

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

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January 2024

Membership Meeting Thursday January 18, 2024 7:00 p.m. Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont A Beginner Birder's Experience in Texas Jeff Hodges

After retiring from corporate America, Jeff redirected his attention towards nature, becoming a Texas Master Naturalist in 2022, volunteering for organizations involved in enhancing green space around The Woodlands and surrounding area. In 2022 Jeff launched his YouTube Channel (@Jeffswildlifeadventures) committing all money earned will be donated to organizations which preserve and restore wildlife habitat. This channel includes Jeff's adventures as he captures unique pictures and videos of animals in their nature habitat, in addition to a series of episodes which follow Jeff's journey as he rewilds his suburban yard into a native plant garden which attracts birds, bees, butterflies, and people to this transformed space.

Jeff bought his first professional camera in 2013 and has worked over the last decade to improve his photography skills but also understanding the habits of animals to get closer, capturing wildlife pictures which show the beauty and personality of the animals.

Jeff specializes on bird photography but enjoys taking pictures of all wildlife. Jeff states his main purpose of his photography is to help people appreciate the beauty and importance of all wildlife and understand what actions we as individuals can take to support the spaces wildlife call home.

Other pictures can be viewed on Jeff's Instagram account at [JKHodges30812](https://www.instagram.com/JKHodges30812).

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

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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
email: gtaudubon@aol.com

Calendar of Events

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

Thursday January 18, 2024 Membership Meeting. Jeff Hodges "A Beginner's Experience in Texas".

Saturday, January 20, 2024. 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.

In winter, there will usually be a good variety of ducks as well as other waterbirds, egrets and herons. Exactly where the birds are depends largely on the water depth in the various cells. Cell 1 -- the northernmost cell -- is the deepest and often has interesting ducks and grebes.

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 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 Cattail Marsh From the South

Go "north" on US69/96/287 around the south side of Beaumont. Take Highway 124 west (left) towards Fannett. 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 and turn south (right) on Walden Road. At the light at Highway 124, go straight ahead on Tyrrell Park Road and then as above.

Thursday February 15, 2024. Membership Meeting.

Stephanie Martinez, Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. Exact title to be determined.

Saturday February 17, 2024. Field Trip. Destination to be determined near the date based on reports on what is being seen.

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.



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

Christmas Bird Counts

It is that time of year again. Such an exciting and fun time to spend the day counting birds in areas that you might not have time to explore very often. It takes a lot of people who consistently will set aside time during a two-week period to help do this bird survey. Thank you to all the people who have tried their best to continue this survey. We go out in all kinds of weather and really enjoy doing Christmas Bird Counts

Christmas Bird Counts began on Christmas day on 1900. Prior to this, hunters had a contest called a "side hunt" where they would shoot as many birds as possible. Ornithologist Frank M. Chapman proposed a new holiday tradition of having a Christmas Bird Census. The first one had 27 birders and 25 counts. They tallied 90 bird species. The Christmas Bird Counts now start on December 14th and continue until January 5th. Every bird is counted. The data is used to assess the bird population and guide conservation groups to find out which action is needed.

If you have ever volunteered to do a Christmas Bird Count you will be assigned a certain area inside a 15 mile in diameter of the circle. There will be certain places you will bird all day long inside your area. Many count circles are divided up in eight or nine areas and you might have one or two areas. A lot of times it depends on how many volunteers are able to help that day.

John and I have done Christmas Bird Counts since 1990. The ones that we have participated in have been:

Brazoria CBC
Freeport CBC
Bolivar CBC
Galveston CBC

Johnson Bayou CBC
Beech Creek CBC
Turkey Creek CBC
Sea Rim CBC (discontinued)

When we were younger we tried to do 7 CBC's each year. This year we will only do 4. A good friend did 13 CBC's in one year. That takes a lot of planning and vacation from work.

Many times birds are found that are not usually noticed. Sometimes we get sections to bird that might not get as many species as others because some areas have better habitat. After doing counts 33 years, I can tell you that weather, drought, construction, destruction of habitat, less volunteers, etc. affect the numbers of species seen. If the day has no sun and just constant precipitation, it is going to be a low count that day. After hurricanes devastated our area, the counts were not good either. I can remember as a new birder there was a count when it was 17 degrees and ice was on all the overpasses in our area. Not many birders could help that day because they could not get to the location. Some us had to bird a whole area alone. Of course, with only two eyes and two ears, there were fewer birds seen.

