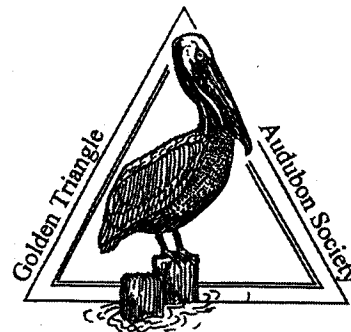


# *Brown Pelican*

**Scanned from Originals**

# The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 9 No. 12

December 2003

## **Sea Rim State Park Christmas Bird Count Sunday December 28, 2003 Meet in Sabine Pass at 7:15 a.m.**

at the entrance to Sabine Pass Battleground State Historical Park. From Port Arthur go south on Texas 87 to the four-way stop in Sabine Pass. Proceed straight ahead on FM3322 for just under a mile. Unfortunately, the staff are not optimistic that the park will have reopened by then, so it will probably be necessary to park on First Street, 100 yards further down.

Countdown dinner at 6:00 p.m., location to be confirmed.

Please contact John Whittle 409-722-4193 (H), 409-880-8276 (W) or [whittleja@hal.lamar.edu](mailto:whittleja@hal.lamar.edu) and let us know you plan to attend.

## **Orange County Christmas Bird Count Thursday January 1, 2004 Meet in Orange at 7:15 a.m.**

at the Service Station at the intersection of Highway 105 and FM1442.

Please contact Ken Sztraky 409-385-2835 (H) or [kens@ih2000.net](mailto:kens@ih2000.net)

Please join us for what we hope will be two enjoyable birding days. All are invited, even if you are not an experienced birder or are only able to bird for part of the day. Feeder watchers are welcome to participate. Let us know in advance and we will find a suitable group for you to join. The more pairs of eyes in a group, the more birds will be seen.

Other local counts which will welcome your participation include the Bolivar Peninsula Count on Sunday December 21 (contact Bill Graber 409-866-5452), the Turkey Creek Count (in the Big Thicket north of Kountze) on December 20 (contact Merle King, Big Thicket NP at 409-839-2689 ext 233 or [Merle.King@nps.gov](mailto:Merle.King@nps.gov)), the Beech Creek Count (in the Steinhagen Lake area) on January 3 (contact Merle King), and the Johnson Bayou (La.) Count on January 4 (contact Ken Sztraky 409-385-2835).

## *The Brown Pelican*

Vol. 9, No.12 December 2003

Golden Triangle  
Audubon Society

**RARE BIRD ALERT AND  
SOCIETY INFORMATION  
TELEPHONE NUMBER  
(409) 728-6957 (728-OWLS)**

[www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://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

## Calendar of Events

**Saturday December 20. Turkey  
Creek Christmas Bird Count.** Meet  
at 6:30 a.m. at the new Big Thicket  
National Preserve Visitor Center  
located on Highway 69 (at FM 420) 7  
miles north of Kountze, Texas. Contact  
Merle King at 409-839-2689 ext. 233  
or [Merle.King@nps.gov](mailto:Merle.King@nps.gov).

**Sunday, December 21. Bolivar  
Peninsula Christmas Bird Count.**  
Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the old Birder's  
Haven in High Island. For more details,  
contact Bill Graber, 409-866-5452.

**Sunday, December 28. Sea Rim State  
Park Christmas Bird Count.**  
See front page for details.

**Thursday, January 1, 2004 – Orange  
County Christmas Bird Count.** See  
front page for details.

**Saturday, January 3, 2004. Beech  
Creek Christmas Bird Count.** Meet  
at 6:30 a.m. at the Corps of Engineers  
Town Bluff Dam picnic area located on  
FM 92 just north of FM 1746. For  
more information call Park Ranger  
Merle King at 409-839-2689 ext. 233  
or [Merle.King@nps.gov](mailto:Merle.King@nps.gov).

**Sunday, January 4, 2004. Johnson  
Bayou Christmas Bird Count.**  
Contact Ken Sztraky at 409-385-2835  
or [kens@ih2000.net](mailto:kens@ih2000.net) for details.

