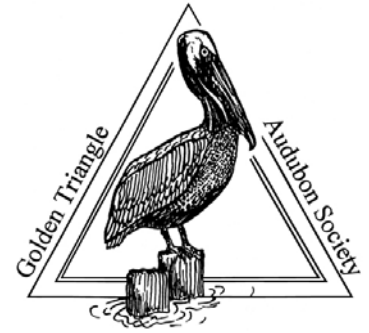


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 29 No. 3

March 2023

**Membership Meeting
Thursday March 16, 2023 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont**

Ecuador – Northwest Andes Mountains 2022

Ross Foreman

In early November of last year, our GTAS member Ross Foreman joined a birding group that explored the Andes mountains of Northwest Ecuador. Ross will present a slide show of the trip that will consist of amazing birds and other wildlife from the trip. The six-day trip included stops at Zurokuma Reserve, the Yanacocha Reserve, Rio Silanche Sanctuary, Mashpi Natural Reserve and Amagusa Reserve, Refugio Paz de las Aves, and other areas around the Tandayapa Valley. Ross has been an avid birder for over 30 years and has birded many areas in both North and South America including Costa Rica, Jamaica, Bahamas, Minnesota, Washington, California, and all over Texas.

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.

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.

Thursday March 16, 2023.
Membership Meeting. Ross Foreman on Birds of Ecuador.

Saturday March 18, 2023. Field trip to Bolivar Flats. This trip will occur as spring shorebird migration is well under way, but while the wintering birds are mostly still present. Bolivar Flats is an internationally important shore-bird location. This trip offers an opportunity to compare many of the "true" shorebirds with lots of help in identifying them. If you want help in identifying, gulls, terns, plover or sandpipers, this is the trip for you.

Meet at the vehicle barrier at 9:00 a.m. From Winnie, take TX 124 south to High Island. At the shoreline, turn right (west) on TX 87 and proceed through Gilchrist and Crystal Beach until you reach the intersection where Loop 108 turns right (north). Turn left (the opposite way to Loop 108) along Rettillon Road. At the beach, if conditions permit, turn right (west) about 1/2 mile to the vehicle barrier. Follow recent tire tracks, and be careful to avoid any cuts that may have developed. It takes at least one and a half hours to drive from the Golden Triangle. We will leave the vehicle barrier at about 8:45 a.m., although the group will be visually obvious on the flats should you be a few minutes late.

Some walking is necessary on this field trip. If the tide is a long way out, the leaders may walk up to a mile from the vehicle barrier, but you can turnaround at any point.

Many of the participants will visit the High Island Sanctuaries as they head home.

Important Note: Galveston County operates a parking permit program on

the Bolivar Peninsula. If you park on most parts of the beach, including the part next to the Flats, you must have a parking permit on your windshield. The fee for the permit is \$10.00 a year and permits are obtainable from most merchants on the Bolivar Peninsula including the Big Store, which opens at 7:00 a.m.

Saturday March 25, 2023.
TENTATIVE Sabine Woods Work Day. For more details, see the Web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org nearer the date. Any changes will be posted there.

Saturday April 22, 2023. Field trip to Sabine Woods.

This trip will look for Neotropical migrants at the height of spring migration. We will assemble at Sabine Woods at 7:30 a.m. (You should be able to find the group if you are unable to be there quite that early.)

At Sabine Woods, there is a small parking area, with additional parking improvised using the roadside verges. We hope to have portable toilets available at the entrance during spring migration.

This trip involves relatively easy walking on the trails at Sabine Woods to look for migrant songbirds, although another option is to sit at one of the drips and wait for the birds to come to you. The trails may be muddy and slippery if it has rained in the prior day or two. Armadillos and feral pigs have been very active, so there will be holes to avoid! There is a \$10 sanctuary pass donation at Sabine Woods for those who are **not** members of Golden Triangle Audubon or TOS.



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

27th Annual Birding Classic

The 27th Annual Birding Classic is fast approaching. This is the biggest, longest, birdwatching tournament in the U.S. It is a yearly event/competition sponsored by Texas Parks and Wildlife. The event promotes birding while documenting species across the state.