I took some of the information for this article from [Audubon.org/conservation/science/Christmas Bird Count](http://Audubon.org/conservation/science/Christmas%20Bird%20Count) Sherrie Roden found a good source for archives for Christmas Bird Counts at netapp.audubon.org

This list of 2023 CBC's was taken from Houston Audubon's website.

- Armand Bayou (TXAY): 12/16
- Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR (TXAP): 12/20
- Beech Creek (TXBE): 12/23
- Bolivar Peninsula (TXBP): 12/14
- Brazoria-Columbia Bottomlands (TXBR): 12/30
- Brazos Bend (TXBZ): 12/16
- Buffalo Bayou [West Houston] (TXBF) : 12/30
- Central Houston (TXHC): 12/18
- Cypress Creek - Katy Prairie (TXCY): 1/1
- Fort Bend (TXFT): 12/19
- Freeport (TXFR): 12/17
- Galveston (TXGA): 12/19
- Galveston West End (TXWG): 1/2
- Houston [Baytown] (TXHO): 12/23
- Huntsville [Walker Co.] (TXHU): 12/30
- Johnson Bayou - SW Louisiana (LAJB): 12/14
- Lake Houston-Humble (TXHH): 1/2
- Matagorda County (TXMM): 12/18
- Old River (TXOR): 12/28
- Orange County (TXOC): 1/1
- San Jacinto Wilderness (TXSJ): 12/30
- San Bernard NWR (TXSB): 12/15
- Spring Creek (TXSC): 12/16
- Trinity River (TXTN): 1/4
- Turkey Creek (TXTC): 12/16
- Wharton Peach Creek (TXWH): 12/21

If you have never been on a CBC and have interest in birds and photography, ask around November to your local birders. They should be able to direct you to a person in charge of the counts. They are generally called the compiler. That person has to contact people who would like to be on the count, meet with them sometimes in the morning and make sure to get everyone's report in a few days. The people on the count have to write down every bird they saw, when they saw it, what time they began the count, and what time they end the count. Most of us start at 7:00 am and bird until dark. Some

people start at 5:00 am to hear owls before sunrise or bird after dark to hear them.

There are two CBC's that see the most birds in one day in Texas: Matagorda Island CBC which saw 230 bird species in 2022. Freeport CBC saw 195. That year Matagorda saw more birds than any of the other counts in the United States.

Other countries have much higher counts. The highest number of bird species seen in one in 2013 was the Cosanga-Narupa which is on the eastern slope of the Andes Mountains in Ecuador. They saw 531 in one day. I spoke with one of the

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Turkey Creek Christmas Bird Count – 16 December 2023

The Turkey Creek count was started in 1978 by Dave Dunacek, the first biologist in the then newly formed Big Thicket National Preserve, and is the second longest running count in Southeast Texas after the Bolivar Peninsula count. The center piece of the count circle is the Turkey Creek unit and trail, which runs along the creek from FM1943 just east of Warren to FM420 just six miles north of Kountze. Although the habitat in the Turkey Creek unit is probably among the least developed land in the Big Thicket, it does include much land owned by timber companies which typically clear cut and then replant. Gore Store Road runs across the circle, and a combination of county roads provides a much less used means to travel from one side of the circle to the other further north. From a birding perspective, the absence of any substantial bodies of water limits the number and types of species that are found. The Creek itself, although important to the Passerine species inhabiting the pine forest, is narrow and only the man-made lake in the Wildwood Resort area on the very edge of the circle, and the small Lake Hyatt, also essentially man-made, provide any habitat for water birds.

Although the numbers of birds seen on a single count does not allow many meaningful conclusions on changes in bird distributions and populations to be drawn, often purely anecdotal observations are the first clues that changes might be in the offing. We are fortunate in that the results of this long-running count, now 46 years old, can help pick out subtle changes in species that are seen infrequently. This year, we were particularly interested to see if we could detect any of the effects of the drought as the circle is just beginning to shake off the effects of an extreme drought. One predictable effect of a drought is to reduce the size and the nutrient quality of the various fruits and seeds. This may be of more importance later in the winter.

