

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 30 No. 3

March 2024

Membership Meeting
Thursday March 21 , 2024 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

Kati Krouse

**Founder and Executive Director of BEARS Etc. and
Vice Chair of Texas Black Bear Alliance**

Kati will be presenting on Black Bears, specifically their historic and current range, updated sightings in Texas, how to be Bear Aware, and what BEARS Etc. and TBBA are doing to help them.

Topics Include:

- Why large carnivores are not pets
- What individuals can do to change the laws
- How you can help locally
- Why BEARS Etc. is the organization to call to help with placement

Founded in 2017, BEARS Etc. is the nation's first bear-centric sanctuary. Located in Walker County, Texas, it connects people with nature through education and awareness. It is building a state-of-the-art facility, providing a safe place for neglected, abused and unwanted bears that are a part of the exotic pet trade and giving them a *PEACE* of the Wild.

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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Vol. 30, No.3 March 2024
Issue number 302

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.

Saturday March 9, 2024. Sabine Woods Work Day. To prepare the Woods for Spring. We have some tools but expect to have to fill holes caused by armadillos and feral hogs, so please bring a spade if possible. Loppers and clippers may also be useful.

Thursday March 21, 2024. Membership Meeting. Kati Krouse on Black Bears. See p. 1 for more details.

Saturday March 23, 2024. 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 Rettilon Road. At the beach, **if conditions permit (beware of soft sand)**, proceed onto the beach and 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 90 minutes 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 1/2 mile or more from the vehicle barrier, but you can turnaround at any point.

Many 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.

Thursday April 18, 2024. Membership Meeting. Cin-Ty Lee on Flycatchers.

Saturday April 20, 2024. Field Trip to Sabine Woods.

28th Annual Birding Classic

This is fast approaching. It 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. Event is up to 24 hours in a single day (midnight to midnight). 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. Tournament Dates: April 15 to May 15 allows each team to select a day for optimal migratory birds. Contact Christine Sliva 409-782-1832 or csлива20@windstream.net



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

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 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 make them members of GTAS or even 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 Facebook

Recently I have had several questions about our Golden Triangle Audubon Facebook page. First of all, we appreciate each one of GTAS FB followers. It is such a good way to share the bird sightings and photos and for all of us to get a glimpse of what our fellow birders are seeing especially if we are having to stay inside for various reasons. Thank you.

Kelley Sampeck started it in March 2014. She added John Mariani and me as administrators because she was moving out of town. At first it was trial and error learning how to put photos onto the fb page. Several photographers felt that the photos turned out clearer when they emailed us the photos. My email address is janafw@aol.com. Some photographers gave me permission to copy and paste any photo that I saw on their fb page to place in our fb page. A

few people like to message me photos because they might not have a fb page. I will accept them any of the ways they send them to me. We have had lots of people looking at our page. The blue Cattle Egret has had the most people reached. It had over 37,000 people reached. Most photographs reach at least 150.

We post photos from people who only have a cell phone, point and shoot, a video, or any kind of camera. Some photos will be crystal clear and others might be a little fuzzy.

One of the purposes for our fb page is to reach people to let them know about our meetings, field trips, workdays, Big Sits, Christmas Counts, Spring and Migration Counts, etc. The next purpose is to educate our viewers about nature. Yes, we put other things besides birds. I have had numerous comments about how much people have learned by viewing our fb page.

Please remember that all of our GTAS people are volunteers. We have no paid employees. Please be patient if John M. or I cannot post your photo after you send it to us. Sometimes we are places where there is no wi-fi or we could be on a trip and cannot post it right then. Also, if we have posted a common bird photo, we might not find it necessary to post the same bird species right away. For that reason, if you send ten photographs, we might not post all of them. Please do not take it personally. We have to look at what has been sent and make a call whether our viewers would think it boring to put the same bird species on over and over in a short time period.

When you email photos to us, please put the name of the bird species, the date you saw it, and the location. When you see photos on our page, sometimes there will not be all the info on it. That is OK but the readers really like to know all three. It is really difficult to name some bird species not knowing where or when the photo was taking. Some bird fb pages refuse to put a photo on without all of that info. We are not that strict, and will still put the photo on.

Please remember that some days we might not receive any photos to post, but last week in two days we received over forty photos to post. Two of those days, I was birding and had no wi-fi. It varies from day to day.

We are trying to add more admins and Kelley, who still controls that process, is working to accomplish that.

