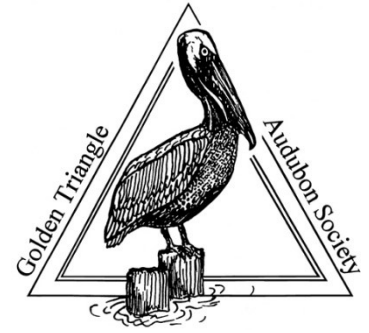


# The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 30 No 11

November 2024

## Annual Meeting

Thursday 21 November 2024 7:00 p.m.  
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

1. Elections
2. Your Favorite Bird Pictures

Dr. Harlan Stewart has again volunteered to prepare all photos submitted in advance into a Powerpoint presentation. The contributors of the pictures are encouraged to talk briefly about their pictures telling where they were taken etc. Contributions should be no more than about 10 pictures. The pictures should be bird related and have been taken in the last two years, but do not need to be exhibition quality, especially if the subject is especially interesting for any reason.

In order to prepare a combined presentation, we will need to have the pictures by Monday morning November 18. They can be emailed as attachments to Harlan at [hstewartmail@gt.rr.com](mailto:hstewartmail@gt.rr.com); If necessary, send several separate emails. The pictures can be compressed to about 50 percent of original to reduce the number of emails needed. If you cannot send them to Harlan in advance, we may be able to show pictures you prepare yourself if they are on a flash drive, and are in the Powerpoint format, ready to project. We much prefer advance submission, and, depending on how many are submitted, we might not have time to show many or even any that are not submitted in advance. Please come early to work out any kinks if you want to do anything other than show still pictures/Powerpoint and talk about them.

We plan to have the doors open no later than 6:00 p.m., and have light refreshments available by about 6:15 p.m.

## Delivery of the *Brown Pelican*

Most of you now receive the *Brown Pelican* as a pdf file attached to an email. Others receive printed copies mailed to you by US mail. This piece is addressed to those of you in the latter category. In October, the printed copies were mailed across the counter of the post office as first-class mail on Friday 4 October. As best we can determine, copies for addresses in Southeast Texas were not delivered until 17 October, the day of our October meeting. Some of you may not have received your mail by the time you needed to have left home to attend the meeting. See page 3 for details of how to start receiving your copy by email.

## *The Brown Pelican*

Vol. 30, No.11 November 2024  
Issue number 310

### Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information  
[www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org)

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## Calendar of Events

*Important Note: Field Trip notices published here are subject to last minute changes. Changes will always be posted on the GTAS web site at [www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org).*

**Thursday October 17, 2024. Membership Meeting.** Your favorite bird pictures. Full details on page 1.

**Thursday November 21, 2024. Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting of Golden Triangle Audubon Society will take place on November 21, 2024 in the Garden Center, Tyrrell Park. At this meeting, we will hold elections for all Offices except President (whose term continues through 2025) and all At-Large Board positions. To nominate someone contact the chair of the Nominating Committee. Steve Mayes. Please in the first instance email him at [gtaudubon@aol.com](mailto:gtaudubon@aol.com). Nominations from the floor will be in order but must be accompanied by affirmation, either orally at the meeting, or in writing, that the candidate is willing to serve.

### 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](mailto:gtaudubon@aol.com).

**Saturday November 23, 2024. Field Trip to West Jefferson County.** In recent years, this has been one of our most successful field trips. However, we are holding our breaths this year, as the area has been inordinately dry, recently and anecdotal report have so far found

relatively few birds. However, it is early November before we normally see many of the wintering species.

The area is well known for its birds of prey, which in past years have included Bald and Golden Eagles, Crested Caracaras and White-tailed Hawks in addition to the more "expected" Red-tailed Hawks, although Northern Harriers, and American Kestrels. Anecdotal reports indicate American Kestrels are arriving in good numbers this year. In some years we have seen White-tailed Kites and Merlins. However, birding trips to the area so far this year have found fewer birds than usual. Perhaps it is still too early, or the weather further north has allowed them to postpone their southward migration. Here in Southeast Texas, we have had a series of unusual weather periods over the last 18-months or so with droughts, freezes and some very wet periods, culminating in a quite severe drought during October this year. The amount of rice grown in Jefferson County this year seems to have been quite low and this may be why we are seeing few cowbirds and blackbirds.