**Thursday, January 15, 2004.  
Membership Meeting.**

Dr. Brent Ortego, immediate past  
president of Texas Ornithological  
Society, and chair of the Sanctuary  
Committee will talk about TOS and  
about Sabine Woods.

**Thursday February 19, 2004.  
Membership Meeting.**

Dan Brooks of the Houston Museum of  
Natural History will be our speaker.  
The title of his talk is not yet available.

**Thursday March 18, 2004. Member-  
ship Meeting.**

Gerald Duhon will be our speaker. His  
talk will be titled " (Barely) South of  
the Border, Down Mexico Way."

**Thursday April 15, 2004. Member-  
ship Meeting.**

Sandy Komito will be the featured  
speaker.

## Subscription Renewal Reminder

Please check the mailing label on  
this issue. If the date on your label NOT  
prefixed by AU has passed, or there is  
no other date, please remit your  
contribution of \$15 to Golden Triangle  
Audubon Society at P.O. Box 1292,  
Nederland, Texas 77627-1292.  
Although this contribution towards the  
cost of the *Brown Pelican* is voluntary  
for National Audubon Society members  
living in the official chapter territory,  
we will appreciate your support. Our  
official chapter territory is defined by  
zip codes, but is basically Jefferson,  
Hardin and Orange Counties and one or  
two localities close to those Counties.

## Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volun-  
teers to provide the refreshments  
at our membership meeting.  
Volunteers are now urgently  
needed for meetings in 2004. We  
do not expect one person to bring  
everything, but please call so we  
can coordinate! If you can just  
bring drinks and cookies or  
something similar, please call  
Jana Whittle at (409) 722-4193  
as soon as possible. Please help  
if you can!

## New Local Hotline

New Golden Triangle Audubon  
telephone hotline is (409) 728-6957  
or (409) 728-OWLS. This is a cell  
phone with voice messaging  
capabilities, so that the tasks associated  
with it can be shared!

## Election Results

At the November Annual Meeting,  
John Haynes was elected President and  
Jeff Pittman Vice President for 2004-  
2005 terms. Don Jeane was reelected as  
Treasurer and John Whittle was  
reelected Secretary. Board members  
elected were Bob Collier, Joe  
Halbrook, Jeannie Lanclos, Steve  
Mayes, Sherrie Roden, Ken Sztraky  
and Jana Whittle.

## Christmas Bird Counts

Dec. 14 - Freeport  
Dec. 14 - Lacassine-Thornwell, LA  
Dec. 15 - Mad Island Marsh  
Dec. 16 - Galveston  
Dec. 17 - Attwater NWR  
Dec. 19 - San Bernard NWR  
Dec. 20 - Brazos Bend  
Dec. 20 - Houston  
Dec. 20 - Sabine NWR, LA  
Dec. 20 - Turkey Creek  
Dec. 21 - Bolivar Peninsula  
Dec. 26 - Old River  
Dec. 27 - Spring Creek  
Dec. 27 - Lafayette, LA  
Dec. 28 - Sea Rim State Park  
Dec. 29 - Crowley, LA  
Jan. 1, 2004 - Orange County.  
Jan. 3, 2004 - Beech Creek  
Jan. 3, 2004 - Buffalo Bayou  
Jan. 4, 2004 - Johnson Bayou, LA

Statewide lists available Tex:  
[www.texasbirds.org/cbc.html](http://www.texasbirds.org/cbc.html)  
and La: (on pages 10 and 11) of  
[www.softdisk.com/comp/birds/  
news/news\\_vol\\_18\\_no\\_4.pdf](http://www.softdisk.com/comp/birds/news/news_vol_18_no_4.pdf)

## Volunteers Needed to Build Bluebird Boxes

We thank those who built bluebird boxes last year. The boxes proved to be so popular that we would like to make it an annual event as one of the ways we reach out to the community.

Therefore we need volunteers to build bluebird boxes so that we can give them away at our January 2004 Membership Meeting. If we only have a few, we will draw lots to determine who among those present will receive them. Golden Triangle Audubon will reimburse the cost of the materials – please bring your receipts with you.