Jana Whittle

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Droughts, El Niño and La Niña

There is general agreement that the US is in an El Niño phase of the Southern Oscillation. Unfortunately, the complex interactions involved make predicting the effects for any particular instance of the Oscillation fraught with difficulties. A typical El Niño becomes evident in September or a month or two earlier with the warming of the Pacific waters off the west coast of South America. It typically lasts until about April.

The "normal" effect in Southeast Texas is increased precipitation and a stronger more southerly stronger subtropical jet, leading to below normal winter temperatures. But the current El Niño was slow to produce these effects, particularly in respect of rainfall!

Fall 2023 Migration at Sabine Woods

We apologize for being somewhat late in presenting this account. It is late November before the eBird listings are available to us, and by that time, we need to provide information on Christmas Counts

This presents the sightings in eBird by individual date for the period August 1 through October 31. This is somewhat dated for inclusion in a Newsletter, but the eBird information is not available until late December, and we prefer to include local Christmas Count reports in the January and February issues.

We try each year to present a listing of the migrants seen at Sabine Woods during both the spring and fall migration. Increasingly, records are entered by the observer into Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird program. Cornell makes these observations available to researchers in digital form after a short delay, eliminating the need to reenter all the records. Our compilation is derived from the eBird reports with only a very few observations that were not entered into eBird added.

Methodology

We employ a methodology unlike that used anywhere else that we are aware of, that attempts, to the extent practical, to exclude duplicate sightings of the same birds on the same day. The base data set is provided by eBird and includes all sightings that have passed the eBird review process. Each day, we first consider for each species, the highest number of that species reported on that day. We then review other reports for that day, and evaluate whether that number is reasonable in light of the numbers of each migrant species reported by other experienced birders, especially those familiar with the area. In most instances, a species reported by only one observer on a day when there was more than one reliable birder submitting a checklist requires some corroboration such as a good description or an identifiable photograph. It should be noted that this methodology will count a bird present over several days once each day. No doubt there are many instances when birds remain overnight and are counted on two or more days, but we have no way of even estimating the "duplicate counting" that results.

We are grateful to all those who entered their sightings into eBird, especially those who birded the Woods on many days. A complete listing of the observers whose eBird checklists were reviewed is included in the digital version of this article.

Review of the Season

The Atlantic basin hurricane season in 2023 spared the Gulf of Mexico from any significant problems, even though there was a near record number of Atlantic basin storms. Indeed, it was a somewhat unusual season in many ways. Only one hurricane (Idalia in late August) and one strong tropical storm (Ophelia in late September) significantly impacted the US mainland and neither affected the Gulf of Mexico. Probably from a weather perspective, the most significant impact was the severe drought that affected the coastal regions of Texas and Louisiana and peaked on October, the height of the fall migration season for the warbler species sought by most

birders. Birds need food and water, and the drought impacts both, the food more than the water. Finding water may require longer distance flights and probably more crowded conditions at the remaining water holes, but it is unlikely that migrants (and residents) will fail to find water at all. However, the prolonged lack of rain means that the food typically consumed by many passerine migrants, seeds and berries, will be less numerous and smaller. Insect numbers are obviously also strongly correlated with water.

Much more than in the spring, the birds passing through in the fall respond to a multitude of conditions in the United States. Study of the spreadsheet reveals a number of periods when birds likely declined to leave on the trans-Gulf journey for two or three days. The usual reason would be strong adverse south winds. August 28-31, September 8-10, September 15-17, September 23-26, and most of October 6-12 are all periods when this seemingly happened. (Detailed historical records of winds are not easy to find.) One wonders also if birds sometimes take off and encounter unfavorable winds after a relatively few miles and head back north.

In the absence of truly rare birds, like the Red-legged Honeycreeper in 2022, many fewer birders than last year visited during fall migration. Indeed, just over 100 checklists were submitted to eBird in Fall 2023, while there were 245 that reported the honeycreeper in 2022. Thus, there are days in fall 2023 for which no checklists were submitted.

Although the value of our analysis tends to involve the numbers of the species that are seen every year, there is always interest in the unusual species that are recorded. The one species that stands out was the well-described MacGillivray's Warbler on September 8. There were other "rare" species, but most were either not as far away from their normal migration pathway or exhibit frequent pattern of vagrancy to the Gulf Coast, such as Western Tanager on October 28. Others were simply species that are seen most years but were seen only once or twice in fall 2013.

Flycatchers were numerous August 30-31, and again September 8-10. We have no checklists for the first eight days of September. Weather archives show rain on most days in that period, so these birds might have waited out that weather system. Sightings in the September 15-17 and 23-25 were heavy (most passerine species) but this may largely reflect that these were weekend periods. There are many reports, and significant numbers of migrants, especially warblers, in the period October 6 to 15. It looks as if perhaps we may not have enough checklists and perhaps too many days with none to draw valid conclusions.