There are several categories. We will be participating in The Big Sit and are in the process of putting a team together consisting of 20 participants. Teams select a 50-foot diameter circle from which to bird (NOTE: THIS IS A MODIFICATION TO ALLOW FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING). Team members can rotate in shifts or can be the same members all day. Birds identified and counted may be inside or outside of the 50' circle, but they MUST be seen/heard by a team member from WITHIN the circle. This is up to 24 hours in a single day (midnight to midnight).

Tournament Dates: April 15 to May 15 allows each team to select a day for optimal migratory birds.

Location: Sabine Woods; Team Name: Visit Beaumont Texas

Contact Christine Sliva 409-782-1832 or
csliva20@windstream.net

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 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.

Winter Hummingbirds in Southeast Texas

Many people would like to know how often people in our area get winter hummers. I had forgotten how many years we have had them but my husband puts in the dates in eBird. Some of us who use eBird went back in the history to see which hummingbirds came in the winter and how long they stayed. Do not get me wrong, we did see them most days, but we might not have seen them every single day because we were either gone, or the birds were visiting flowers elsewhere.

In total in three counties, there have been nine hummingbird species that have wintered in our area. The three counties I know people who kept records through ebird, are Jefferson, Orange, and Hardin. These are some records that I retrieved from eBird about various hummingbird species that stayed a certain length of time in backyards in our area in the fall/winter. I took records from October through March.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird:

Nederland at our house:

There have been three one day fall/winter sightings: 11-21-04, 1-13-17, and 11-24-21

Stayed about four months from 11-21-10 until 3-20-11

Stayed about four months from 11-17-11 until 3-21-12

Stayed about five months from 10-20-12 until 3-28-13

Stayed almost three months from 10-31-13 until 1-27-14

Stayed a little over two weeks from 12-29-15 until 1-14-16

So far has stayed three months 12-3-22 until present day

A different house in Nederland

Two one day sightings on 11-3-15 and 11-13-2020

One two-day sighting from 11-7-21 until 11-8-21

Stayed a little over three months from 12-4-2012

Stayed a little less than two months from 11-9-2013 until 12-24-2013

Stayed over four months from 10-29-16 until 3-9-17

Another house in Nederland

One two-day sighting from 11-13-2020 until 11-14-2020

Broad-billed Hummingbird

A house in Groves had one come on 10-27-19 and stayed 19 days.

Allen's Hummingbird

One house in Nederland had one on 2-2-13

A different house in Nederland had one 12-27-11 until 2-25-12

Calliope Hummingbird

One house in Nederland had one to two from 12-29-11 until 3-16-12

Another house in Nederland had four different days with one on 10-11-2020, 3-7-08, 12-11-09, 12-16-09

One stayed for a little over three months from 12-20-09 until 3-31-10

One stayed for three weeks from 12-25-10 until 1-20-11

In part 2, we will look at the Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, Rufous, Ruby-throated, and Anna's winter hummingbirds eBird records for our area.

Just for the records, Jefferson County has a record of ten total hummingbird species because April 26, 2007 there was a sighting at Sabine Woods of a Green-breasted Mango. I realize that did not happen in the winter, but it is a good fact to know. The Texas Bird Records Committee has approved the sighting because there was a photo taken that day and several people saw it including my sister and brother-in-law.

Jana Whittle

Plants to Attract Winter Hummingbirds in Jefferson, Orange and Hardin Counties

Several people have asked about which plants we have in our yards of the ones of us in our area who have had winter hummers stay for weeks and even months. Of course, the first thing is always having multiple hummingbird feeders and clean and refill them every three days.

The first time I ever even thought about planting plants that hummingbirds like, I was at Billie Smith's house in Groves. Every September I would sit with her in her back yard and watch a minimum of 200 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds come to her eight feeders while I was there. Then one day when I was walking back to my car to leave, I noticed that she had a really, long driveway that had flowering plants lined all the way to the street. Plus, she had some of the same flowers in her back flower bed. The next time I went, I counted them. There were 27 plants. Each one of these plants had hundreds of red tubular flowers. I later found out that the flowers go to seed in November or December. Also, some people feel that they will spread too much, but I have not had that experience so far. I went to several local nurseries and asked for "the hummingbird" plant, but ended up not getting the same plant. So, I learned the scientific name "*Hamelia Patens*". They are very easy to take care of, are drought resistant, and produce flowers for a very long time in the fall. I planted at least six in a very narrow flower bed next to our driveway.

