bayou is currently closed. To get to Tyrrell Park from Highway 69, it is necessary to take IH-10 west towards Houston and exit almost immediately at the Walden Road exit, turning south (left) on Walden Road. Cross over Highway 124 onto Tyrrell Park Road and after 3/4 mile, turn left into Tyrrell Park as usual. The Garden Center is on the left, just inside the park.

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Vol. 29, No.1 January 2022
Issue number 290

Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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

Thursday January 19, 2023. Membership Meeting. See page 1 for details.

Saturday, January 21, 2023. Field Trip to Cattail Marsh, Beaumont.

Meet at the parking lot for Cattail Marsh at 8:00 am. 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. **The group has usually made a leisurely three-or-so-mile hike round the various cells in the marsh, but in recent months the water levels have been changed several times, so the route may be altered to cover the cells where the birds are most numerous. Be advised that, while you can turn around and retrace your steps at any point, there are typically no meaningful "shortcuts" after you start on the levees between cells.** 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 make the hike.

Thursday February 16, 2023.

Membership Meeting. Cody and Phuong Conway on Africa.

Saturday February 18 2023. 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 at all times. To reach Anahuac NWR from Winnie, take Highway 124 south to FM 1985. (It is 11.0 miles from IH-10 and half a mile less from Highway 73.) Turn right (west) on FM 1985 and proceed about **11 miles** to the **MAIN** Anahuac NWR Entrance Road on the left (to the south). As you drive along FM 1985, 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. Stop along this road only where you can safely pull completely off the road. Obey the speed limits on that road and in the refuge, and stop completely at the stop signs! Watch along the entrance road especially near the south end for Crested Caracaras and White-tailed Kites. A Burrowing Owl is wintering along the shoreline of East Bay near Frozen Point.

We will probably visit the main unit ("Old Anahuac") and possibly also the Skillern Tract, looking primarily for waterfowl and other waterbirds but also raptors and sparrows.

There are usually geese and Bald Eagles on and near the refuge in winter. In normal years, Shoveler Pond attracts large numbers of ducks. However, the Refuge drew down the Pond in 2022 to better manage the vegetation for ducks, but in the early part of the season, ducks have not found the Pond to their liking. The water level has been very high for most of the fall. As noted elsewhere in this issue, the weather has been somewhat unusual, and it seems likely that many species, not only waterfowl, have been late in flying south this year.



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

Effects of the Freeze

The recent "Deep Freeze" event has focused attention on the effects on wildlife and, of course, birds in particular. Coming as it did less than two years after the February 2021 freeze which is turn was only three years after the January 2018 freeze. The relatively short period between these three events will doubtless be evidenced in local bird populations for several years to come. Hard information on the lifespan of birds is hard to come by. There is an increasing amount of information on the numbers of birds of various species that can be inferred from the sightings records in eBird, and this becomes more definitive as the steep ramp up in numbers of reports submitted to eBird slowly gives way to more of a steady state situation. To a large extent, however, the information is still anecdotal in nature.

Based on many years of anecdotal observations by birders and ornithologists, the birds that suffer the highest mortality in hard freeze events along the Gulf Coast are small passerines. Those affected most are insectivores; freezes kill insects, leaving these birds without adequate food. Seed eaters are less affected, because their food is not destroyed, although it may be somewhat harder for them to acquire. Birds associated with water tend to fare better because the freezes are not usually long enough or deep enough to freeze the local natural bodies of water. These birds will find unfrozen water and will often congregate on or near the banks of streams and ponds where the water is often still significantly warmer than the air. Water has a very high specific heat, meaning that it takes a lot of cooling (typically from cold air) to reduce its temperature. Birds of prey are generally larger birds, often with reserves of fat. Many of them in extreme conditions will act as scavengers, feeding on prey that did not survive the freeze. Geese and most ducks are able to survive any freeze likely to occur in Southeast Texas.