In the space available, it is not possible to discuss any analyses in deep detail. The overall analyses for previous fall migrations were all published in and remain available on our web site to enable your own research.

John A. Whittle

Field Trip to Hawk Club in Bridge City 17 February 2024

Cold, windy field trips seem to be a theme this year for the Golden Triangle Audubon Society. The February trip to the private Hawk Club in Orange County has great habitat that is not accessible by the general public but some of the birders in the club have built a relationship with the Hawk Club over the years getting access for the Orange County Christmas Bird Club. The low-lying property is southwest of the city limits of Bridge City, and the portion owned by the Hawk Club extends south to the Neches River and the northern reaches of Sabine Lake. It was not an ideal day to visit the wetlands but birders soldiered on to explore a territory most birders do not get to see!

Ducks are definitely something that birders should look for at the Hawk Club as it was established as a duck hunting club. Northern Shoveler was first spotted by the birders but they were quickly joined by Gadwall and American Wigeon. Mottled Ducks were also seen by the group which is encouraging as this species is declining throughout its range. Green-winged Teal was also spotted but it was apparently a down year for ducks at the club and the numbers were not up to their usual standards. This has been true throughout the area perhaps because of a combination of the recent drought and a mostly mild winter to our north.

Other typical birds of marsh areas were also found on the day. American Coot are present in this area anywhere there is enough water and aquatic vegetation and were easily spotted. Common Gallinules are a little harder to see but are not too shy and the group did find some. Likely, there are additional rail species present on the property but the cold and wind made finding them difficult. Neotropical Cormorant was spotted on the property as was Great Egret. Some distant wading birds were initially thought to be Snowy Egrets but some long-distance photography proved that they were Cattle Egrets. Recently, Cattle Egrets have been split into two species and so our birds are now known as "Western Cattle Egrets." Large Great Blue Herons were seen both in flight and stealthily hunting in the ponds. White-faced Ibis were spotted by the group but it is likely that many more birds were hiding in more sheltered areas from the cold and wind. A Belted Kingfisher was spotted as it flew away from its perch and a Pied-billed Grebe was seen in one of the ponds.

There were songbirds seen on the day as well although conditions were not ideal. Eastern Phoebe was easily detected both by sight and sound. This is by far the most common wintering flycatcher in our area and they love to be near water so it was not too surprising to find several here. Savannah Sparrows are by far the most common winter sparrows in the area and this was also true at the Hawk Club. Savannahs were flushed from the brushy areas along the ponds and there were likely even more present than were seen. Swamp Sparrows were found along the pond edges while White-throated Sparrow was seen in a wooded area. Other common woodland birds were detected on the day. Ruby-crowned Kinglets fussed as they bounced around the trees and Carolina Wrens called from deeper in the brush. Blue Jay was present in the woods while Northern Mockingbird was detected in a more open area.

Northern Cardinals were common in the thickets while Tree Swallows soared over the ponds. Downy Woodpecker was detected in the trees and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker played hide and seek with the group before finally giving a good look to the group.

Raptors are always favorites for any field trip. Our area has plenty of species to choose from and the Hawk Club has good habitat for many of them. A few birders got to see a Merlin as it perched on a fence post near the road into the Hawk Club. Unfortunately, the small falcon flew off before the whole group could get a good look. Several American Kestrels were spotted on the day. Some demonstrated the hovering flight for which they are well known though no successful hunt was witnessed. An Osprey was spotted as it flew overhead carrying a fish. The marsh areas of Orange County host a large number of Ospreys every winter and it is always a good place to look for them. Northern Harriers were spotted cruising low over the marsh while Red-tailed Hawk was seen flying higher over the field. Maybe the highlight of the trip was a Bald Eagle perched in a tree near the road. This huge raptor cooperated with the party and gave great looks and photos to all. The bird's white head was tinged with brown. This could indicate that the bird recently plunged into muddy water after prey or that it might be an approximately four-year-old bird that has not quite reached full adult plumage. The bird eventually flew off but not before everyone got great looks. A couple of Crested Caracaras sat on the ground for a distant view by the birders.

The Hawk Club has a great mix of habitat with extensive wetlands and woodlands. There is no doubt that the property holds many more species than were seen on the field trip. The cold and especially the high winds likely prevented many birds from being detected. Recent Christmas Counts on the property have produced such exciting birds as Vermilion Flycatcher so there is always the prospect of great birds on the property. It would definitely be worthwhile to attempt future trips to this extensive habitat and seek out whatever might be hiding in this little birded property in Orange County!