With a very wet few hours the day before, extending into the night-time hours, many parties were not able to begin serious birding until later in the morning than is usual on Christmas Counts. But the few hours after serious rain ends often finds the birds trying to make up for lost time. The tentative total of 59 species is comparable to the preceding two years, but below the average mid to high sixties that prevailed in the years immediately prior. On a longer-term perspective, the number of species is close to average, but the number of individual birds at only 1318 is very significantly below. One species whose numbers are highly variable from year to year can significantly influence the numbers. For this count, American Robin is such a species and finding less than a hundred for the second year in a row may be significant. Robins are, of course migratory, so it may be nothing more than milder conditions further north delaying completion of the migratory journey.

Ring-necked and Wood Ducks are usually to be found on Lake Hyatt. Wood Ducks were not there this

year, or may have fed and retreated to more sheltered areas as we were later in surveying the Lake. What the lake did have was at least nine Wilson's Snipe, feeding conspicuously in the open. Apart from an outlier in 1987, it was 2020 before the next one was seen. They have now crossed the 20 percent threshold, which although somewhat arbitrary, is used as a divider between unusual and rare by many regional reviewers.

It was encouraging to see Loggerhead Shrike return to the list. There has been a definite decline in the numbers in the open areas of Jefferson County to the south of the circle, but more and more this looks like a very localized effect there. In the early years of this count, not seeing a Shrike in the circle was unusual, but until this year the previous sighting was in 2015, so perhaps all is well, and numbers are beginning to return to normal.

Eastern Bluebird numbers were very low, in fact, the lowest since 1995 and only a little above the very low numbers in the early years of the count. In those low historical counts, the number of observers was very low. At this time, we don't have access to many other 2023 counts. The Beech Creek count, located just a little further north also shows a lowish number for Bluebirds, but not nearly as marked as the Turkey Creek count. Time will tell if there is reason for concern over Bluebird numbers

Birds recorded:

Wood Duck (6), Ring-necked Duck (3), Pied-billed Grebe (2), Eurasian Collared-Dove (1), Inca Dove (5), Mourning Dove (13), Killdeer (20), American Woodcock (3), Wilson's Snipe (9), Greta Blue Heron (5), Great Egret (2), Black Vulture (78), Turkey Vulture (117), Cooper's Hawk (1), Bald Eagle (3), Red-shouldered Hawk (2), Red-tailed Hawk (5), Great Horned Owl (1), Red-headed Woodpecker (3), Red-bellied Woodpecker (21), Downy Woodpecker (11), Pileated Woodpecker (8), Northern Flicker (11), American Kestrel (8), Eastern Phoebe (24), Loggerhead Shrike (1), White-eyed Vireo (54), Blue-headed Vireo (9), Blue Jay (27), American Crow (212), Carolina Chickadee (23), Tufted Titmouse (36), Red-breasted Nuthatch (2), Brown-headed Nuthatch, Brown Creeper (1), House Wren (8), Winter Wren (2), Carolina Wren (18), Golden-crowned Kinglet (5), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (46), Eastern Bluebird (23), Hermit Thrush (1), American Robin (81), Gray Catbird (2), Northern Mockingbird (8), American Goldfinch (54), Chipping Sparrow (63), White-crowned Sparrow (1), White-throated Sparrow (35), Savannah Sparrow (7), Song Sparrow (5), Swamp Sparrow (5), Eastern Meadowlark (16), Red-winged Blackbird (2), Orange-crowned Warbler (4), Pine Warbler (47), Yellow-rumped Warbler (43), Northern Cardinal (114). Species Total (59); total individuals (1318). 14 observers in 7 parties.

Party totals; 20.4 hours, 11.7 miles on foot; 26.9 hours, 138.0 miles by car. Total 49.3 hours, 149.7 miles.