The populations of insectivores may take several years to recover from the mortality during a freeze event. Although those birds that do survive will be able to breed, perhaps with less competition for food during the critical phases of raising chicks, there may be increased pressure from predators on the reduced number of birds available. One point to bear in mind is that ornithologists estimate that about 80 to 90 percent of passerine birds that hatched do not survive even one year. This estimate does include those lost to nest predation before they fledge as well as those that do not survive their first winter.

One problem for 2023 is that populations do not appear to have completed recovery from the February 2021 freeze, so the recent freeze will likely further exacerbate the population decrease. Indeed, the populations in February 2021 may well not have fully recovered from the January 2018 freeze, so we may be looking at a triple whammy. When we think of insectivores, we usually think first of warblers, but probably the most vulnerable birds are the kinglets, especially the Ruby-crowned Kinglet. (Golden-crowned Kinglets apparently eat arthropods as well as insects, explaining why they have a more northern range than Ruby-crowned.) Also likely to have been seriously affected by the freeze are the Eastern Phoebes, the populations of which do not seem to have recovered from the 2018 and 2021 freezes. The most numerous warbler in Southeast Texas is the Yellow-rumped Warbler. In addition to insects, they eat many seeds and are uniquely able to

metabolize the berries of wax myrtle and tallows. As such, it is not expected that they will be as seriously affected as the more obligate insect eaters. However, the recent freeze did not eliminate all mosquitoes, and they were certainly present near water in the days immediately after! Whether these survived the freeze or hatched in response to the sudden increase in temperature after the freeze is not clear.

Seed eating birds, such as those typically the beneficiaries of human provided feeders (such as cardinals, chickadees and finches) will probably fare better than insectivores but nevertheless are at risk of what in humans we would call exposure. Some of the insectivores will also eat seeds when there is little alternative available.

One special case involves hummingbirds. Increasing numbers of hummingbirds, both western species and more tropical species from south Texas winter along the Gulf Coast. In the late fall, there are usually enough flowering plants to provide nectar, but many birders maintain sugar water feeders and the birds take advantage of them. The recent freeze has killed virtually all flowering plants locally, and the cold threatened the hummingbirds. Provision of minimal heating during the coldest nights, for example by an incandescent light bulb in a sheltered area where the birds can perch will help the birds through the coldest nights. After that, the birds will be totally dependent on the feeders for food, and will remain so until they migrate back to their breeding areas in spring.

Birds are warm blooded, and some mortality from the recent freeze is to be expected in most species for those birds unable to find shelter and perhaps a warmer location near a house or other heated structure that is not completely insulated. Waterfowl and related groups (gallinules, grebes and the like may be able to find water that is discharged into the ecosphere at significantly elevated temperatures. Many chemical plants, refineries and power stations have "cooling ponds" where warm water is discharged to allow it to cool to air temperature.

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 2023 dues. You may pay at any membership meeting (checks preferred) or use the subscription/membership blank on the back page.

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 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 who are interested in our activities although their membership in NAS does not bring them to our attention.

We would very much encourage you receive the Brown Pelican electronically as this saves paper, cost and volunteer time. To start that, simply send an email to gtaudubon@aol.com from the address you want us to use.

Turkey Creek Christmas Bird Count 17 December 2022

This Christmas Count was established in 1978 to help document the birds in the Turkey Creek Unit of the then newly formed Big Thicket National Preserve. The habitat is very typical of the "Thicket" that gives the Preserve its name, but this circle does not include much water, limiting the number of species expected. This year, the weather was a little cold (for the area) but suitable for birding. Last year, it was obvious that many species were present in low numbers, following on the infamous February 2021 freeze. This year, 59 species were recorded, still on the low side, but one more than last year. The number of individual birds was also not quite as low as last year, but was still substantially below the norms of a few years ago. The effects of the freeze can still be seen in the numbers of most of the insectivores. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were not back up to "normal" and unfortunately may have been affected again by the subsequent freeze just before Christmas.

Looking at the results for other individual groups, we would note that the Ring-necked Duck flock in Lake Hyatt, currently the only significant body of water in the circle, was healthy in number. Wood Ducks are often seen in the smaller creeks, but this year a sizable number was seen on Lake Hyatt along with a pair of Pied-billed Grebes, and two Wilson's Snipes feeding undisturbed on the islands in the lake.