The following species were recorded by the trip leaders: Blue-winged Teal (75); Northern Shoveler (65); Gadwall (50); American Wigeon (12); Mottled Duck (4); Green-winged Teal (1); Pied-billed Grebe (1); Mourning Dove (5); Common Gallinule (5); American Coot (30); Killdeer (12); Neotropical Cormorant (1); Western Cattle Egret (3); Great Egret (1); Great Blue Heron (4); White-faced Ibis (25); Black Vulture (8); Turkey Vulture (5); Osprey (1); Northern Harrier (2); Bald Eagle (2); Red-tailed Hawk (2); Belted Kingfisher (1); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1); Downy Woodpecker (1); Crested Caracara (2); American Kestrel (5); Merlin (1); Eastern Phoebe (4); Blue Jay (1); Tree Swallow (6); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (2); Carolina Wren (4); Northern Mockingbird (1); White-throated Sparrow (3); Savannah Sparrow (13); Swamp Sparrow (2); Eastern Meadowlark (2); Red-winged Blackbird (35); Yellow-rumped Warbler (25); Northern Cardinal (6)

Steve Mayes

Bird Sightings – February 2024

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: February used to be one of the "quietest" months, but the birding community seems to be very active every month nowadays. Despite no longer listing migrants that are merely a week early this column is still lengthy this month.

Local Counties (listed above)

Fulvous Whistling-Duck	Feb 19	JEF-TP (3) HS
White-winged Scoter	Feb 1-3	JAS-US96 S of Jasper (1) Sage Church, Andrew Rapp
Limpkin	Feb 16	JAS-Sandy Creek Park (1) Fred Lyons
	Feb 20	ANG-Cassells Boykin Park (1) Bryan Cotter
Solitary Sandpiper	Feb 8	JAS-Jasper (1) Sage Church, Andrew Rapp
	Feb 16	ANG-Ellen Trout Park Lufkin (1) Gary Hunter
Swallow-tailed Kite	Feb 6	ORA-IH-10 Vidor (1) Barbara Jensen
Short-eared Owl	Feb 25	JEF-Sabine Pass - S 1st Ave (Pilot Station Rd) nr Texas Bayou (2) Jerry Connally
Yellow-throated Vireo	Feb 29	JEF-SW (1) Stephanie Anderson
Yellow Warbler	thru Feb 7	JEF-Groves (1) Dania Sanchez
Painted Bunting	Feb 1-28	JEF-Nederland (3 m, 1 f) HS, continuing

Nearby Counties

Egyptian Goose	Feb 23	CHA-Anahuac (2) Darwin Evangelista
Horned Grebe	Feb 25	CAM-Holly Beach (1) James Smithers
Common Ground-Dove	Feb 7-13	HAS-George Bush Park (1) Ross Silcock, Robert Rogilio, mult obs
	Feb 18	LIB-Devers (12) Elijah Clark, Keith Andringa
	Feb 24	GAL-UH Coastal Ctr FM2004 (17) Lisa Hardcastle
Cinnamon Teal	Feb 2-24	CAM-Lacassine NWR Wildlife Loop (1) mult obs
Wilson's Phalarope	Feb 10	CHA-FM1985 (1) Sage Church
Common Nighthawk	Feb 17	HAS-Katy Prairie (1) Anon
Allen's Hummingbird	Feb 1-27	HAS-Copperfield area (2) Stephen Williams, mult obs
Limpkin	Feb 4--12	GAL-Magnolia Ridge/Clear Creek (2) continuing
Black-legged Kittiwake	Feb 17-18	CAM-Rutherford Beach (1) Paul Conover, Nick Ramsey
Franklin's Gull	Feb 7	GAL-Bolivar Flats (2) Clin McCullick
Gt Black-backed Gull	Feb 5	HAS-Ash Lake (1) mult obs
Glaucous Gull	Feb 5	HAS-Ash Lake (1) mult obs
	Feb 17-23	HAS-Channelview (1) Mult obs
California Gull	Feb 4	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) Richard Liebler, Heru Lee, Cin-Ty Lee
	Feb 16-23	HAS-Channelview, Market St (1) Cin-Ty Lee, mult obs
Iceland Gull	Feb 4	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) Heru Lee, Cin-Ty Lee