*Thanks are due to Nancy Angell for compiling this count
John A. Whittle.*

Beech Creek Christmas Bird Count – 23 December 2023

The Beech Creek count was the second of the two counts established in 1978 by Dave Dunacek, the first biologist at the Big Thicket National Preserve. It takes its name from the Beech Creek unit, a tract of mainly beech trees in the northern part of the Big Thicket otherwise dominated by pine trees. While the Beech Creek unit is close to the center of the circle, important to the avifauna of the circle are a number of other features. Steinhagen Lake is a 10,700-acre man-made (March 1947 to June 1953) and extends to areas outside the count circle north of the US Highway 190 bridge. It was created by the construction of the Town Bluff dam (originally and to some extent still referred to as Dam B). In addition, all units of Martin Dies Jr State Park (both east and west of the bridge) and a number of Corps of Engineers parks; notably Magnolia Ridge Campground on the west side, and Sandy Creek Park on the east side are in the count circle. A recent addition to the Big Thicket Preserve, the Canyonlands unit on the west side of the Neches River downstream of the Town Bluff Dam largely lacks access roads.

The inclusion of the large body of a relatively shallow lake in the circle substantially increases the diversity of the avifauna. While many of the waterbirds prefer the relatively undisturbed northern parts of the lake near the confluence of the Neches and Angelina Rivers, some individuals or rafts of birds associated with water (ducks, cormorants, coots, grebes, terns etc) often drift southwards into the circle. The lake, of course, is fresh water and the edges of all fresh water bodies of water are favored by many species of birds. The lake was essentially drained briefly (two or three weeks) in July 2023 for repairs to the dam. In summer 2019, a drawdown of longer duration was undertaken, partially in the hopes of controlling water hyacinth and hydrilla. In the 10 years up to 2018, the average number of species seen on the count was 84. For the four years 2019-2022 it was 71.

Duck hunting is allowed on the lake every day of the season. In years past in the 1990s and the first decade or so of the 2000s there were lots of ducks and the frequent sounds of gunfire, coming mostly from the northern reaches of the lake (outside the count circle). Counts in those years recorded good numbers of many species of duck with Canvasbacks being one of the standouts. In many of these years several hundred were counted. In the last five or so years, the numbers have dropped off to almost none. While the lake drawdowns and the changes in vegetation they have caused are likely an important factor, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that hunting pressure has contributed to a longer-term reduction in waterfowl numbers.

On count day, the rain threatened by forecasters did in fact materialize as widely scattered heavy late afternoon showers which did not affect every sector and fortunately came too late in the day to seriously hinder the count. The preliminary total of 76 species was much better than the previous year's 60 and was in the same range as the three years that preceded that low total. The total species for the count has been quite variable over the years, and the low 80s would represent a "good" year. The total number of individual birds was a very respectable 5,861, higher than in most recent years. The variation in numbers is significant, but there is no obvious single species that we can point to. American Robin numbers are always

variable, as are numbers of coots and cormorants.

In many areas of Southeast Texas, Pied-billed Grebes are encountered in twos or threes, so a return to finding 63 was noteworthy. The quick return of American Coot numbers to the high levels typical of the periods 1994 to 2003 and 2007 to 2015 is interesting. Coots are omnivorous, but so are ducks. Coots, however, are largely surface feeders, while ducks are either dabbling or diving ducks depending on species. It will be interesting to watch the changes in numbers over the next few years if the lake level is not subject to more wide fluctuations. While the occasional Ring-billed Gull finds its way to the lake, there were none this year. The number of Forster's Terns was low, leading to speculation that small fish were perhaps not plentiful near the surface this year, maybe a result of the July 2023 drawdown. Double-crested Cormorant numbers were very high, but they typically feed from the surface catching prey at greater depths than the terns, and are more omnivorous.

We have become used to seeing good numbers of Bald Eagles, and three was the lowest number in several years. The eagles on the East Texas lakes in winter likely mostly breed much further north, coming south for the winter. It is, however, also likely that a few of the eagles we see in winter are "Southern" Bald Eagles, which tend to nest in December or January and disperse during the summer to point north, likely much further north.