The area is also well known as the wintering ground of what has become a large (about 1,000 strong) flock of Sandhill Cranes and most winters is one of the best places to see the wintering sparrows of the area.

Both cranes and sparrows are omnivorous, and depend on seeds and roots in fall and winter. As a result of the very wet period in the summer, there appears to be plenty of seeds available. They will eat insects, but mainly in the spring and summer.

Depending on whether we experience any heavy rain in the next two or three weeks, there may be flooded fields, that attract ducks and geese also.

We recommend those coming by way of IH-10 stop at the Stuckey's at the intersection of IH-10 and FM365 (on the short stretch of two-way service road of IH-10 - north side) to use the facilities and purchase any snacks you need. Reaching toilet facilities during this trip requires a lengthy side trip! Then meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of FM365 and Johnson Road (on the "north/west" side of Johnson Road at that intersection). From the intersection of Interstate 10 and FM365 in Fannett, proceed along FM365 (towards Nome) for about six miles.

Shortly after you emerge out of the woodlands, South China Road goes to the right (east then north) and immediately afterwards, on the left, is Johnson Road. If you approach from the north, Johnson Road is about 7.5 miles south of US 90 on FM365. Contact Field Trip chair Steve Mayes, [gtaudubon@aol.com](mailto:gtaudubon@aol.com) for further information. This will be largely a "car birding" trip, car-pooling desired. There is space to leave cars at the intersection of FM365 and Johnson Road.

## **Preliminary List of Local Christmas Bird Counts**

**Johnson Bayou, LA.** Saturday December 14. Contact Gary Kelley, [garymke@sbcglobal.net](mailto:garymke@sbcglobal.net)

**Bolivar Peninsula.** Date not confirmed. Contact Steve Mayes, [sgmayes@hotmail.com](mailto:sgmayes@hotmail.com)

**Turkey Creek.** Saturday 21 December. Contact John Whittle [johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com)

**Beech Creek.** Saturday 28 December. Contact [johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com)

**Orange County.** Wednesday 1 January 2025  
Contact Linda Jackson, [vlbjax@yahoo.com](mailto:vlbjax@yahoo.com)

## **Membership Dues and Delivery of the *Brown Pelican***

To simplify our record keeping, all memberships now run from January through December. Membership dues are \$20 per year. We are now accepting 2025 dues. You may pay at any membership meeting (checks preferred) or use the subscription/membership blank on the back page. Dues paid in September or later will cover through the end of 2025.

For new members joining National Audubon on line and providing 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.

The October 2024 *Brown Pelican* was mailed (across the counter at a Post Office) as First-Class Mail on Friday 4 October but as best we can tell, none were delivered until Thursday 17 October. This was the day of the October Meeting! As is often the case, there was no postmark on the mail piece, and we have no idea what happened. As a result, we would very much encourage you to receive the *Brown Pelican* electronically, not only to ensure that you receive it in a timely manner but also because this saves paper, printing cost, postage cost and significant volunteer time in taking the manuscript to and collecting the copies from the printer, sealing the copies, affixing labels and stamps and taking them to the post office. Postage rates have recently increased again, and quite substantially this time. It cost 50 cents in 2018 to mail a copy and now it is 73 cents. We are aware that many of you prefer to have printed copies to read, but as noted, it is becoming increasingly expensive and consumptive of volunteer time for us to prepare and mail them, even apart from potential delivery delays. When we send you a copy electronically, we send it as an attachment to an email. We know that a few of you cannot access attachments, so in the email, we normally will also provide a direct link to the copy on our web site ([goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://goldentriangleaudubon.org)), as well as instructions as to how to navigate yourself to that issue on the website. To start receiving your copy as a pdf file, simply send an email to [gtaudubon@aol.com](mailto:gtaudubon@aol.com) from the email address you want us to use. Normally, we will send you an email by return with a copy of the latest issue attached to make sure everything is working properly. At this time, we plan to continue sending mailed copies to those of you without electronic access.