Iceland Gull (Thayer's)	Feb 5-14	HAS-Ash Lake (3) mult obs
	Feb 14	GAL-9-mile beach (1) Keith Alderman
	Feb 17-18	HAS-Channelview-Market St/Lynchburg/Burnet Bay (1) mult obs
Common Tern	Feb 11	HAS-Sylvan Beach (3) Cliff and Sarah Trend
Sandwich Tern	Feb 12	CHA-Oak Is Pier Z(1) WE
Least Bittern	Feb 25	GAL-HI S E Gast (1) WE
White-tailed Hawk	Feb 25	CAM-LA 27 Bell City (1) Jack Rogers
Broad-winged Hawk	Feb 18	CAM-Cameron (1) Charles Lyon, Melissa Weaver, James Smithers
Burrowing Owl	Feb 1-24	CHA-Anahuac NWR Frozen Point (1) continuing
	Feb 2-24	CAM-Rutherford Beach Road (1) Philip and Cathy DiSalvo, mult obs
Short-eared Owl	Feb 18	CAM-Rutherford Beach (1) Charles Lyon, Melissa Weaver, Charlott Chehotsky
	Feb 24-24	CAM-Willow Island/Broussard Beach (1) Jack Rogers, Jordyn Mathieu
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Feb 18-25	CAL-Corbina Rd (1) David Booth, mult obs
Greater Pewee	Feb 2-25	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) continuing
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Feb 11	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Vasudev Gohil, Zainab Patel
Great Kiskadee	Feb 4	CAM--57-Acre Park (2) George Eschenbach
Tropical Kingbird	Feb 4	GAL-E of League City (1) Lisa Hardcastle
	Feb 7-29	GAL-TAMU Galveston (1) Alex Cox, mult obs
Couch's Kingbird	Feb 13	CAL-Vinton (1) Megan Berg
Western Kingbird	Feb 2-23	GAL-HI E Mexico Rd (3) WE mult obs
	Feb 18	GAL-Lafitte's Cove (1) James, Schubert, Robert Becker
Cliff Swallow	Feb 21-23	HAS-Bray's Bayou ne Stella Link (8) Peter Kaufman
Lesser Goldfinch	Feb 2	CAL-Corbina and Lincoln area (1) mult obs
	Feb 3	GAL-Campeche Cove(1) Richard Liebler
	Feb 17	HAS-Atascosita (1) Heather Ashielfie
	Feb 18	CAL-Lake Charles (1) mult obs
Lark Bunting	Feb 4-18	HAS-Warren Ranch/Katy Prairie (up to 8) continuing
Harris's Sparrow	Feb 3-28	GAL-Campeche Cove (1) mult obs
Clay-colored Sparrow	Feb 6	CAL-Sulphur (1) Michael Thibodeaux

Spotted Towhee	Feb 4	HAS-San Jacinto Bttlgn (1) continuing	Nashville Warbler	Feb 21	HAS-Kleb Woods (1) mult obs
Yellow-breasted Chat	Feb 24	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Jack Rogers, Jordyn Mathieu	MacGillivray's Warbler	Feb 24	HAS-Woodlandsnd Park
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Feb 8	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) mut obs	Black-thr Blue Warbler	up to Feb19	HAS- Piney Point Village (1) Richard Alexander
	Feb 25	HAS-Exploration Green 1 (1) Anon	Summer Tanager	Feb 3	GAL-Clear Creek Village
	Feb 25	HAS-Crosby_Lynchburg (1) Ray Porter	Western Tanager	Feb 10,26	GAL-Ferry Rd (1) Anon
Western Meadowlark	Feb 2	GAL-Moody Gardens (1) Eric Howland, Greg Whittaker		Feb 12	HAS-Canyon Gate (1) Liz Buck
	Feb 9	GAL-Bolivar Flats (1) WE		Feb 26	GAL-Clear Creek Vill (1) Jackie Farrell
	Feb 13, 18	HAS-Longenbaugh/Porter Rds (1) Karen Goodger, Justin Sandt	Black-headed Grosbeak	Feb (4)	HAS-Pine Brooks Wetlands (1) Brian Young
	Feb 27	HAS-Paul Rushing Park (1) Karen Goodger	Blue Grosbeak	Feb 2, 12	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Cin-Ty Lee, KMJ Bird
Hooded Oriole	Feb 5	CAL-SW of Lake Charles (1) Suzanne LaBove	Indigo Bunting	Feb 15	LIB-Romayor (1) Gary Rabalais
Bullock's Oriole	Feb 4-23	HAS Bellaire (1) mult obs	Painted Bunting	Feb 6	CAL-Sulphur (1) Claire Sylvest
	Feb 26	HAS-Eldridge Pkwy S/Richmond (1) Letha Slaigle. Amy Ondrus		Feb 6-7	HAS-Webster (1) Chris Bick
	Feb 28	CHA-ANWR Exact location not specified (1) Carol Bell, Roger Howard			
Baltimore Oriole	Feb 3-26	HAS-Bella Vista area (1) Judy Behrens			
	Feb 8	HAS-Blackhawk Park (1) Anon			
	Feb 19	LIB-Romayor (1) Gary Rabalais			

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; 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.