Although they are rarely seen, a small number of Greater Roadrunners exists in the Thicket. One was seen this year, the first since 2015, and the one before that was in 2011.

Last year, the number of vultures was unusually very low, but this year the numbers were back up to normal. Red-shouldered Hawks were well represented, and three Red-tailed Hawks were seen after the species was missed last year. The number of *Accipiters* typically found on this count is strangely very low. This year, a Cooper's Hawk was the only one. It was nice to find three Barred Owls. This is the most common owl in the area, but difficult to detect owing to its nocturnal habits. American Kestrels were a little low this year, but anecdotal information from elsewhere in the local area suggests that the species is increasing again after some significant declines in recent years.

One bright spot was the number and variety of woodpeckers. While not quite up to the numbers of the previous decade, it appears that woodpeckers were less affected by the previous freezes. It will be important to see whether the recent sequence of lengthy drought(s) followed by a severe freeze results in more trees dying and more habitat favorable to woodpeckers.

The only flycatcher present in number in winter in the area is the Eastern Phoebe. Last year's low number on this count was attributed to mortality during the February 2021 freeze, but this year's 19 suggests a good recovery. The 2023 count will tell us what happened in 2022. The quintessential small birds of the Thicket, Carolina Chickadee and Tufted Titmouse did not seem to suffer drastically in 2021 as evidenced by the 2021 results, but the 2022 numbers were significantly low. Both species eat mostly insects in summer, but eat more seeds in winter, enabling them to fare reasonably well in winter, and neither species is significantly migratory.

Several species and groups were present in numbers within the normal ranges. These include Brown-headed Nuthatches, all

the wrens, Eastern Bluebirds, Hermit Thrushes, Gray Catbirds and Cedar Waxwings.

Two highly migratory species that often serve as harbingers of winter in Southeast Texas are American Goldfinches and American Robins. This count was conducted before any significant cold weather was experienced in the northern part of the continent where these species breed. The favorable weather further north late into the fall probably led to delayed migration by many birds of both of these species. They did not arrive until after the counts had already been conducted.

Most of the winter sparrows are also migratory, but a good variety had arrived by count day. Three Henslow's Sparrows were encouraging, as a small number of the species winters in the count circle, but are quite difficult to find. We don't find Dark-eyed Juncos every year, but this appears to be a good year for them locally. Eastern Towhees on the other hand seem not to be coming as far south in winter as they used to, and none were detected on this count this year. Chipping Sparrows were numerous, while White-throated Sparrow numbers were within norms. The first Field Sparrows since 2019 were recorded.

A few comments on what species were not seen is perhaps in order. This is one of the rare Christmas Count circles that struggles to find House Sparrow – none this year – and also the various "blackbird" species – Red-winged Blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds and grackles – also all none this year.

Thanks are due to Nancy Angell for organizing the count this year, and to all the participants.

Species seen: DUCK, Wood (24); DUCK, Ring-necked (38); GREBE, Pied-billed (2); DOVE, Mourning (22); ROADRUNNER, Greater (1); COOT, American (2); KILLDEER (8); SNIPE, Wilson's (2); VULTURE, Black (110); VULTURE, Turkey (75); HAWK, Cooper's (1); HAWK, Red-shouldered (13); HAWK, Red-tailed (3); OWL, Barred (3); KINGFISHER, Belted (1); SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (6); WOODPECKER, Red-headed (5); WOODPECKER, Red-bellied (41); WOODPECKER, Downy (8); WOODPECKER, Hairy (12); WOODPECKER, Pileated (15); FLICKER, Northern (3); KESTREL, American (2); PHOEBE, Eastern (19); VIREO, White-eyed (2); VIREO, Blue-headed (4); JAY, Blue (37); CROW, American (197); CHICKADEE, Carolina (38); TITMOUSE, Tufted (25); NUTHATCH, Brown-headed (12); WREN, House (7); WREN, Winter (1); WREN, Carolina (32); GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (4); KINGLET, Golden-crowned (10); KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (31); BLUEBIRD, Eastern (42); THRUSH, Hermit (15); ROBIN, American (70); CATBIRD, Gray (7); THRASHER, Brown (1); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (7); WAXWING, Cedar (70); GOLDFINCH, American (31); SPARROW, Chipping (111); SPARROW, Field (3); JUNCO, Dark-eyed (8); JUNCO, Dark-eyed; Slate-colored (2); SPARROW, White-throated (53); SPARROW, Henslow's (3); SPARROW, Song (12); SPARROW, Swamp (25); MEADOWLARK, Eastern (11); WARBLER, Orange-crowned (11); WARBLER, Pine (73); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (101); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped.(Myrtle) (6); CARDINAL, Northern (67); SPECIES, total (59); INDIVIDUALS, total (1543)