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## **Field Trip to Sabine Woods – 19 October 2024**

Our October Field Trip was, as usual, to Sabine Woods, on the premise that the timing of the trip stands a good chance of catching the later neotropical migrants. Perhaps less so than in the spring, the winds and weather can nevertheless influence how many migrants are in the woods. We did start early to catch the birds that may have come in the previous day and were not yet ready to cross the Gulf that night. The first front to the late fall -- it could not really be called a cold front, and it was a completely dry one -- passed through three days prior but kept going well out into the Gulf and therefore probably did not dissuade many migrants from setting out across the Gulf within one or two days. It did reduce the temperature by about 20 degrees. The dry conditions extended to a completely cloudless sky. There was no wind at all until the middle of the day. The

forecast southwest wind failed to appear, but briefly a fresh easterly wind was present. So much for the "science" of meteorology!

The birding group of around 20 was composed almost exclusively of members familiar with the Woods, and was not very cohesive, as participants wandered quite widely. As a result, very few if any participants saw all the birds in the trip list! The area was in the grip of an increasing drought that followed an extremely wet period. That wet period filled -- overfilled really -- all the ponds, and there was still water in all of them, although very little in the northwest pond. As a result of the abnormal fall climate, the Woods have relatively little undergrowth in areas where there has been extensive growth in recent years,

There was considerable activity, Tricolored and Little Blue Heron notably, during the morning over the pond that is north of the Woods. This is essentially a permanent pond, but hidden from view by high vegetation on its banks. For the first time in a while, there were cattle in the area north of the Woods, with a few of the inevitable Western Cattle Egrets attending them. There were a couple of dark Ibis, and at least one Northern Harrier was cruising low over the area. A flock of about 65 Blue-winged Teal was seen.

In contrast to the last two or more years, there were not any unusual species in the Woods this fall and the Woods have not been birded as much as usual much this fall. The 19th was about when a pair of Cape May Warblers arrived in the years up to 2021, but not since. They were partial to the “Tennessee Tree” – a complex of live oaks at the western end of the main pond. Probably as a result of the developing drought, it produced very few acorns this year. The warblers used to drink from the sweet sap left when the acorns fell, and the tree was very popular with other species as well. On this day, birds were spread out over the whole of the western half of the Woods.

Raptors were perhaps a little scarce on this trip. A noisy young Red-shouldered Hawk had been ranging around the area for a while, and was evident. Two Black Vultures perched for a period on the almost dead oak on the bluff over the center of the main pond. Black Vultures have been increasing along the highway from Sabine Pass, often in very substantial numbers, but haven’t often perched in the Woods proper. A large part of the group spent some time in the newly leased western “annex” and found a pair of Great Horned Owls. Their presence doubtless resulted in the absence of any Barn Owls.

The new water feature just west of the Tennessee Tree was active, and is proving to be a valuable addition to the birding features in the Woods. It was there that a Yellow-throated Warbler was photographed along with a Northern Parula. It was getting late for a Parula, but there are usually one or two Yellow-throated Warblers that winter along the immediate coastal plain of Southeast Texas and south-western Louisiana. At least two Tennessee Warblers were around and several American Restarts, immature males and females. Two Magnolia Warblers, including one very boldly marked and therefore likely a male, were seen, as well as one Bay-breasted Warbler and one Chestnut-sided Warbler. One Black-throated Green Warbler, one Wilson’s Warbler, and one Nashville Warbler rounded out the neotropical migrant warblers. Wintering warblers were represented by an Orange-crowned Warbler, marginally early, and a Pine Warbler that overshot its normal wintering range. Altogether the total of 14 warbler species was a very respectable fall showing.