This Wave Theory of Spring Migration Will Prepare You for Your Next Outing

Extracted from an article by Hannah Waters originally published in *Audubon* magazine Spring 2023)

Songbirds don't leave their wintering grounds all together. Here's when to expect different species as they cross the Gulf of Mexico. Species don't show up in April and May all mixed up in an avian potpourri; instead, they tend to pass through in a predictable order year after year.

Wave theory of avian migration. Each wave has a unique cast of characters that share ecological traits, such as wintering grounds and diet. And within each are two smaller peaks divided by sex: Males tend to migrate ahead of females to claim nesting territories.

The birds' arrival dates and precise order vary annually. Wind patterns shift. Weather, like storms or late freezes, can interrupt migration, whereas warm breezes and clear skies hasten birds along. Habitat changes on wintering grounds or stopover sites alter routes. But overall, the waves are reliable.

That's helpful for banders, who must carefully plan to process sometimes 600 birds in a single day. "Our number-one priority is bird safety," Jacob says. "Wave theory helps us predict when the big pushes of birds are going to come." It's helpful for birders, too: By knowing what birds to expect they can better prepare for a day in the field. "It doesn't take away from the magic of it," Jacob says. "It's reassuring to know: They're going to be here, and I know when they're going to be here."

The Three Waves of Migration

Wave 1: Early Birds

Short-distance migrants that winter in the southern United States or northern Mexico dominate the first wave. When

spring's sunlight hits the Arctic, warmth spreads south, spurring them north. Some eat seeds and thus can find food before insects hatch. *Species include: Yellow-rumped Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Swamp Sparrow, and Palm Warbler*

Wave 2: Neotropical Travelers

The pace of migration picks up in mid-April. The second wave features many colorful migrants traveling from the tropics. These species depart when they sense changes in day length and other subtle cues. They arrive just in time to glean the first emerging midges and other insects off leaves and branches. *Species include: Gray Catbird, Least Flycatcher, Magnolia Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, House Wren, Ovenbird, Tennessee Warbler, and Yellow Warbler*

Wave 3: Bug Lovers

The third wave doesn't come until spring is in full force. Leaves are out, the weather is warm, and there are plenty of bugs. That's when avian insectivores skilled at catching midair insects show up: flycatchers and certain warblers. Caterpillars are also abundant, supporting vireos and cuckoos. *Species include: Willow Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, American Redstart, Wilson's Warbler, and Swainson's Thrush*

Does the West Coast Experience Waves?

In the West, birds arrive in two bursts during spring: bug catchers in mid-March, and seed eaters in mid-April. But the patterns are not as distinct.

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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 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.

Notes to Fall 2023 Sabine Woods Spreadsheet

Rare species

The following not to be expected species seen only once or twice are not included in the table:

Eastern Whip-poor-will one on Oct 8; Vermilion Flycatcher one on Sep 23, one on Sep 24; Ash-throated Flycatcher two on Oct 2; Couch's Kingbird one on Sep 10; Bell's Vireo one on Oct 4; MacGillivray's Warbler one on Sep 8; Western Tanager one on Oct 28

Expected species seen in small numbers

The following are expected but seen in numbers too small to justify entries in the table:

Green Heron one on Aug 25, one on Aug 30; Orchard Oriole one of Aug 12. Louisiana Waterthrush one on Sep 14; Golden-winged Warbler one on Oct 6; Black-throated Blue Warbler one on Sep 19; Scarlet Tanager one on Oct 8.

List of Observers Submitting Checklists

Many submitted more than one, and a total of 109 checklists were available.

Madeline Averett, Bonnie Berard, John Berner, Chris Brantley, Mel C, Dan Coleman, Rebecca Cook, Michael Cooper, Megan Davidson, Howard Davis, Ryan Dickerson, Frank Farese, Margaret Farese, Beth Foulds, Robert Gearhart, Mariann Golden, Pamela Goolsby, John Haynes, Thomas Hellweg, Carol Hurley, Greg Jackson, Johnny Johnson, Virginia Johnson, Cin-Ty Lee, Brad Lirette, Heydi Lopes, John Mariani, L D Mathers, Steve Mayes, Sean Mecredy, Claire Moore, Pamela Morgan, Shawn Onsgard, Greg Reynolds, Michael Rosen, Sue Rosen, Andrea Salas, Claire Schaeffer, Jared Schaeffer, Bonda Sek, Renvy Smith, Harlan Stewart, Mariah Stonestreet, Lauren Stranahan, Christine Turnbull, Sean Verkamp, John Whittle, Janey Woodley, Tim Young.