No. of observers (13); Number of parties (6); Party-hrs on foot (27.25); Party-miles on foot (19.80); Party-hrs by car (18.00); Party-miles by car (118.00); Total Party hrs (45.25); Total Party miles (137.80)

Observers Nancy Angell, Tanya Davis, Sherry Gibson, Ken Hartman, Johnny Johnson, Jaclyn Parker, Sherrie Roden, Christine Sliva, Wanda and Charles Smith, Harlan Stewart, Jana and John Whittle.

Beech Creek Christmas Bird Count 20 December 2022

The Beech Creek Christmas Count was the second of the Big Thicket counts, and was established in 1978 to help document the birds in the Beech Creek Unit of the then newly formed Big Thicket National Preserve. In addition to that unit and other similar habitat in the vicinity, the circle includes the southern part of Steinhagen Lake and all of Martin Dies State Park.

There was heavy rain during the night before the count, but the weather was good for birding, and there was only one significant hindrance to travel. What stands out most among the results of this count was the lack of waterfowl. Normally, there are several species of ducks on Steinhagen Lake including until three years ago a sizeable flock of Canvasback. Sometimes the ducks are outside the circle in the northern part of the lake in the State Scientific Area, but rafts of ducks were not to be seen in the count circle this year. The American Coots were there. The 60 species recorded on the count was very low, although the number of individual birds was paradoxically quite high. The low number of species reflected the lack of ducks and a strange absence of a number of sparrow species. The insect eating species seems to be close to normal, perhaps reflecting the lesser impact of the February 2021 freeze on birds on and near the shores of the lake.

One Wood Duck and two Canvasback represented a very disappointing showing, something that seems to be areawide, with ducks concentrated in few of the normal places. A presence of a good number of both American Coots and Double-crested Cormorants suggests that the food in the lake was adequate, and that the ducks had probably not yet arrived, awaiting colder weather further north to driven them south. After all the Christmas Counts are completed, and after the end of hunting season, we will be able to conduct a more in-depth analysis.

Many species and groups of species were seen in normal numbers on this count. American White Pelicans, Forster's Terns, Great Blue Herons were all there. Great Egrets were few, but a Snowy Egret and a Tricolored Heron, both species missed last year were seen.

Both vulture species were seen in numbers within the norms of recent years. Red-shouldered Hawks were reasonably numerous, Red-tailed Hawks a little low. However, eight Bald Eagles were seen. When the count was started in 1978, Bald Eagles, although there were a few wintering around the local lakes (Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend), were very much a rare species in the region. One was seen from the Town Bluff Dam in 1979, but it was 1983 before a second one was recorded. Numbers have since increased and at least one has been seen on each Beech Creek count since 2004. These eagles are probably mostly Northern Bald Eagles, breeding much further north and wintering in the warmer regions in the southern US. There are also Southern Bald Eagles, that breed in the southern US, typically nesting in the December-March period and dispersing post breeding to the northern tier of the US.

Interestingly, the number of American Kestrels was the second highest in the history of the count. In recent years, there has been concern nationwide over an apparently declining population, but this number, combined with anecdotal reports of good numbers elsewhere in Southeast Texas, suggests a

healthy increase in numbers over the last year or two.