As usual, there were Downy Woodpeckers and Red-bellied Woodpeckers present, and one Northern Flicker, perhaps very marginally early. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo represented a very late – two weeks late -- migrant. A Belted Kingfisher surveyed the main pond from above, but did not land.

The old saw that the last departing Eastern Wood-Pewees are pushed out in the middle of October each fall by the first arriving Eastern Phoebes was perhaps aptly demonstrated by the presence of at least two pewees and a good number of recently arrived phoebes. Two Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were flycatching from the wires and tall forbs on and near the northern fence line. A Hermit Thrush was significantly early. A couple of Gray Catbirds were early and located entirely by call.

For several seasons, there has been only one Carolina Chickadee in the Woods, but there are now at least two and perhaps three, so perhaps there may be additions next breeding season! Ruby-crowned Kinglets were present as they always are in small numbers from mid-September onwards but numbers increase from the middle of October until they cannot be described as anything less than abundant from November through early to mid-April. Wintering Golden-crowned Kinglets are much less numerous but present from mid-October, as they were on this day. It seems to us that they have become more common as wintering birds in the Woods and the local area over recent years. Unfortunately, eBird has not been intensively used by enough birders for long enough to allow analyses with a high degree of accuracy. Despite their hyperactive nature, they are more commonly detected by their very high-pitched calls by those lucky enough to still be able to hear them. The alarm call, the call most often heard in winter, is usually a single or two-part note of about 8000 Hz frequency. It is a little higher than the 6000 Hz calls of a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. (Most human speech is in the 2000-5000 Hz range, although individuals who cannot hear up to about 7000 Hz usually are aware of their hearing loss.)

There were still a few of the last summering Red-eyed Vireos. Some White-eyed Vireos, easily located and identified by call, were present, along with one of the first wintering Blue-headed Vireos. A few House Wrens (recently split as Northern House Wren) were perhaps expected. A Wood Thrush was relatively unusual for mid-October.

Mid-October is the heart of Indigo Bunting migration, and there was a group of seven Blue Grosbeaks in the northwest island. There is almost always a few Painted Buntings wintering in the Woods, mostly females and first year males, and the first one this year was located.

Birds reported (may not be complete listing of all birds seen by all participants); Blue-winged Teal (65); White-winged Dove (3); Mourning Dove (3); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (1); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (2); Killdeer (1); Laughing Gull (2); Neotropic Cormorant (1); Little Blue Heron (2); Tricolored Heron (6); Western Cattle Egret (7); Great Egret (4); Great Blue Heron (2); White Ibis (10); /Glossy/White-faced Ibis (1); Black Vulture (3); Turkey Vulture (1); Northern Harrier (1); Red-shouldered Hawk (1); Great Horned Owl (2); Belted Kingfisher (1); Red-bellied Woodpecker (2); Downy Woodpecker (2); Northern Flicker (1); Eastern Wood-Pewee (1); Eastern Phoebe (4); Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (2); White-eyed Vireo (4); Blue-headed Vireo (3); Red-eyed Vireo (1); Loggerhead Shrike (1); Blue Jay (7); Carolina Chickadee (2); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (3); Golden-crowned Kinglet (1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (6); House Wren (5); Gray Catbird (2); Brown Thrasher (1); Northern Mockingbird (1); Hermit Thrush (1); Wood Thrush (1); Red-winged Blackbird (14); Common Grackle (10); Boat-tailed Grackle (4); Black-and-white Warbler (1); Tennessee Warbler (2); Orange-crowned Warbler (1); Nashville Warbler (1); Common Yellowthroat (2); American Redstart (5); Northern Parula (1); Magnolia Warbler (2); Bay-breasted Warbler (1); Chestnut-sided Warbler (1); Pine Warbler (1); Yellow-throated Warbler (1); Black-throated Green Warbler (1); Wilson's Warbler (1); Northern Cardinal (3); Blue Grosbeak (7); Indigo Bunting (13); Painted Bunting (1)

*John Whittle*

# 10 Fun Facts About the Killdeer

*Even if you haven't seen one, chances are good you've heard this notoriously noisy shorebird.*

By Alice Sun, *Reporter, Audubon Magazine*  
Published September 30, 2024

A common sight across much of North America, the Killdeer is full of surprises. Though it's considered a shorebird, the species is often found far from the beach. And despite its modest stature, slightly bigger than a robin, it has a big voice that is impossible to miss even from a distance. Up close, the bird has a subtle beauty, with dark bands across its breast, a chestnut back, and striking rings of red around its eyes.