Sightings at Sabine Woods during Fall 2023

Species	Date	August 2023					September 2023																		
		12	25	26	30	31	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	19	20	21	23	24	26	27	29	30
Nbr Checklists		1	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1
Yellow-billed Cuckoo							1	1						3		1			1	1	1				
Chuck-will's-widow				1	1	1	1		1										1	1	1				
Mississippi Kite										1				5											
Northern Harrier																									
Sharp-shinned Hawk																									
Cooper's Hawk		1												1	1					2					1
Broad-winged Hawk		2	2	2	2		1	3	1					1	1						2	1			1
Swainson's Hawk						1	1	2						1											
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker																									
Northern Flicker																									
American Kestrel																				1	1				
Merlin																					1	1	2		1
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1				1	1	11	2	1					1	1					1					
Eastern Wood-Pewee				3	4	4	6	4	3	1		2	1	11	2					2	2	8			1
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1						1	1						1	6	3	1			1	1	2			
Acadian Flycatcher				1	1	2	3	1						1		1				1	1	2			
Alder Flycatcher									1																
Willow Flycatcher				1	1	2	2													1		1			
Traill's Flycatcher			1	2	3	4	6	3	2					4	1						3	3			
Least Flycatcher	1	1		1	1	1	3	8	1	1				1	2	1				5	3	3			2
Empidonax sp	3		1	1	2	2	13	2	3	1				1	9	2		1		4	3	6			1
Eastern Phoebe																							1		
Great Crested Flycatcher	3	1	4	5	8	4	23	4	2	2				5	4	3				4	2	2			1
Eastern Kingbird		1				2		6	1					2											
White-eyed Vireo														1	2		1			1		2			
Yellow-throated Vireo																									
Blue-headed Vireo													1												
Philadelphia Vireo														3	3										
Warbler Vireo								1						1	1	4	1								
Red-eyed Vireo		1		2	4	2	2	1	1	1	1			1	2	2	1					4			1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet																					1	2			
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1		2	8	6	5	11	3	6	4		1	2	6	7					4	3	5		2	8
House Wren																									1
Gray Catbird																				1					1
Brown Thrasher				1						1				2	2					2	1				1
Swainson's Thrush																					2				
Wood Thrush																					1				

Sightings at Sabine Woods during Fall 2023

Species	Date	August 2023					September 2023																		
		12	25	26	30	31	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	19	20	21	23	24	26	27	29	30
Nbr Checklists		1	1	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1
Lincoln's Sparrow																									1
Yellow-breasted Chat				7	6	3	4	1	2				3	4	1										1
Baltimore Oriole				2	4	4	9				1			13	9	1		1	1	1					
Ovenbird						1	1	1					1	1	2	1			1	1	1				1
Worm-eating Warbler				1		1									1						1				
Northern Waterthrush						1								1	1	1			1	1					
Blue-winged Warbler							1																		
Black-and-white Warbler		2	1	1	6	4	5	6	2	4		4		2	6	6	1				2	2			2
Prothonotary Warbler																2		1							
Tennessee Warbler								2											1						
Orange-crowned Warbler																									
Nashville Warbler									2				1	2	1			1		5	3				
Mourning Warbler					2	1	7	6	4					2					1	1	1				
Kentucky Warbler						1		1								1									
Common Yellowthroat									1					1	2						2				1
Hooded Warbler		2			3	2	2	3	1	1	1		2		1						1	1			
American Redstart				1		1	1	2						1	2	2	1		3	2			2		6
Northern Parula		1						1		1	2	2		2	4			1		1					
Magnolia Warbler								1	1												5		1		
Bay-breasted Warbler																									1
Blackburnian Warbler																									
Yellow Warbler		1	1		2		3							1	2	1		1							
Chestnut-sided Warbler																									
Palm Warbler																									
Yellow-rumped Warbler																									
Yellow-throated Warbler		1													1										
Prairie Warbler									1																
Black-throated Green Warbler					1										1					1					
Canada Warbler				5	5	4	3	1	1				3	5	2	2		1	3	4	1				1
Wilson's Warbler									1		1				2				2	1	4				1
Summer Tanager							1							1	1				1	1	1				
Northern Cardinal		5		6	6	5	6	6	2	6	3	1		2	6				6	6	4		2		6
Rose-breasted Grosbeak																									
Blue Grosbeak				3	1	2		1							2				1						
Indigo Bunting							1								4				3	1	2				6
Painted Bunting		1		1		1	2		2					3		2	1		3	2	3				2