Plans are available on the internet at <http://www.texasbluebirdsociety.org/pdf/nestboxplans.pdf> or contact Jana Whittle at (409) 722-4193 for a printed copy.

Jana would also welcome any offers to make at least one Purple Martin house to give away at the February Membership Meeting.

## Editorial – Conservation and Paying the Costs

We hope that those reading these words do not need any convincing that conservation is a critical necessity. However, it is appropriate every now and again to articulate what Audubon stands for. We cannot do better than quote two paragraphs from the preamble to the 1995 Audubon Strategic Plan

*The mission of the National Audubon Society is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. Yet transcending this mission is an ideal: a world where the conservation ethic is automatic, not coerced. Conservation cannot be limited to a few individuals or organizations. To preserve the biological diversity of this planet - humanity's ecological inheritance, which is being so rapidly dissipated - conservation must be an attribute common to all people. We envision a world where humankind accepts the obligations of being part of nature, especially the obligation of stewardship. We seek to shape a culture in which the violation of nature is socially, politically, and morally unacceptable. In short, we seek a culture of conservation and an environmental ethic.*

*We recognize that this culture of conservation is only a concept, a vision. A true cultural transformation may be decades in the evolution, but we are not afraid to begin. We aspire, therefore, to germinate and nurture a global society bound together by a commitment to resource conservation and a passionate respect for nature. Toward this end, toward speeding the birth of a culture of conservation we invest our hopes, our labors, and our dreams.*

In this editorial, we address one aspect of what we can do to help further this eloquently expressed mission. Elsewhere in this issue we reproduce a very informative and well expressed comment from a recent extensive debate on the TEXBIRDS listserv, a debate which began with discussion on the effects of hunting on bird populations but digressed into the funding of habitat conservation.

We believe birders must expect to pay more towards conservation. Hunter generated funds, whether from taxes, fees for access or philanthropic contributions have been instrumental in conserving large expanses of waterfowl habitat. On the other hand, birders, relatively speaking, contribute very little towards habitat conservation. The membership dues to organizations such as Audubon, Texas Ornithological Society, and local birding groups do little, if any, more than pay for the costs of the magazine or newsletter. Even the "coffee table" magazines with substantial income from advertising dollars produce very little, if any, contribution to the major activities of the sponsoring organization. Most of the money used by conservation organizations in their major programs comes from contributions and bequests.

Similarly, the entry fees that are collected by parks and sanctuaries often do not even cover the costs of minimal staffing and maintenance. And on the Gulf Coast today, maintenance is necessary just to prevent degradation of habitat. Gone are the days when all that was necessary was to acquire the land and prevent development. Even if the land has not been extensively modified by alteration of the drainage, or by agricultural pursuits, land today left to "nature" will soon be taken over by tallow, McCartney rose, mustang grape or by water hyacinth or giant salvinia. It is absolutely vital to control these invasive "exotics."

Birder resistance to fees, even reasonable fees, must be overcome. We need to acquire and protect habitat now, while the land is still available and in recoverable condition. Five dollars a day (with a realistic annual fee option) for access to a favored birding area would ensure adequate resources for maintenance and, in most cases, provide funds to acquire additional habitat. Such fees would still represent only a small fraction of the realistic total costs of a typical day's birding.

## Bird Sightings – October 2003

Coverage: Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Tyler, Jasper, Newton, Angelina, San Augustine and Sabine counties. Send Reports to: John Whittle, 3015 Nashville Avenue, Nederland, Texas 77627-6749 by the 10th of the month after or e-mail to john.whittle@lamar.edu or call (409) 880-8276 or fax to (409) 880-8270. For "very rare" birds, please submit a brief account of your sighting, including a description of the bird (unless unmistakable), brief details of what it was doing, and where it was seen (if on publicly accessible property)

Format: "Common" to "abundant" birds are shown in the fashion "JEF 4 reps(25)" which means four reports in Jefferson County totaling 25 birds. Less than "common", as JEF-SW 7/5(2) ABC", which means seen in Jefferson County (JEF) at Sabine Woods (SW) on the 5th of July, two (2) birds, reported by observer "ABC." **Commentary:** An extremely interesting October, especially as far as warblers are concerned. See the comments on the very rare species following the listing.