Indeed, there's plenty to unpack about this bird. Found throughout the Lower 48 in the summer and present year-round in the southern half of the country, Killdeer are highly adaptable and thrive in a diverse range of settings. They also have a flair for the dramatic, putting on a show both when mating and threatened. Not to mention, Killdeer chicks are really, really cute. Okay, you get the idea. Read on to learn more fascinating Killdeer facts!

1. The name Killdeer is bound to raise some eyebrows—but this species has nothing against Bambi. Instead, the name is an onomatopoeia that refers to the bird's piercing call, a shrill *kill-dee!* that it shouts while in flight. In fact, you'll often hear a Killdeer long before you see it noisily wheeling about the sky with its pointed wings.

2. The Killdeer's loud calls have inspired many of its names over the years. In the 18th century, naturalists referred to it as the Noisy Plover or the Chattering Plover. And its species name in Latin, formalized by Carl Linnaeus in 1758, is *vociferus*—which roughly translates to “shouting” or “yelling.”

3. A Killdeer is a type of plover. More specifically, it is part of the “ringed plover” group, which includes stout, short-beaked shorebirds like Snowy and Piping Plover. The Killdeer is the largest member of this group in North America and can be distinguished from its cousins by the two wide bands of black across its breast. Other similar-looking species, like the Semipalmated Plover, only have one.

4. Although they're considered shorebirds, Killdeer aren't solely found near water. In fact, they favor a wide range of open areas like agricultural fields, tidal flats, pastures, and grass lawns. As a result, Killdeer are often seen feeding and even nesting in habitats that are close to people, like golf courses, baseball fields, and children's playgrounds—sometimes disrupting their human neighbors' plans in the process.

5. Invertebrates can make up more than 90 percent of a Killdeer's diet. These birds love chowing down on everything from beetles and grasshoppers to earthworms and snails. Pay attention to a Killdeer while it's foraging, as it moves in a pattern typical of plovers: The bird runs a few steps, stops abruptly, and tilts its head to look and listen for prey before seizing it with its bill. After eating, the bird quickly gets back

on the move, looking for its next meal. Killdeer have been known to follow tractors to eat the stirred-up insects in their wake.

6. To find a mate, Killdeer pairs engage in stunning displays. While on the ground, males and females will bow to each other with their tails fanned out, putting their rusty rears on full view. The duo then takes to the air, where both birds will hover, give a series of calls, and circle each other with slow wingbeats.

7. A Killdeer nest is notoriously hard to spot. Known as a scrape, it's essentially a shallow depression that's lined with pebbles. To build this nest, males and females engage in a “scrape ceremony.” The male lowers his breast and shapes the ground into a divot. If the female accepts, she'll approach and take his place on the scrape, while the male puffs up and calls loudly. These nests are often built on top of gravel, the perfect substrate to hide their speckled eggs. But this camouflage means Killdeer chicks tend to live on the edge, growing up in risky locales like roadsides or gravel roofs.

8. Get too close to a nest, and a Killdeer parent may flex its acting chops by pretending to be an easy meal. The bird will flare out its wings at an awkward angle, give out quivering calls, and flash that rufous rump—faking a broken wing to lure predators like raccoons and coyotes away from its nest. To protect their young from large herbivores like cows and horses, Killdeer pull off a different stunt. They puff up and run at the animals, diverting them from stepping on the nest.

9. Young Killdeer can withstand a lot. They're precocial, meaning they're able to start running around and feeding themselves within hours of hatching. For Killdeer that end up nesting on roofs, chicks have been seen to survive seven-story drops. You wouldn't guess their toughness from looking at them, though: The dainty chicks appear like cotton balls atop two toothpicks—making them some of the most adorable chicks in the avian world.