Woodpeckers of all the local species do not appear to have been significantly affected by the freezes and numbers were very normal.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets, known to be a species very much at risk in freezes, were quite low, surprising since they were normal last year. Golden-crowned Kinglets, apparently a hardier species, or perhaps one more willing to eat seeds when insects are not available, were in numbers above the long-term averages for the count. It seems that, contrary to the trend for most species wintering close to the Gulf coast, more of them are wintering further south than they used.

American Robin numbers, very low in 2021, were very high this year, as it seemed there were robins it seemed like everywhere. A local landowner told us that they had all arrived the day before! It is possible that some of these robins were passing, and most of those seen will likely winter in the area. Robins do winter south to the Corpus Christi area but few reach the Rio Grande Valley. Interestingly, eBird data show a significant wintering concentration in the Mexico City area, about 600 miles south of the next southernmost concentration, with very few reports from the area between.

Chipping Sparrows were normal as were White-throated Sparrows. Dark-eyed Juncos were also in good numbers but there were almost no other sparrow species. Perhaps they too were late in moving south this year. Four Eastern Towhees were detected.

Thanks are due to Nancy Angell for stepping up and organizing this count this year.

Species seen: DUCK, Wood (1); CANVASBACK (2); GREBE, Pied-billed (8); DOVE, Mourning (19); COOT, American (352); KILLDEER (35); SANDPIPER, Spotted (4); GULL, Ring-billed (1); TERN, Forster's (35); CORMORANT, Double-crested (151); PELICAN, American White (31); HERON, Great Blue (10); EGRET, Great (2); EGRET, Snowy (1); HERON, Tricolored (1); VULTURE, Black (37); VULTURE, Turkey (108); EAGLE, Bald (8); HAWK, Red-shouldered (11); HAWK, Red-tailed (2); SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (11); WOODPECKER, Red-bellied (45); WOODPECKER, Downy (12); WOODPECKER, Hairy (1); WOODPECKER, Pileated (16); FLICKER, Northern (15); KESTREL, American (13); MERLIN (1); PHOEBE, Eastern (19); VIREO, White-eyed (3); JAY, Blue (55); CROW, American (137); CHICKADEE, Carolina (46); TITMOUSE, Tufted (35); KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (28); KINGLET, Golden-crowned (22); GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (4); WREN, House (3); WREN, Winter (1); WREN, Carolina (37); CATBIRD, Gray (2); THRASHER, Brown (1); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (14); BLUEBIRD, Eastern (54); THRUSH, Hermit (4); ROBIN, American (1990); WAXWING, Cedar (119); FINCH, Purple (1); GOLDFINCH, American (107); SPARROW, Chipping (232); JUNCO, Dark-eyed (36); SPARROW, White-throated (95); TOWHEE, Eastern (4); WARBLER, Orange-crowned (15); WARBLER, Pine (27); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (193); CARDINAL, Northern (126); SPECIES, total (60); Number of Individuals (4357); Number of observers (12); Parties (6); Party-hours on foot (9.25); Party-miles on foot (5.35); Party-hours by car (40.00); Party-miles by car (116.00); Party-hours total (49.25); Party-miles total (121.35)

Observers: Nancy Angell, David Bell, Dennis Durkee, Sherry Gibson, Marilyn and Rick Guidry, Fred Lyons, Sherrie Roden, Christine Sliva, Harlan Stewart, Jana and John Whittle.

-Bird Sightings – December 2022

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. In most cases, we do not include birds that are "heard only" or probably hybrids.

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: In December, it is essentially expected that there will be a good number of reports, as most Christmas Bird Counts take place during the month. These counts ensure that few unusual species go undetected!