**GOOSE, White-fronted** JEF-SW 10/26(20) JAW  
**DUCK, Mottled** JEF 10/25(17) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/27(50) JAW  
**BOBWHITE, Northern** JEF 1 rep(1)  
**PELICAN, Amer. White** JEF 3 reps(15)  
**PELICAN, Brown** JEF-SRSP 10/8(7) AM; JEF-TX87 10/21(10) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/26(12) JAW  
**CORMORANT, Neotropic** JEF 12 reps(151)  
**CORMORANT, Double-crest.** JEF-TX87 10/4(1) JAW  
**HERON, Great Blue** JEF 8 reps(20); ORA 1 rep(1)  
**EGRET, Great** JEF 12 reps(44); ORA 2 reps(4)  
**EGRET, Snowy** JEF 11 reps(49); ORA 1 rep(1)  
**HERON, Little Blue** JEF 1 rep(1)  
**HERON, Tricolored** JEF 2 reps(4)  
**EGRET, Cattle** JEF 7 reps(465); ORA 3 reps(111)  
**NIGHT-HERON, Black-cr.** JEF 1 rep(1)  
**IBIS, White** JEF 6 reps(69)  
**IBIS, Plegadis** JEF-SW 10/4(20) JAW; JEF 10/25(3) JAW  
**SPOONBILL, Roseate** JEF 10/4(3) JAW; JEF 10/5(2) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/26(2) JAW;  
**VULTURE, Black** JEF 3 reps(7); ORA 1 rep(2)  
**VULTURE, Turkey** JEF 5 reps(14); ORA 2 reps(3)  
**OSPREY** JEF-TX87 10/4(1) JAW; JEF 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/5(1) GD; JEF-TX87 10/15(4) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/21(5) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/26(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/30(2) JAW  
**KITE, Mississippi** JEF-SW 10/4(2) JAW  
**HARRIER, Northern** JEF-SRSP 10/21(1) JAW  
**HAWK, Sharp-shinned** JEF 2 reps(3)  
**HAWK, Red-shouldered** JEF 5 reps(5); ORA 2 reps(2)  
**HAWK, Red-tailed** JEF 3 reps(4); ORA 1 rep(1)  
**KESTREL, American** JEF 6 reps(24)  
**FALCON, Peregrine** JEF-SW 10/21(1) JAW  
**RAIL, Clapper** JEF 3 reps(11)  
**PLOVER, Black-bellied** JEF 1 rep(1)  
**PLOVER, Piping** JEF-SRSP 10/8(2) AM  
**KILLDEER** JEF 5 reps(21); ORA 2 reps(4)  
**STILT, Black-necked** JEF 2 reps(11)  
**WILLET** JEF 3 reps(10)  
**GODWIT, Marbled** JEF-TX87 10/30(1) JAW  
**SANDERLING** JEF 1 rep(34)  
**GULL, Laughing** JEF 7 reps(1269)  
**GULL, Ring-billed** JEF 2 reps(13); G  
**GULL, Herring** JEF 2 reps(12)  
**TERN, Caspian** JEF 2 reps(24)  
**TERN, Royal** JEF 1 rep(17)  
**TERN, Common** JEF 1 rep(9)  
**TERN, Forster's** JEF 5 reps(136)  
**SKIMMER, Black** JEF 1 rep(2)  
**DOVE, Rock** JEF 10 reps(45)  
**COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian** JEF 15 reps(55)