10. When it comes to migration, Killdeer are divided between travelers and homebodies. Some populations breed in Canada and the northern United States and travel south in the winter, while others spend the whole year in the southern parts of the country. Interestingly, the birds that do migrate end up skipping over the ones that stay put, traveling past the southern U.S. in favor of places like Mexico and Central America. This pattern, which scientists call “leapfrog migration,” can be observed in various other kinds of birds.

*[This interesting article was published recently by Audubon. Killdeer can be easily found in Southeast Texas throughout the year, and there is no indication that any of the local birds are of the migratory population.]*

# Bird Sightings – October 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:** The longer we compile this section, the more

we recognize the patterns of trips into the field by birders! Birding picks up substantially in the second half of October. This happened despite the increasingly severe drought this year. There not being any really rare birds located in October, we need to comment on a few other species. The invasion of Common Ground Doves has been developing for some time now, but became much more evident this month. It could be that the very dry conditions were to the liking of the species. Subsequent months will tell. We don't know whether Western Meadowlarks are actually increasing or birders are just becoming more diligent in checking the meadowlarks they do see, but whatever, more are being reported. We believe our current policy of only including migrants when they are more than one week late (in the fall or early in the spring) is providing a more usable and interesting column.

## Local Counties (listed above)

Burrowing Owl	Oct 22	JEF-Needmore Road area (1) Rebecca Kay
Golden-winged Warbler	Oct 6	ANG-Lufkin (1) Gary Hunter

## Nearby Counties

Least Grebe	Oct 12	CHA-ANWR-Entrance Rd (1) J Gable, Sarah and Todd McGrath
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## Common Ground Dove

Oct 2,10	GAL-Homrigaus Rd (1) Geordie Eschenbach, Keith Alderman
Oct 5	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Jim Hinson
Oct 12-22	HAS-Bear Creek Park (4) Jim Hinson, mult obs
Oct 13-15	GAL-Settegast Rd (3) Lance Pawlik, Dean Silvers
Oct 13-15	HAS-Bear Creek Park (2) Jim Hinson, mult obs
Oct 14	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Randy Frederick, Renee Rusk, Lindsay Seely
Oct 14-22	GAL-Galveston Is SP (2) mult obs
Oct 14-16	GAL-Campeche Cove (2) Richard Liebler. mult obs
Oct 14	HAS-George Bush Park (1) Bayard Nicklow
Oct 15-20	HAS-J P Landing Park (1) Megan Ahlgren, mult obs
Oct 16	GAL-Lafitte's Cove (1) Paul Sivon
Oct 18-22	GAL-Hwy 197 Texas City (1) Allen & Michael Hardee
Oct 21	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Richard Rulander
Oct 25	GAL-Horseshoe Marsh (1) WE, Nicholas Minnich, Charlie Ayers
Oct 27	GAL-Jamaica Beach Shahan Rd (1) Greg Whittaker
Oct 26-29	HAS-Bear Creek Park Jim Hinson, Drew Dickert, mult obs
Oct 29	HAS-Seabrook Wildlife Park (1) K Brooks
Groove-billed Ani	Oct 22 HAS-San Jacinto Battleground (4) William Barber
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Oct 22 HAS-Robt C Stuart Park (1) James Rieman
Black-billed Cuckoo	Oct 1 HAS-F.M. Law Park, SE Houston (1) James Rieman
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Oct 22 HAS-Memorial Park (1) Chloris Wren
Allen's Hummingbird	Oct 15-20 HAS-Houston Copperfield (1) Steven Williams, continuing,
	Oct 20 HAS-Friendswood (1) Chris Bick
	Oct 24 HAS-Green Trails Village (1) Kevin Smith
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	Oct 20 HAS-Houston Copperfield (1) Marie Asscherick
Sandhill Crane	Oct 1 HAS-J P Landing Park (1) Patricia Muskings
American Golden-Plover	Oct 5 CHA-Smith Point (1) Joseph Kennedy