Of interest are the Purple Finch reports. The reports are concentrated in the Big Thicket north of the Golden Triangle in the "Lakes Area" around Toledo Bend and Sam Rayburn. Black Scoters were seen in a number of locations along the coast from southwest Louisiana to just southwest of the greater Houston area. Late Franklin's Gulls were reported from Cameron Parish, Louisiana and the Houston area. Numerous Western Kingbirds were seen in Cameron parish, and a further west in Chambers, Harris and Galveston counties. There were many late migrating Broad-winged Hawks in Cameron Parish and Chambers County

Local Counties (listed above)

Cinnamon Teal	Dec 10	JEF-TP (1) Kim Dahlberg
	Dec 26-31	JEF-TP (2) Dwayne Litteer, mult obs
Allen's Hummingbird	Dec 4-6	JEF-Nederland (1) HS
Buff-bellied Hummingbird	Dec 3-31	JEF-Nederland (1) JJW
Brown Booby	Dec 8	JEF-PI N levee (1) JAW
	Dec 11	JEF-PI offshore N Levee (1) Wyatt Egelhoff

Purple Finch

Dec 6	JAS-Jasper (1) Penny Lanham
Dec 10	ANG-Sam Rayburn Huntington (1) A Tindell
Dec 12	JAS-Ebenezer Park area (2) Phillip Hight
Dec 20	TYL-w of FM92 (1) David Bell
Dec 23	JAS-5 mi S of Jasper (3) Laura Clark
Dec 23-30	ANG-SE Lufkin (6) Donna Beck
Dec 27	ANG-SW of Lufkin (1) Katrina Echols
Dec 31	HAI-NW of Kountze (2) Nancy Angell
Dec 31	JAS-SW of Jasper (10)

Western Meadowlark Dec 8 JEF-Wilber Rd (1) Timothy Freiday

Painted Bunting Dec 21-31 JEF-Nederland (2) HS

Nearby Counties

Fulvous Whistling-Duck Dec 1-2 CAM-Lacassine Wildlife Loop (7) Kathy Rhodes, Darlene Eschete mult obs

Cinnamon Teal Dec 28-30 CAM-Cameron Prairie NWR (1) Andrew From, Joshua Soileau

Canada Goose Dec 6 CHA-ANWR Shoveler Pond (12) Johnny Johnson

Black Scoter

Dec 17	CHA-Pine Bluff Park (1) Chuck Davis, J & C Miles, Scott Buckel
Dec 17	HAS-Shoreacres-Houston Yacht Club (1) Chuck Davis, J & C Miles, Scott Buckel
Dec 17	CHA-Sylvan Beach Park (1) Chuck Davis, J & C Miles, Scott Buckel
Dec 19-31	HAS-Baytown NC (2) mult obs
Dec 21	CAM-Long Beach Rd (1) Pawel and Jan Michalak
Dec 22	CAM-Peveto Woods Beach (5) Elizabeth and Joseph Aubert)

Horned Grebe Dec 11 CAM-Holly Beach (1) Wyatt Egelhoff

Common Ground Dove	Dec 3	GAL-S of FM2004 (20) Kyle O'Haver, Robert Becker, Clayton Leopold
Groove-billed Ani	Dec 18	CAM-Grangerville Rd (2) Van Remsen, Daniel Lane, Jack Rogers
Lesser Nighthawk	Dec 2	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Wyatt Egelhoff, Carrie Chapin. Jon Piasecki
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Dec 12-24	GAL_Dickinson (1) Jane Murtishaw, mult obs
Purple Gallinule	Dec 30	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Ronald HallLimpkin Dec 16 CAL-S Ward Line Rd (1) Erik Johnson
Mountain Plover	Dec 1	GAL-Beach 1.5mi NE of San Luis Pass (1) Kristen Vale
American Golden Plover	Dec 5	GAL-Rollover Pass (2) Wyatt Egelhoff
Stilt Sandpiper	Dec 2	CAM-Lacassine Wildlife Loop (1) John and Jana Whittle
Solitary Sandpiper	Dec 13-17	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Pk (1) Richard Rulander, mult obs
Parasitic Jaeger	Dec 15	GAL-Bolivar Flats (1) Prineet Anand
Pomarine Jaeger	Dec 20	GAL-Bolivar Flats (1) Wyatt Egelhoff, Justin Leahy, Carrie Chapin
	Dec 20	GAL-Bolivar Ferry (1) Paul Sweet
Black-legged Kittiwake	Dec 3	HAS-Clear Lake Park (1) Andrew Hamlett, mult obs