**DOVE, White-winged** JEF-NEDR 10/2(6) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/5(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/6(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/23(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/27(10) JAW; JEF 10/30(9) JAW  
**DOVE, Mourning** JEF 18 reps(214); ORA 4 reps(4)  
**DOVE, Inca** JEF 4 reps(8); ORA 1 rep(1)  
**CUCKOO, Yellow-billed** JEF-SW 10/4(1) SM  
**OWL, Great Horned** JEF-SW 10/15(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/21(1) JAW; JEF-SW(1) 10/21 LB; JEF 10/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW  
**WILL'S-WIDOW, Chuck-** JEF-SW 10/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 10/8(1) AM  
**WHIP-POOR-WILL,** JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW; S  
**SWIFT, Chimney** HAI 10/19(2) KS; JEF-NEDR 10/4(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/5(2) JAW;  
**HUMMINGBIRD, Buff-bellied** JEF-SW 10/12(1) JHH  
**HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.** JEF-NEDR 10/1(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/2(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/4(50) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/5(20) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/6(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/7(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/8(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/14(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/15(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW; ORA 10/7(2) SBE; ORA 10/11(1) SBE  
**HUMMINGBIRD, Black-chin.** JEF-NEDR 10/14(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/23(1) JAW  
**HUMMINGBIRD, Archilochus** JEF-NEDR 10/22(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/27(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/28(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/29(1) JAW  
**HUMMINGBIRD species** JEF-SRSP 10/8(4) AM; JEF-SW 10/8(30) AM  
**KINGFISHER, Belted** JEF 7 reps(29)  
**WOODPECKER, Red-bellied** JEF 3 reps(3); ORA 3 reps(4)  
**SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/8(2) AM; JEF-NEDR 10/20(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW; ORA 10/7(1) SBE  
**WOODPECKER, Downy** JEF 4 reps(11); ORA 1 rep(1)  
**FLICKER, Northern** HAI 10/18(1) KS  
**FLICKER, N. (Red-shafted)** ORA 10/7(1) SBE  
**WOODPECKER, Pileated** ORA 1 rep(1)  
**WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern** ORA 1 rep(1)  
**FLYCATCHER, Least** JEF-SW 10/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/5(2) GD; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW;  
**EMPIDONAX species** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/5(2) GD  
**PHOEBE, Eastern** HAI 10/22(1) KS; JEF 10/15(1) KS; JEF 10/25(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/30(1) JAW; ORA 10/26(1) KS  
**FLYCATCHER, Ash-throated** JEF-SRSP 10/19(1) EC  
**FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested** JEF-SW 10/8(1) AM  
**KINGBIRD, Western** JEF-SRSP 10/19(1) EC  
**KINGBIRD, Eastern** ORA 10/20(1) SBE  
**FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tail.** JEF 10/5(4) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/8(1) AM; JEF-TX87

10/15(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/21(2) JAW; JEF-TX87  
10/21(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(2)  
JAW

**SHRIKE, Loggerhead** JEF 9 reps(84)  
**VIREO, White-eyed** JEF 6 reps(12)  
**VIREO, Cassin's** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW  
**VIREO, Red-eyed** JEF-SW 10/5(1) GD; JEF-SW  
10/8(1) AM