I went to the Hummingbird Festival in Rockport for about 20 years and toured people's backyards to see what plants worked for them. Nancy Newfield is a good friend of mine and I watched her band hummingbirds there. She wrote a book about plants that draw in hummers, and I went to her house in Louisiana several times. When she came this way, we would meet at a restaurant and talk hummers and plants. Louisiana has a wonderful population of winter hummers and she has banded many of them.

So, I asked Sherrie Roden and Harlan Stewart to help me create a list of plants that winter hummingbirds use and that grow in our area.

This is the list we came up with Flowering times (SSFW = Spring, Summer Fall, Winter)

Asterisks (*) for frost tolerant plants, multiple asterisks for plants that are even more frost tolerant than others.

Red Shrimp Plant (the redder, the better) SSFW**

Purple Porterweed SSFW

Coral Porterweed SSFW

Turk's Cap SF

Big Momma's Turk's Cap SFW

Mexican Turk's Cap SFW

Cuphea schumanii SFW

David's Verity Cuphea SSFW

Candy Corn Cuphea FW

Mexican Sunflower SF

Pineapple Sage FW

Mexican Bush Sage SF

Russelia equisetiformis (Firecracker Bush) SSFW

Coral Honeysuckle SSFW ****

Mexican Honeysuckle (*Justicia spicigera*) WS*

Flowering Maple (*Abutilon pictum*) (orange) SSFW

Hamelia patens SF

Bottle Brush Bush

There are many others, but these have worked the best in our yards. One plant that is always listed in hummingbird plant books is the red cardinal flower, but for some reason, they will not grow in my yard.

These plants can be hard to find locally, but I order some from places online and they arrive beautifully. Also, there are several nurseries in the Houston/Seabrook area that often carry them. I always call and ask.

Jana Whittle

Whooping Cranes

As most of you probably know, Whooping Cranes from the reintroduced Louisiana flock sometimes get wanderlust and we have had some come to Jefferson County. Some years ago now, two settled in the Blair Road area. Despite our refraining from disclosing the location, word got around among the hunting community, and two were shot and killed in 2016. The perpetrator was prosecuted under the Endangered Species Act and sentenced to probation. However, he failed to fulfill the conditions of his probation and was eventually sentenced to 11-months in federal prison.

More recently a pair took up residence just off Highway 73. In 2021, they had one chick, but it did not make it to adulthood for reasons not known to us. There was also a pair in Chambers County on Oak Island Road for a substantial period. In 2022, one crane was in residence at the same Jefferson County location, and at this writing is still there.

The International Crane Foundation has provided the following information.

"The female crane that is currently in Jefferson County is named L14-17, so she is about six years old now. Her mate who passed away last summer was named L11-18. We are hopeful that once she is relocated back to Louisiana, she'll re-pair by the next nesting season. Who knows, maybe she'll take her new mate back to Texas!"

In answer to our question, they responded

"We aren't entirely sure why they pass over so much "high-quality" habitat between their release location at White Lake and Jefferson County. I like to remember that they see things from a birds-eye view that we can't understand. Even though they belong to a non-migratory population, they still have migratory instincts and may become restless and explore! If the cranes found a secluded location with abundant resources, they might decide that it's good enough to stay. We can predict where they'll go, but we never know for sure, and I think that makes it exciting!"

Madi Radford of the International Crane Foundation will be our speaker at our April meeting.

Field Trip to Anahuac NWR – 18 February 2023

It was a cold day with a stiff wind for the Golden Triangle Audubon's February field trip to Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. Despite this, the trip had a good turnout with more than a dozen participants meeting at the Anahuac entrance station. As the group started organizing and arranging the carpooling for the drive around the refuge a female Vermilion Flycatcher was discovered perched on a nearby fence. The little bird put on a show and was very cooperative for the birders and photographers present. A good sign to start off any field trip!