Franklin's Gull

Dec 2	CAM- Broussard Beach (1) Buford Myers, Van Remsen
Dec 4	CAM-Hwy 82 just W of Holly Beach (2) James Smithers, Madeline Wainscott
Dec 11	CAM-Holly Beach (1) Wyatt Egelhoff
Dec 17	HAS-Challenger 7 Mem Park (8) Eowyn Johnson, A. Bittern, Doug Fishman, mult obs
Dec 20	GAL-Bolivar Flats (1) Wyatt Egelhoff, Justin Leahy, Carrie Chapin
Dec 20-31	McHale Park (5) mult obs
Dec 21	HAS-EI Jardin Park (1) Sonny Bratz

Iceland (Thayer's) Gull	Dec 7	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) Richard Rulander
	Dec 11	CAM-Holly Beach (1) Wyatt Egelhoff
	Dec 14-15, 24	HAS-Ash Lake (2) Cin-Ty Lee, mult obs

Black Skimmer	Dec 17	CAL-Calcasieu Pt Landing (75) David Booth
Wood Stork	Dec 6	CAL-S Lake Charles (3) David Booth
	Dec 8	HAS-El Franco Lee Park (3) Doug Fishman
	Dec 11	HAS-SE Houston (60) Larry Dybala
Magnificent Frigatebird	Dec 13	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) Steve Rogow
Least Bittern	Dec 17	CAL-Intracoastal Park (1) Katie Barnes, James Smithers
	Dec 15-19	HAS-Baytown NC (1) Tim Lenz, mult obs
Glossy Ibis	Dec 17	HAS-Sheldon Lake (2) Dorothy Hoffman, Megas Rosario
Mississippi Kite	Dec 17	HAS-Knob Hill Park (1) Nicholas DeMaio
	Dec 19	HAS-Memorial Park-Eastern Glades (1) Vaughn Phillips
White-tailed Hawk	Dec 5-6	CAL-Bell City (1) James Smithers, Madeline Wainscott

Broad-winged Hawk

Dec 1-4	CAM-Willow Island (1) Van Remsen, James Smithers, Madeline Wainscott
Dec 1	CHA-Smith Pt Hawk Watch site (1) Joseph Kennedy
Dec 2-3	CAM-Hwy 27/Trosclair Rd (3) Andrew From. Van Remsen
Dec 5	CAM-Broussard Beach (1) Michael Musumeche, Cheryl Huner, David Booth
Dec 18	CAM- East (unspecified location) Melissa Weaver, Charlie Lyon
Swainson's Hawk	Dec 1 CHA--Smith Pt Hawk Watch site (1) Joseph Kennedy
	Dec 1 CHA-FM1985 (1) Samantha Wolfe, Bradford Winn
Burrowing Owl	Dec 2-31 CHA-ANWR Frozen Pt (1) mult obs
Golden-front. Woodpecker	Dec 15 HAS-Houston Chapman Dt (1) Charlie Spencer
Ladder-back Woodpecker	Dec 3 GAL-S of FM2004 (2) Kyle O'Haver, Richard Liebler
	Dec 7 HAS-Tomball (2) Denise Furtado
	Dec 16 HAS-Warren Ranch (1) James Rieman, John Berner, Andrew Hamlett
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Dec 22 CHA-ANWR exact loc not specified (1) Denise Cameron
Least Flycatcher	Dec 18 CAL-S of Lake Charles, LA 397 area (1) Erik Johnson
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Dec 18 CAL-LA397 area (1) Erik Johnson
	Dec 27 CAM-Lacassine NWR Wildlife Loop (1) Fred and John Pratt
Great Kiskadee	Dec 18,29 CAM-Hackberry (1) Joan Garvey, Mark Meunier, mult obs
Couch's Kingbird	Dec 18 CAM-just N of Cameron Prairie NWR (1) Daniel Lane, Jack Rogers, Van Remsen