Among the woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Red-bellied Woodpecker numbers were normal, while Downy Woodpeckers were down somewhat, as were Pileated Woodpeckers and Northern Flickers. It is now several years since the area experienced a hurricane with extreme winds, and the most damaged trees have likely fallen, so there are fewer trees attractive to woodpeckers.

In a drought year, and late summer and fall 2023 saw the most extreme drought in memory, we should look particularly at the year-round resident species for any impacts. The drought certainly meant that seeds and fruits would be at best smaller and/or fewer, and likely less nutritious. On the Turkey Creek count, much of the habitat is close to water, and the trees and vegetation often are able to tap into that water. That in turn will tend to concentrate the birds along the shores of the lakes and the banks of the creeks where our participants tend to concentrate their efforts regardless of the drought situation.

Sparrow numbers and diversity were predictably, I suppose, low. Brown-headed Cowbirds are rarely found in this count circle and 2023 was no exception. House Sparrows were absent from the count for the third year in a row. Many other species common in most counts were absent: Brown-headed Cowbird for example.

Looking back over the past records, it begins to appear that White-eyed Vireo are on the increase as winter residents. The typical winter resident vireo is the Blue-headed, two seen, although the numbers are never large. None in 2022 had been the first year the species was missed since 1996. Strangely enough, we went from 1978 to 1996 – the first years of the count – without finding one, and 2022 was the first subsequent

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Bird Sightings – December 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.

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: December is always an interesting month because of the number of rarities that are discovered during these counts. Increasingly, Tropical Kingbirds are being reported in the area. Most are carefully identified (best done by call). As those who have travelled south will know, it is an extremely common “wire bird” in Central and South America, comparable to the Northern Mockingbird in North America. Gulls, especially immature birds are notoriously difficult to identify, but the Thayer’s form of the Iceland Gull is one of the easier challenges.

Local Counties (listed above)

Ruby-throated H'bird	Dec 1-28	ANG-Westwood Bend (1) Katrina Echols
Black-chinned H'bird	Dec 1-4	ANG-Lufkin (1) Gary Hunter
Purple Gallinule	Dec 5	JEF-TP (1) Timothy Freiday
Limpkin	Dec 1-21	ANG-Marion Ferry Park (3) Gary Hunter
	Dec 17	HAI-John;s Lake Area (1) Johnny Johnson
White-tailed Hawk	Dec 8	CAL-Corbina Rd (1) Henry Robertson
Vermillion Flycatcher	Dec 3	JAS- Martin Dies SP (1) A. Tindell
Western Kingbird	Dec 3-4	JEF-Sea Rim SP (1) Buck Lee
Rose-breaded Grosbeak	Dec 11	JEF-SW (1) Howard Davis
Painted Bunting	Dec 21-31	JEF-Nederland (1) HS

Nearby Counties

Black Scoter	Dec 5	CHA-ANWR Frozen Pt (3 fem) WE
Horned Grebe	Dec 3	CAM-Rutherford Beach (2) James Smithers, Nick Ramsey
Common Ground Dove	Dec 2	CAL-Tom Segall Rd (3) Rendy Frederick
	Dec 30	HAS-Geo Bush Park (3) B Moffett, JM Fleischer
Lesser Nighthawk	Dec 14	GAL-High Is (1) mult obs
Wilson's Plover	Dec 2	GAL-Bolivar Flats (2) Grace Yaros, mult obs
Solitary Sandpiper	Dec -22	HAS-Sylvan Beach Park (1) mult obs
Purple Sandpiper	Dec 17-26	CHA/HAI-Sylvan Beach Park (1) mult obs
Franklin's Gull	Dec 17-19	GAL-Bolivar Flats and Bolivar Ferry (1) mult obs
	Dec 27-29	GAL-Boddeker Road (6) Ross Foreman, John Webb
Iceland Gull (Thayer's)	Dec 2-23	HAS-Hog Is (1) mult obs
	Dec 5-8	HAS-Ash Lake area (1) Tena Gardiner, mult obs
	Dec 14	GAL- 7 ½ mile pond (1) Richard Liebler
Harris's Hawk	Dec 19	GAL-Texas City Landfill (1) Jamie Schubert
Swainson's Hawk	Dec 4	GAL-Carbide Park (1) Richard Liebler
	Dec 14	CHA ANWR-Shoveler Pond (1) Janet Neath, Chuck Davis, Marylene Chan
Red-naped Sapsucker	Dec 30	HAS-Woodland Park (1) Greg Allen
Ladder-back. Woodpecker	Dec 30-31	HAS-Archbishop Fiorenza Park (1) Andrew Hamlett