As the group headed for the first destination it was obvious that the flooded fields south of the entrance station held plenty of waterfowl. Green-winged Teal were obvious from the start and Northern Shoveler were also plentiful. Gadwall were also present along with a few American Wigeon. American Coots crowded together and a handful of Ruddy Ducks swam and dove nearby. A nice flock of Greater White-fronted Geese were gathered on the far shoreline and Northern Pintail were also seen. A Crested Caracara flew by giving a good look at this odd-looking raptor. When the Coots started running across the water in a panic and the ducks burst into flight there was only one explanation – Bald Eagle! But in this case, there was not one eagle present but two! An adult Bald Eagle and an immature bird were both working the area looking for breakfast. The immature eagle seemed especially hungry as it swooped over the waterfowl time and time again. The adult was more patient and for good reason. When the young eagle finally did catch something (it was unclear what but likely a coot) the adult eagle went after it! The two birds locked talons at one point but the adult eagle came away with the prey item leaving the young bird to continue the hunt. Not the most sporting way to get a meal but nature is rarely fair!

Continuing down the road to Frozen Point a few other birds were encountered by the group. Forster's Terns worked the edge of the bay and Savannah and Swamp Sparrows foraged along the edge of the rocks along the shore. A Common Gallinule worked a nearby pond while a flock of Meadowlarks (probably Eastern) were flushed from the roadside. A large Herring Gull perched on a rock in the water while Tree Swallows zipped over the nearby marsh. Though these birds were welcome they were not the targets of the trip to Frozen Point. That honor belonged to a Burrowing Owl! This bird has spent the winter in a hole in an old concrete slab near Frozen Point and what was probably the same bird spent the previous winter in the same spot. Burrowing Owls are small, long-legged owls that often inhabit burrows dug by other animals. In the western United States, they often reside in prairie dog colonies. In Florida they often use Gopher Tortoise burrows. They hunt mostly small rodents and are not at all common on the upper Texas coast. Any Burrowing Owl find in this area is a good find and one that is cooperative enough to occupy a burrow right off a road in a wildlife refuge is an even better find! On this day, the bird stuck his head out of the burrow a couple of times while the group watched and photographed. Satisfying looks were had by all of this extremely cooperative Burrowing Owl.

From Frozen Point, the group returned to the entrance station and explored the hummingbird garden. The cold wind kept many birds down but some did make themselves seen and heard. A House Wren chattered and eventually showed itself in

some thick bushes while Yellow-rumped Warblers were common everywhere. An Orange-crowned Warbler foraged in a willow tree while a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher flitted nearby. A couple of Lincoln's Sparrows were spotted while a Song Sparrow chipped from nearby. An Eastern Phoebe surveyed the garden while a Ruby-crowned Kinglet bounced from tree to tree. A couple of Northern Cardinals and the birders completed the tour of the hummingbird garden and moved on to Shoveler Pond.

Shoveler Pond is well known to all local birders and has been a prime birding location for years. Recently, refuge staff has put the area through a major rehabilitation effort and the hard work has paid off. The area is now more open with a large amount of invasive vegetation cleared out leaving more good habitat for the native birdlife. Plenty of ducks were visible in the area of the boardwalk when, previously, an overgrowth of vegetation made viewing impossible of the little remaining open habitat. On this date, there were Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal along with plenty of Gadwall. A large flock of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks lined one shoreline while several Pied-billed Grebes swam nearby. Several Northern Harriers quartered over the marsh, flying low looking for an easy meal. Little Blue, Great Blue and Tricolored Herons also hunted in the area along with some White Ibis. One of numerous White-faced Ibis gave the group some pause as it bore some superficial resemblance to the less common Glossy Ibis but the group eventually sorted out the (probable) identity of this confusing bird. A nice flock of Roseate Spoonbills was a special delight to the birders and were life birds for at least one of the group. And even seasoned birders can always appreciate Roseate Spoonbills! Completing the circuit around Shoveler Pond allowed one sharp-eyed birder to pick out a Cinnamon x Blue-winged Teal hybrid. Ducks hybridize more frequently than most other birds but this was still a nice find and good photographs were taken to confirm the bird's identity.

Add in birds like Brown Pelican, Black-necked Stilt and Osprey along with one of the group getting a nice Bobcat encounter and it was an excellent field trip to be sure! Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge lived up to its reputation as one of the best birding destinations on the upper Texas coast if not the country. No doubt the birders will be back again for future field trips to this fantastic location!