Western Kingbird

Dec 2	GAL-HI-E Mexico Rd (1) Carrie Chapin, Jon Piasecki, Wyatt Egelhoff
Dec 3	CAM-Trosclair Rd (1) Andrew From
Dec 4-10	CAM-Johnson Bayou area (1) James Smithers, Madeline Wainscott, Gary Kelley
Dec 6	CHA-FM562 3 mi NE of Smith Point (1) Garrett Hodne
Dec 6	CHA-Anahuac Access Rd (1) JAW
Dec 10	CAM-Lacassine NWR Wildlife Loop (1) Paul Zimmerman, Deanna and Gordon Griggs
Dec 18	CAL- Nelson Road Boat Launch (1) Paul Zimmerman
Dec 16	HAS-Baer Creek Park(1) Margaret Farese, Linda Martin-Rust, mult obs
Dec 29	CAM-Hackberry (1) Erik Johnson
N Rough-winged Swallow	Dec 1 CHA--Smith Pt Hawk Watch site (1) Joseph Kennedy

Cave Swallow	Dec 18	CAM-Calcasieu Riv Rd (1) Robert Dobbs
Bewick's Wren	Dec 18	CAL-Tom Hebert Rd (1) Erik Johnson
	Dec 16	HAS-Warren Ranch (1) James Rieman, John Berner, Andrew Hamlett
Townsend's Solitaire	Dec 26	HAS-Heritage Part Terrace (1) Steven Berenzweig
Veery	Dec 4	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) James Smithers, Madeline Wainscott
Purple Finch		
	Dec 16	CAM-Lake Arthur (1) Robert Dobbs
	Dec 27	ANG-SW of Lufkin (1) Katrinas Echols
	Dec 31	GAL-HI Boy Scout Woods (1) Wyatt Egelhoff
Lapland Longspur	Dec 11	HAS-Katy Prairie Sharp Rd (1) Timothy Freiday
	Dec 18	CAL-LA 397 (1) Erik Johnson
Clay-colored Sparrow	Dec 25	HAS-Villages of Bear Creek (1)
Henslow's Sparrow	Dec 18	CAL-Baer Creek Park (1) Stuart Nelson, Howard Smith, Jim Hinson
	Dec 30-31	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Geoff Butcher, Adam Wood, mult obs
Green-tailed Towhee	Dec 19-30	HAS-F M Lee Park (1) Stephan Lorenz, mult obs
Yellow-breasted Chat	Dec 18	CAL-Pine Pasture Rd (1) Daniel Lane, Jack Rogers, Van Remsen
Bobolink	Dec 31	LIB-CR491 (1) Colette Micallef
Western Meadowlark	Dec 16	HAS--Warren Ranch (1) James Rieman, John Berner, Andrew Hamlett
Bullock's Oriole	Dec 18-28	HAS-Friendswood (1) Chris Bick
Baltimore Oriole	Dec 3-31	HAS-Glenbrook Valley (1) James Rieman
	Dec 15	CAL-S Lake Charles Ernest St (1) Dale Hamilton and Paul Zimmerman
Bronzed Cowbird	Dec 10	CHA-Pear Orchard Rd (1) JAW
MacGillivray's Warbler	Dec 24	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) James Smithers, Kurt Ongman
Yellow Warbler	Dec 4	GAL-Texas City Skyline Dr (1) Richard Liebler
Yellow-throated Warbler	Dec 2-3, 18	CAL-S Lake Charles (1) David Booth, mult obs
Prairie Warbler	Dec 10	HAS-Katy Prairie-Sharp Rd (1) John Rice-Cameron
	Dec 18	CAL-LA397 area (2 separate)) Erik Johnson
	Dec 18	CAL-Tom Stegal Road (1) Erik Johnson
Black thr Green Warbler	Dec 17, 29	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Jon Piasecki, Wyatt Egelhoff, Carrie Chapin
Western Tanager	Dec 2	HAS-Briar Forest area (1) Bill Wright
	Dec 21	HAS-Sharp Road (1) Jim Hinson, mult obs
	Dec 24-28	HAS-Clear Lake City (1) Hoeff Ka,
Painted Bunting	Dec 13	CAL-Sulphur (10) Claire Sylvest

Abbreviations used: ANG – Angelina County; ANWR – Anahuac NWR; 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;; 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 TEXBIRDS 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.