	Oct 5	GAL-Bolivar Flats (2) WE
	Oct 27	GAL-Rollover Pass (1) WE
Baird's Sandpiper	Oct 1	CHA-Beach (1) WE
	Oct 6	GAL-East Beach (1) Judith Rowen
California Gull	Oct 12	CAM-Broussard Beach (1) Mac Myers, David Muth
	Oct 12	GAL-East Beach (1) Willow Pincer
Iceland Gull	Oct 28	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) James Rieman
	Oct 20	CHA-ANWR Shoveler Pond (1) Claud Durand, Chloris Wren
Golden Eagle	Oct 21	GAL-FM2004 area S of FM646 (1) Kyle O'Haver
Swallow-tailed Kite	Oct 4	CHA-Frozen Pt Rd (1) Arth MacKinnon
	Oct 20	HAS-Clear Lake area (2) Kate Gibbs
Mississippi Kite	Oct 11	CAM-Cameron (1) David George, Todd Harvey
Ferruginous Hawk	Oct 16	CHA-Smith Pt Hawk Watch (1) David Hanson, Joseph Kennedy
Western Wood-Pewee	Oct 28	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Randy Frederick
Say's Phoebe	Oct 1	CHA-Hawkins Camp Rd (1) Michael Womer
Vermilion Flycatcher	Oct 11	CAL-Lake Charles (1) Charlotte Chehotsky
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Oct 18-21	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Richard Rulander, Andrew Hamlett
Great Kiskadee	Oct 6	GAL-57-Acre Park (1) continuing
	Oct 30	GAL-Kemah (1) Geordie Eschenbach
Cassin's Kingbird	Oct 24	CAM-Johnson Bayou Deep Bayou Rd (1) Charlotte Chehotsky, Kathy Rhodes, Crystal Johnson
Bell's Vireo	Oct 30	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Andrew Hamlett, Richard Rulander
Bewick's Wren	Oct 26	CHA-Smith Point (1) Joseph Kennedy
Bullock's Oriole	Oct 20	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Richard Rulander, Andrew Hamlett
Swainson's Thrush	Oct 31	
Wood Thrush	Oct 31	CAM-Johnson Bayou Park Ln (1) Eugene Huryn
Sprague's Pipit	Oct 15	HAS-Rice University (1) Cin-Ty Lee

	Oct 5	GAL-Bolivar Flats (2) WE
	Oct 27	GAL-Rollover Pass (1) WE
Baird's Sandpiper	Oct 1	CHA-Beach (1) WE
	Oct 6	GAL-East Beach (1) Judith Rowen
California Gull	Oct 12	CAM-Broussard Beach (1) Mac Myers, David Muth
	Oct 12	GAL-East Beach (1) Willow Pincer
Iceland Gull	Oct 28	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) James Rieman Black Tern Oct 20 CHA-ANWR Shoveler Pond (1) Claud Durand, Chloris Wren
Golden Eagle	Oct 21	GAL-FM2004 area S of FM646 (1) Kyle O'Haver
Swallow-tailed Kite	Oct 4	CHA-Frozen Pt Rd (1) Arth MacKinnon
	Oct 20	HAS-Clear Lake area (2) Kate Gibbs
Mississippi Kite	Oct 11	CAM-Cameron (1) David George, Todd Harvey
Ferruginous Hawk	Oct 16	CHA-Smith Pt Hawk Watch (1) David Hanson, Joseph Kennedy
Western Wood-Pewee	Oct 28	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Randy Frederick
Say's Phoebe	Oct 1	CHA-Hawkins Camp Rd (1) Michael Womer
Vermilion Flycatcher	Oct 11	CAL-Lake Charles (1) Charlotte Chehotsky
Ash-throated Flycatcher	Oct 18-21	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Richard Rulander, Andrew Hamlett
Great Kiskadee	Oct 6	GAL-57-Acre Park (1) continuing
	Oct 30	GAL-Kemah (1) Geordie Eschenbach
Cassin's Kingbird	Oct 24	CAM-Johnson Bayou Deep Bayou Rd (1) Charlotte Chehotsky, Kathy Rhodes, Crystal Johnson
Bell's Vireo	Oct 30	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Andrew Hamlett, Richard Rulander
Bewick's Wren	Oct 26	CHA-Smith Point (1) Joseph Kennedy
Bullock's Oriole	Oct 20	HAS-Sylvan Rodriguez Park (1) Richard Rulander, Andrew Hamlett
Swainson's Thrush	Oct 31	CAM-Johnson Bayou Park Ln (1) Eugene Hury
Wood Thrush	Oct 31	CAM-Johnson Bayou Park Ln (1) Eugene Hury
Sprague's Pipit	Oct 15	HAS-Rice University (1) Cin-Ty Lee