The following species were recorded by the trip leaders:

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (130); Greater White-fronted Goose (60); Blue-winged Teal (85); Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal (1); Northern Shoveler (375); Gadwall (245); American Wigeon (2); Mottled Duck (12); Northern Pintail (9); Green-winged Teal (350); Lesser Scaup (2); Ruddy Duck (20); Pied-billed Grebe (19); Eurasian Collared-Dove (1); Mourning Dove (2); Common Gallinule (11); American Coot (450); Black-necked Stilt (54); Killdeer (7); Greater Yellowlegs (3); Lesser Yellowlegs (1); Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs (2); Wilson's Snipe (1); Ring-billed Gull (2); Herring Gull (1); Caspian Tern (1); Forster's Tern (3); Neotropic Cormorant (7); American White Pelican (25); Brown Pelican (2); Great Blue Heron (4); Great Egret (3); Snowy Egret (8); Little Blue Heron (2); Tricolored Heron (9); White Ibis (43); White-faced Ibis (79); Roseate Spoonbill (26); Turkey Vulture (9); Osprey (1); Northern

Harrier (9); Bald Eagle (3); Red-tailed Hawk (3); Burrowing Owl (1); Crested Caracara (1); Eastern Phoebe (2); Vermilion Flycatcher (1); Loggerhead Shrike (1); Tree Swallow (20); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (2); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (1); House Wren (1); European Starling (3); Northern Mockingbird (1); Savannah Sparrow (15); Song Sparrow (3); Lincoln's Sparrow

(2); Swamp Sparrow (6); Eastern Meadowlark (12); Red-winged Blackbird (175); Brown-headed Cowbird (2); Boar-tailed Grackle (2); Great-tailed Grackle (12); Boat-tailed/Great-tailed Grackle (6); Orange-crowned Warbler (3); Yellow-rumped Warbler (40); Northern Cardinal (4).

Steve Mayes

Bird Sightings – February 2023

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: A relatively normal February, without any totally unexpected species. The cold weather in mid-

February did not seem to cause any major disruptions. In the case of "early" migrants, especially those crossing the Gulf, the birds do not have advance knowledge that they are flying into adverse weather, and the duration of the cold spell was short, so mass casualties were unlikely, although the migrating birds reach the Texas coast in dire need of food. But the majority of the early migrants seem to have arrived well before the freeze, probably induced by favorable winds.

Purple Finches again came into the northern parts of our area in considerable numbers, especially in the counties around Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend Reservoirs. Wintering Western Kingbirds were found in some numbers continuing an increasing trend in recent years.

Local Counties (listed above)

Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Feb 19	JEF-TP (1) Stephanie Shipp, Michael Sack, mult obs
Buff-bellied Hummingbird	Feb 1-4, 15-28	JEF-Nederland (1) JJW, mult obs
Purple Gallinule	Feb 3-27	JEF-TP (1) continuing
Sandhill Crane	Feb 5	ANG-US69 nr Zavalla (4) Tim Garvey and Paula Aschim
Solitary Sandpiper	Feb 18	HAI-Big Thicket NP (1) David Doyle
Glaucous Gull	Feb 27	JEF-SRSP Marsh Unit (1) David Wittrock, Lou Chauvin
Barn Swallow	Feb 3	JEF-TP (14) Bonnie Berard
Purple Finch	Feb 1-27	HAI-Silsbee (3) Sherry Gibson
	Feb 2-26	ANG-SW of Lufkin (4) Katrina Echols
	Feb 3	HAI-N of Silsbee (3) Johnny Johnson
	Feb 3-15	JAS-SW of Jasper (4) Fred Lyons
	Feb 4-7	ANG-Normandy Estates (5) Donna Beck
	Feb 4-28	SAB-Hemphill (up to 10) David Bell
	Feb 5, 26	ANG-Lufkin (1) Gary Hunter
	Feb 4-6	ANG-Lufkin (3) Donna Beck
	Feb 12	JAS-nr CR51 (1) Phillip Hight
	Feb 19	HAI-Silsbee (1) Jana Winberg
	Feb 21	HAI-Sour Lake (2) John Park
Black-and-white Warbler	Feb 11	TYL-Martin Dies SP-Cherokee (1) Fred Lyons, Gabe Hargrove
Yellow Warbler	Feb 3-7	ANG-Ellen Trout Park (1) Gary Hunter, A Tindell
Painted Bunting	Feb 1-27	JEF-Nederland (3 m, 1 f) HS, mult obs