Sightings at Sabine Woods during Fall 2023

Species	Date	October 2023																Total	
		3	4	6	7	8	9	10	12	14	15	17	19	21	22	26	27		28
Nbr Checklists		3	1	2	4	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	2	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo					1		1			2				1					14
Chuck-will's-widow					1	1	1			1									12
Mississippi Kite																			6
Northern Harrier		2			3				1	1	1			1				1	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk		3			1					3	1			1				2	11
Cooper's Hawk					1	2			1		1							1	12
Broad-winged Hawk				2	5	1				2	2	1							32
Swainson's Hawk																			5
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker												2	2	2		1		1	8
Northern Flicker					1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1					10
American Kestrel				1	1	1							1					1	7
Merlin				1	1		1			1									9
Olive-sided Flycatcher																			20
Eastern Wood-Pewee				8	2	1	1	1						2		2		3	74
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			2	1			1		1										23
Acadian Flycatcher					1														15
Alder Flycatcher																			1
Willow Flycatcher																			8
Traill's Flycatcher				2	1														35
Least Flycatcher		1	1		1	1	1		1	1		1							43
Empidonax sp		1			1	2	1												60
Eastern Phoebe				1	5	3			1	1	2	1		2					17
Great Crested Flycatcher					1		1												79
Eastern Kingbird																			12
White-eyed Vireo			1	13	4	12	2	2	1	2	1	1							46
Yellow-throated Vireo						1	1												2
Blue-headed Vireo					3	2	3	2		2	1	1		1					16
Philadelphia Vireo				2	2	3													13
Warbler Vireo					2	1													11
Red-eyed Vireo				3	1	1						1							32
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		1		4	6	25	11	10	6		4	5	3	7	2	3		6	96
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		4		9	8	28	1	2	4	4	2		5	3	1	3		6	164
House Wren					1	1	1						1	3	1			2	11
Gray Catbird				1	16	8	15	3	1	2	1	2						1	52
Brown Thrasher					2	7	3		2	2	1	2		1				1	31
Swainson's Thrush			1	2	2	1	1	1	3			1							14
Wood Thrush				1	3	3			1			2							11

Sightings at Sabine Woods during Fall 2023

Species	Date	October 2023																Total	
		3	4	6	7	8	9	10	12	14	15	17	19	21	22	26	27		28
Nbr Checklists		3	1	2	4	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	2	
Lincoln's Sparrow					2	4			1					1					9
Yellow-breasted Chat					6	3						1							42
Baltimore Oriole																			46
Ovenbird				5	2	2	1	1	1									1	25
Worm-eating Warbler				1					1										6
Northern Waterthrush				1															7
Blue-winged Warbler				1	1														3
Black-and-white Warbler		4		9	6	1	5	3	2	1			3	2					92
Prothonotary Warbler																			3
Tennessee Warbler				2	6	3	3	4	2	2		2	1	3				6	37
Orange-crowned Warbler						1				2		3							6
Nashville Warbler		1		6	9	11	7	8	5	4	3	6	1	2		1		6	85
Mourning Warbler					2														27
Kentucky Warbler																			3
Common Yellowthroat			1	4	40	23	5	6	1	1		1	1	1				1	92
Hooded Warbler				3	3								1						27
American Redstart		6	2	16	11	12	4	7	5	3		3	1						94
Northern Parula				10	12	8	5	5	2	2		5	2	2				1	69
Magnolia Warbler		1		5	8	9	1												32
Bay-breasted Warbler					1														2
Blackburnian Warbler				1		1													2
Yellow Warbler																			12
Chestnut-sided Warbler				3															3
Palm Warbler				1			2		1					1					5
Yellow-rumped Warbler										1				2				1	4
Yellow-throated Warbler					1														3
Prairie Warbler		1																	2
Black-throated Green Warbler				4	3	2	2	2	3	3		1	1	4					28
Canada Warbler				1															42
Wilson's Warbler		1	1	4	4	4	1	4		1									32
Summer Tanager				6	4	3	2		2			1	1	1					26
Northern Cardinal			6	4	4	8	5		4	1	1	3	5	4	2	2		2	129
Rose-breasted Grosbeak					2	3						4							9
Blue Grosbeak				2	1														13
Indigo Bunting		2		11	45	45	4	2	4	10	2	2	8	8		2		14	176
Painted Bunting					2	1				1						1			28