Ferruginous Hawk	Dec14	CHA-ANWR East Unit (NW corner)(1) David Sarkozi, Eily Neale
Greater Pewee	Dec 1-29	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) continuing
Easte Wood Pewee	Dec 1	HAS-Brays Bayou Park (1) Miguel Duarte B.
Least Flycatcher	Dec 3	CAM-Willow Is (1) James Smithers, Nick Ramsey
	Dec 3	CAM-Lacassine NWR Wildlife Loop (1) Nick Ramsey
Great Kiskadee	Dec 16	GAL-Bacliff (2) Beth Sears, Liz Garney, Sandra Parker
Tropical Kingbird	Dec 16-17	GAL-League City (1) Brian Baird, mult obs
	Dec 16-30	HAS-Johnson Space Ctr Longhorn area (1) mult obs
	Dec 25-27	GAL-Clear Creek Education Village (1) Lisa Hardcastle, Brian Anderson
Western Kingbird	Dec 2	CAL-Bell City (1) Jack Rogers,
	Dec 1	GAL-Moody Gdns (1) Greg Whittaker
	Dec 3-8	GAL-Settegest Rd (2) Lance Pawlik, Dean Silvers, Keith Alderman
	Dec19	GAL-Corps Woods (1) Judith Rowen, Robert & J Gable
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Dec 3	CAM-Willow Is (1) James Smithers, Nick Ramsey
Philadelphia Vireo	Dec 18	HAI-Japhet Creek (1) Stanley Alimoney
Warbling Vireo	Dec 25	GAL-Clear Creek Nature Park (1) Brian Anderson
Rock Wren	Dec 16-31	CHA/HAS-Sylvan Beach Park (1) mult obs
Bewick's Wren	Dec 2-31	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) mult obs
Wood Thrush	Dec 3	CAM-Willow Is (1) Nick Ramsey, James Smithers
Lapland Longspur	Dec 25	GAL-Apfel Park (1) Boris Novikov
Lark Bunting	Dec 1-21	HAS-Warren Ranch Road area (up to 45)
	Dec 4	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) Donald Fullmer
Clay-colored Sparrow	Dec 7-31	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) John Hale, Richard Rulander
Brewer's Sparrow	Dec 4	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) Donald Fullmer
Harris's Sparrow	Dec 3-31	GAL-Campeche Cove Animal Hosp (1) Lance Pawlik, mult obs
Green-tailed Towhee	Dec 3	HAS-Sharp Road (1) Michael Allen, Carolina Alvarado

Spotted Towhee	Dec 9-31	HAS-Longwood-Retention Pond (1) John Cocanower, mult obs
Yellow-breasted Chat	Dec 31	HAS- Longwood-Retention Pond (1) John Cocanower
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Dec 14	CHA-FM1985 (1) SM
Western Meadowlark	Dec 1	GAL-Mahan Park (1) Richard Liebler
	Dec 5	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) John Hale
	Dec 6	HAS-Paul Rushing Park (1) Doug Fishman
	Dec 28	HAS-Warren Ranch Lake Area (1) Anthony Colicci
Baltimore Oriole	Dec 25-31	HAS-Bella Vista (1) Judy Behrens
	Dec 29	GAL-Santa Fe (1) Justin Halls
Nashville Warbler	Dec 22	HAS-River Oaks (1) Tina Overstreet
Yellow Warbler	Dec 2	GAL-Mahan Park (1) Richard Liebler
	Dec 26	HAS-Northpark Place (1) Bill Allen

MacGillivray's Warbler	Dec 2	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Nick Ramsey, James Smithers
Black-headed Grosbeak	Dec 25	HAS-Humble (1) Elizabeth and Philip Templeman
Blue Grosbeak	Dec 3-8	GAL-Campeche Cove Animal Hosp (1) Richard Liebler, mult obs
	Dec 9	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1)
Painted Bunting	Dec 11	GAL-HI Boy Scout Woods (1) WE
	Dec 18	HAS-Ann Taylor Park (1) B Moffett

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, SW – Sabine Woods; TP – Tyrrell Park including Cattail Marsh; TYL – Tyler County; WE – Wyatt Egelhoff; WJC – West Jefferson County.