Nearby Counties

Cackling Goose	Feb 3-9	CAM-Illinois Plant Rd (13) Cheryl Huner, mult obs
	Feb 18	CAM-Lacassine NWR Pool Unit (2) Adam Diel
Cinnamon Teal	Feb 9	CAM-Lacassine NWR HQ (1) Michael Aurelia
	Feb 13	CAM-Bell City (1) James Sooy
	Feb 16-21	CAM-Cameron Prairie NWR (2) Rebekah Lepretre, mult obs
	Feb 25	CAL-Fabacher Rd (1) Gaufam Apte
Surf Scoter	Feb 22	CHA-Miramar Park (Offshore) (1) Lithia Metzmeier
Chuck-will's widow	Feb 5	CAM-Johnson Bayou Smith Ridge Rd (1) Nick Ramsey Jack Rogers
Anna's Hummingbird	Feb 4-26	HAS-Copperfield Area (1) continuing
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Feb 17-25	GAL-Dickinson (1) Jane Murtishaw
Allen's Hummingbird	Feb 6	HAS-Copperfield Area (1) mult obs
Yellow Rail	Feb 3	CAM-LA384/385 area(13) Jonathan Lueck (banding project)
Purple Gallinule	Jan 30	CHA-ANWR Frozen Pt (2) Laura Wilson, Bonnie McKenzie, Michael Mathews
Pectoral Sandpiper	Feb 25	HAS-Village Grove Park (2) Andrew Hamlett
Franklin's Gull	Feb 1-17	HAI-McHale Park (1) continuing
	Feb 13	GAL-Texas City Dike (2) Debbie Repasz

California Gull	Feb 3-7	GAL-Apfel Park/East Beach (1) continuing
	Feb 3	GAL-8 mi Beach (1) Brenda Gonzales
Glaucous Gull	Feb 15	CHA-Ash Lake (1) Cin-Ty Lee
Wood Stork	Feb 24	HAS-Deer Park Ballfields (1) Dale Wolck
Masked Booby	Feb 10	GAL-Bolivar Pen beach (1 imm deceased)
Magnificent Frigatebird	Feb 18	GAL-Tiki Island (1) Kiara Blandon
Broad-winged Hawk	Feb 19	CAM-Trosclair Rd (1) Phililip Wallace
Burrowing Owl	Feb 1-25	CAL-Tom Segal Rd/Corbina Road (1) continuing
	Feb 4-27	CHA-ANWR Frozen Pt (1) mult obs (continuing)
Hairy Woodpecker	Feb 3	HAS-Briar Forest (1) Matthey Giorgio
Ash-thr Flycatcher	Feb 8	LIB-Liberty area (1) Mike Riley
Western Kingbird	Feb 4-21	GAL-Pt Bolivar (1) Doug Fishman, Wyatt Egelhoff, Jon Piasecki, Charrie Chapin, mult obs
	Feb 21	GAL- Bolivar 27th St (1) Richard Liebler
	Feb 27	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Wyatt Egelhoff
Cliff Swallow	Feb 12	HAS-Braeswood (4) Peter Kaufman
Barn Swallow	Feb 6	GAL-Ferry Terminal Galveston side (1) Wyatt Egelhoff
	Feb 17	HAS-Horsepen Creek Park (1) Howard Smith
Purple Finch	Feb 1-19	LIB-FM1008 area N of Dayton (9) Colette and Paul Micallef
Orchard Oriole	Feb 1	HAI-Hughes Rd (1) Anon, Painted
Bullock's Oriole	Feb 12	HAS-Anderson Park (1)Rohit Agarwal
	Feb 12-14	HAS-Westheimer and Voss (1) Karen Goodger, Doug Fishman
	Feb 17	HAS-West Houston (1) Ann Cole
Baltimore Oriole	Feb 2-3	HAS-Spring Branch (1) Justin Sandt
	Feb 10-11	HAS-east of Katy (1) Timothy Freiday
	Feb 12	HAS-Pearland (1) Jeff McCall
	Feb 13-19	HAS- Glenbrook Valley (1) James Rieman
	Feb 18	CAL-Lake Charles (1) Kathleen Simon
Spotted Towhee	Feb 4	HAS-Jesse Jones Park (1) Dale Wolck, Andrew Hamlett
	Feb 12	HAS-Sharp Rd (1) Tim Perkins
Western Meadowlark	Feb 5	CAM-Lighthouse Rd (1) Nick Ramsey, Jack Rogers
	Feb 5	HAS-N of Waller (2) John Berner
	Feb 5	LIB-CR1051 (1) Wyatt Egelhoff
	Feb 19	Warren Ranch Lake (1) Stephen Gast
Henslow's Sparrow	Feb 10	HAS-Bear Creek Pk (1) Timothy Freiday
Ovenbird	Feb 5	CAM-Johnson Bayou Smith Ridge Rd (1) Jack Rogers
Louisiana Waterthrush	Feb 9	CAM-Lacassine HQ (1) Micahel Aurelia
Northern Waterthrush	Feb 20	GAL-S of Santa Fe (1) Kyle O'Haver , Richard Liebler, Wyatt Egelhoff, Robert Becker
Black-and-white Warbler	Feb 5	CAM-Johnson Bayou Smith Ridge Rd (1) Nick Ramsey, Jack Rogers