**JAY, Blue** JEF 18 reps(79); ORA 3  
reps(6)  
**CROW, species** ORA 1 rep(6)  
**SWALLOW, Tree** JEF 2 reps(5)  
**SWALLOW, N. Rough-wing.** JEF 1 rep(10)  
**SWALLOW, Barn** JEF 2 reps(5)  
**CHICKADEE, Carolina** JEF 2 reps(2); ORA 5 reps(10)  
**TITMOUSE, Tufted** ORA 4 reps(7)  
**WREN, Carolina** JEF 4 reps(8)  
**WREN, House** JEF-SW 10/5(2) GD; JEF-SW  
10/30(2) JAW  
**WREN, Sedge** JEF-SW 10/5(1) GD; JEF-  
TXPT 10/26(1) JAW  
**WREN, Marsh** JEF-SW 10/5(3) GD  
**KINGLET, Ruby-crowned** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/8(1) AM; JEF-SW 10/15(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/26(2)  
JAW; JEF-SW 10/30(3) JAW  
**GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray** JEF 7 reps(44); ORA 1 rep(4)  
**BLUEBIRD, Eastern** HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 1 rep(1);  
ORA 1 rep(12)  
**THRUSH, Swainson's** JEF-SW 10/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(2) GD; JEF-SRSP 10/8(2) AM; JEF-SW 10/8(2)  
AM  
**THRUSH, Hermit** JEF-SRSP 10/21(1) JAW  
**ROBIN, American** JEF-NEDR 10/1(1) JAW; JEF-  
NEDR 10/4(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/5(3) JAW; JEF-  
NEDR 10/6(10) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/20(3) JAW  
**CATBIRD, Gray** JEF 5 reps(34)  
**MOCKINGBIRD, Northern** JEF 9 reps(112); ORA 5  
reps(9)  
**THRASHER, Brown** JEF 8 reps(59)  
**STARLING, European** JEF 14 reps(671)  
**WARBLER, Blue-winged** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW  
**WARBLER, Tennessee** JEF 9 reps(79)  
**WARBLER, Orange-crowned** JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW; JEF-  
SW 10/27(5) JHH; JEF-SW 10/28(2) JHH; JEF-SW  
10/30(2) JAW  
**WARBLER, Nashville** JEF 9 reps(32)  
**PARULA, Northern** JEF-SW 10/4(4) JAW; JEF-  
SRSP 10/8(1) AM; JEF-SW 10/8(1) AM; JEF-SW  
10/21(1) LB; JEF-SW 10/27(5) JHH  
**WARBLER, Yellow** JEF-SW 10/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(2) GD  
**WARBLER, Chestnut-sided** JEF 5 reps(8)  
**WARBLER, Magnolia** JEF 5 reps(8)  
**WARBLER, Black-thr. Blue** JEF-SW 10/20 EC; JEF-SW  
10/21 (1) LB; JEF-SW 10/25(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/26(1)  
JAW; JEF-SW 10/27(1) JHH  
**WARBLER, Yellow-rumped** JEF-SW 10/8(1) AM; JEF  
10/15(1) KS  
**WARBLER, Black-thr. Green** JEF 9 reps(56)  
**WARBLER, Yellow-throated** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 10/27(1) JHH  
**WARBLER, Pine** ORA 2 reps(2)  
**WARBLER, Prairie** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 10/15(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/18(1)  
EC; JEF-SW 10/19(1) EC; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW;  
JEF-SW 10/27(1) JHH; JEF-SW 10/28(1) JHH; JEF-  
SW 10/30(1) JAW

**WARBLER, Palm** JEF-TX87 10/18(1) EC; JEF-  
SRSP 10/19(1) EC; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/27(1) JHH  
**WARBLER, Black-and-white** JEF 4 reps(20)  
**REDSTART, American** JEF 10 reps(44)  
**WARBLER, Worm-eating** JEF-SW 10/4(1) SM  
**OVENBIRD** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(1) GD; JEF-SRSP 10/8(1) AM; JEF-SW 10/8(2)  
AM  
**WARBLER, MacGillivray's** JEF-SW 10/21(1) LB; JEF-SW  
10/25(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/27(1) JHH  
**YELLOWTHROAT, Common** JEF 9 reps(21)  
**WARBLER, Hooded** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 10/5(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/27(1)  
JHH  
**WARBLER, Wilson's** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(2) GD; JEF-SW 10/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/27(4)  
JHH  
**WARBLER, Canada** JEF-SW 10/8(1) AM  
**CHAT, Yellow-breasted** JEF-SW 10/5(1) GD; JEF-SW  
10/5(1) JAW  
**TANAGER, Summer** JEF 2 reps(4); ORA 1 rep(2)  
**TANAGER, Scarlet** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW  
10/5(1) RV  
**TANAGER, Western** JEF-SW 10/19(1) CLL  
**SPARROW, Chipping** JEF-TXPT 10/21(1) JAW  
**SPARROW, Henslow's** JEF-TXPT 10/19(1) CLL  
**SPARROW, Nelson's Sharp-t.** JEF-TXPT 10/5(50) GD  
**SPARROW, Seaside** JEF 2 reps(31)  
**SPARROW, Lincoln's** JEF-TXPT 10/5(1) GD; JEF-  
SW 10/15(1) JAW  
**SPARROW, Swamp** JEF-TXPT 10/26(2) JAW  
**SPARROW, White-throated** JEF-BMT 10/25 HJ  
**CARDINAL, Northern** JEF 6 reps(23); ORA 4  
reps(23)  
**GROSBEAK, Rose-breast** JEF-SW 10/4(1) JAW  
**BUNTING, Indigo** JEF 7 reps(102)  
**BUNTING, Painted** JEF-SW 10/4(2) JAW  
**BLACKBIRD, Red-winged** JEF 8 reps(174)  
**MEADOWLARK, Eastern** JEF 2 reps(9)  
**MEADOWLARK species** JEF 2 reps(9)  
**GRACKLE, Common** JEF 9 reps(92); ORA 1 rep(1)  
**GRACKLE, Boat-tailed** JEF 8 reps(213)  
**GRACKLE, Great-tailed** JEF 18 reps(744)  
**GRACKLE, Gt./Boat tailed** JEF 1 rep(1)  
**COWBIRD, Brown-headed** JEF 3 reps(107); ORA 1 rep(7)  
**BLACKBIRD species** JEF 1 rep(50)  
**ORIOLE, Baltimore** JEF-SW 10/5(1) GD  
**SPARROW, House** JEF 5 reps(29); ORA 1 rep(1)