Christmas Bird Counts *(Continued from page 3)*

planners for an Ecuador bird count. He starts in January getting permission from landowners, he contacts businesses to get sponsors for a t-shirt for each person, a breakfast, lunch, and dinner donation for each volunteer birder. It was so interesting to see the different types of approaches for compilers to get ready for the CBC's.

Each CBC, no matter where you are takes focus and drive. Thank you to all the compilers and birders over the last 123 years who help year after year. Last year, there were approximately 2,100 CBCs all over the world. A total of 2,554 bird species were tallied by 79,005 participants.

Jana Whittle

Beech Creek CBC *(Continued from page 5)*

year the species was missed. Interesting also were large numbers of both Carolina Chickadees and Tufted Titmouse.

Birds recorded: Wood Duck (4), Northern Shoveler (2), American Wigeon (2), Mallard (4), Canvasback (11), Ring-necked Duck (1), Lesser Scaup (2), scaup species (17), Pied-billed Grebe (63), Eurasian Collared-Dove (4), Mourning Dove (30), Common Gallinule (9), American Coot (1968), Killdeer (45), Wilson's Snipe (1), Double-crested Cormorant (253), cormorant species (162), American White-Pelican (4), Greta Blue Heron (5), Great Egret (21), Snowy Egret (1), Little Blue Heron (1), White Ibis (2), Black Vulture (132), Turkey Vulture (46), Bald Eagle (3), Red-shouldered Hawk (7), Red-tailed Hawk (5), Belted Kingfisher (7), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (11), Red-bellied Woodpecker (62), Downy Woodpecker (6), Hairy Woodpecker (4), Pileated Woodpecker (12), Northern Flicker (7), Merlin (1), American Kestrel (3), Eastern Phoebe (17), White-eyed Vireo (3), Blue-headed Vireo (2), Blue Jay (79), American Crow (165), Carolina Chickadee (118), Tufted Titmouse (62), Red-breasted Nuthatch (1), White-breasted Nuthatch (1), Brown Creeper

(1), House Wren (3), Winter Wren (2), Carolina Wren (36), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (9), Golden-crowned Kinglet (11), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (59), Eastern Bluebird (29), Hermit Thrush (3), American Robin (15), Brown Thrasher (1), Northern Mockingbird (11), European Starling (17), Cedar Waxwing (85), American Goldfinch (151), Chipping Sparrow (89), Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow (18), Song Sparrow (2), Swamp sparrow (3), Eastern Towhee (1), Red-winged Blackbird (908), Common Grackle (569), Orange-crowned Warbler (13), Pine Warbler (59), Yellow-rumped Warbler (282), Northern Cardinal (105). Species total (76) total individuals (5862). Party totals 14 hours, 10 miles on foot; 27 hours, 83 miles by car. Total 41.0 hours, 93.0 miles.

Thanks are due to Nancy Angell for compiling this count.

John A. Whittle

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 2024 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.

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Form

To join the National Audubon Society, please complete this form and return with Introductory Membership fee of \$20 (payable to the National Audubon Society, or indicate you wish to be billed) to National Audubon Society, Memberships, PO Box 97194, Washington, DC 20090-7194. To use this form to give a membership as a gift, please complete the form and indicate your name in the appropriate space. Payment should accompany gift memberships.

Name: _____

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Check enclosed Please bill me

Golden Triangle Audubon C4ZW250Z

Brown Pelican SUBSCRIPTION/ MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

eMail or Tel No: _____

RARE BIRD ALERTS

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

The Texas-wide Rare Bird Alert, maintained by Houston Audubon Society, is available on their web-site at <http://www.houstonaudubon.org/> Email alerts are also available for a fee.

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.