Nashville Warbler	Feb 5	HAS-Robt Stuart Park (1) A. Bittern
	Feb 11-19	HAS-Clear Lake City (1) Tony Frank, Steve Rogow
Northern Parula	Feb 4	CHA-White Mem Pk (1) John Bartos
Black-thr Green Warbler	Feb 3-21	HAS-Robt Stuart Park (1) A. Bittern-, James Rieman, mult obs
Black-headed Grosbeak	Feb 2-12	CHA-W Baytown (1) David Hanson
	Feb7-8	HAI-Pine Shadows (1) Diana Strassmann, John Berner
Western Tanager	Feb 3	HAS-Robt C Stuart Park (1) A Bittern
	Feb 27	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Wyatt Egelhoff, mult obs
Pyrrhuloxia	Feb 20	GAL-S of Santa Fe (1) Kyle O'Haver , Richard Liebler, Wyatt Egelhoff,
Painted Bunting	Feb 18	HAS-Spring (1) Brad Akers
	Feb 20	CAL-Moss Bluff (1) Lauren Lyons

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; SM – Steve Mayes, SRSP – Sea Rim State Park; SW – Sabine Woods; TP – Tyrrell Park including Cattail Marsh; TYL – Tyler County; WJC – West Jefferson County.

Avian Influenza – New Issues

Avian influenza virus has circulated in the wild bird population literally for centuries, but mostly in a low pathogenic form. There was a widely publicized outbreak in North America in 2014-15 that particularly affected Corvids (crows and jays) and birds in commercial poultry operations, where the close proximity of large numbers of birds enhanced its spread. The various strains of the flu are generally divided into Low Pathogenic and Highly Pathogenic classes, but only the Highly Pathogenic class causes high mortality. New strains seem to originate in Asia, and spread from there spread into Europe. How they spread from Asia across the Pacific or from Europe across the Atlantic is not clear. A clue might come from the most recent major outbreak in the UK, which began in late 2021, most visibly affecting migratory geese. In 2022, there have been precipitous breeding failures, with 90 percent failure at one of the largest Northern Gannet colonies on Bass Rock in Scotland. Other communally nesting seabirds that have been severely impacted include Roseate Terns and Great Skuas, both quite rare, Arctic and Sandwich Terns and shearwaters are also seemingly being hit hard. These are all species quite capable of flying long distances, and it is likely there is significant exchange between European and North American birds in the breeding populations of these species in places like Iceland, Greenland and northeastern Canada. Each year, some birds of Asian origin seemingly make their way from Siberia to western Alaska and then down the northwestern coasts of North America.

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

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RARE BIRD ALERTS

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

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.