Cedar Waxwing	Oct 6	HAS-Deerfield (1) Tammy Barette (very early)
	Oct 12	HAS-Houston Arboretum (10) mult obs
Lark Bunting	Oct 12	HAS-Kickerillo-Mischer Preserve (1) Sally Heineke
Golden-winged Warbler	Oct 14-23	CA-Peveto Woods (1) Randy Frederick, mult obs
MacGillivray's Warbler	Oct 14-27	CAM-Peveto Woods ((1) Lindsay Seely, Renee Ruck, Gordon Griggs, mult obs
Cape May Warbler	Oct 26	CAM-Trosclair Rd (1) Dave Patton
Bay-breasted Warbler	Oct 1	CAL-Lake Charles (1) David Booth
	Oct 25-28	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) mult obs
	Oct 28	CAM-Oak Grove (1) Jack Rogers
Black-thr. Gray Warbler	Oct 24-25	GAL-Lafitte's Cove (1) Dean Silvers, Robert Becker, Gayle Green
Prairie Warbler	Oct 26	HAS-San Jacinto Battleground (1) Richard Rulander, Andrew Hamlett

#### Western Meadowlark

	Oct 16	CHA-Smith Point (1) Joseph Kennedy
	Oct 21	GAL-Artist Boat Preserve (1) Richard Liebler
	Oct 26	HAS-San Jacinto Battleground (1) Richard Rulander, Andrew Hamlett
	Oct 27	HAS-J P Landing Park (3) Khloris Wren, Claude Durand
Dark-eyed Junco	Oct 17	CAM-Willow Is (1) Charlotte Chehotsky
Western Tanager	Oct 10-19	HAS-Bear Creek Park (1) Jim Hinson, mult obs
	Oct 26	CAM-Oak Grove (1) Dave Patton
	Oct 29	HAS-Glenbrook Valley-Sim's Bayou (1) James Rieman
Black-headed Grosbeak	Oct 16	HAS-Challenger 7 Memorial Park (1) Jim Billie
	Oct 27	GAL-HI S E Gast (1) WE

**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; LIB – Liberty County; 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; WE – Wyatt Egelhoff; WJC – West Jefferson County.

## Where have all the birds gone?

The list above is about average in length, but that belies the local scarcity of our “regular” birds, particularly in West Jefferson County. At this time, the evidence is essentially only anecdotal, but those of you who regularly drive the roads in the western part of the county can scarcely have failed to notice that there just are not many birds there. It appears not to be a widespread phenomenon, for the roads in adjacent Chambers County seem to have more or less normal or only slightly reduced populations of the regular species that are found in Jefferson County in late summer and fall.

The drought locally, classified as a severe drought and

which appears to be breaking as this column goes to press in late October, may be partly responsible. but the drought covers most of east Texas and the lack of birds appears to us to be more localized. (We have it easy. The counties in extreme western Texas -- particularly, Culberson, Jeff Davis, Presidio and Brewster counties are in much worse shape and are in exceptional drought, the most severe category.) Time will tell, but we wonder if changing agricultural practices, particularly what appears to us to be greatly reduced rice farming, has resulted in lesser numbers of blackbirds and other open country resident birds.

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

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### NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

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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](http://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.