**Number of Species** 147  
**Number of Individuals** 6600

#### County Abbreviations

HAI - Hardin; JEF - Jefferson; ORA - Orange

#### Location Codes

NEDR - Nederland; SRSP - Sea Rim State Park; SW - Sabine  
Woods; TX87 - Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP;  
TXPT - Road to Pilot Station at Texas Point

#### Observer Abbreviations

AM - Art Mackinnon; CLL - Carol Lynn Loker; EC - Eric  
Carpenter; GD - Gerald Duhon; HJ - Harrison Jordan; JAW -  
John Whittle; JHH - John H. Haynes; KS - Ken Sztraky; LB -  
Lynn Barber; RV - Habib Rahman and Darrell Volert; SBE -  
Sheri Berthard; SM - Steve Mayes.

## Notes on Rare Species

### Buff-bellied Hummingbird – 12 October – John Haynes

Seen in Sabine Woods on the morning of October 12, apparently just passing through.

### Ash-throated Flycatcher – 19 October – Eric Carpenter

Seen just west of the Willows at Sea Rim.

### Cassin's Vireo – 4 October – John Whittle

A dull vireo of the "Solitary" complex, seen all too briefly in Sabine Woods. The head color was greenish gray, and there was no sharp demarcation between the greenish gray on the throat. The re was only a very slight tinge of yellow along the flanks.

### Black-throated Blue Warbler – 20 October on – many observers

Although this species is expected in October, this was a female that stayed through early November.

### Prairie Warbler – all month – many observers

A well marked Prairie Warbler has been present in Sabine Woods, in all probability, since late August, and was still being seen at press time in early December.

### McGillivray's Warbler – 21-27 October – Lynn Barber, Steve Mayes and John Haynes

This very shy bird was first found on October 21 by Lynn Barber, who noted "Full gray head, very prominent broken eye-ring" and

surmised it was an adult female. On October 25, Steve Mayes saw the bird and described "bold, distinct, thick white eye crescents above and below the eye that did not come close to making a full ring. There was no trace of black on the chest or face. The throat was paler gray than the rest of the hood, but I detected no trace of yellow in it." On October 28, John Haynes noted "the eye crescents were prominent and in no way reminiscent of the broken or thinnish rings Mourning (Warblers) get. ...no yellow in the throat..." Both Steve and John noted the chip was different from the chip of a Mourning Warbler.

### Western Tanager – 19 October – Carol Lynn Loker

Seen at Sabine Woods.

### Henslow's Sparrow – 19 October – Carol Lynn Loker

This sparrow was observed for 20 minutes along the edge of the road to the Pilot Station at Texas Point, 150 yards north of the last bend in that road.

## Bird Alerts

Having run out of space this month, we will refer you to the web site [www.goldentriangle.org](http://www.goldentriangle.org) was the latest alerts. This enables you to receive the latest alerts without the time lapse that necessarily occurs in getting the *Brown Pelican* to you.

Also, there was not room for the report on the Field Trip on November 22. That report will also available on the web site.

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## Texas Birds and Hunting

*(This comprehensive discussion of conservation funding issues related to hunting and birding was posted by Ted Eubanks on the TEXBIRDS listserv on November 22.)*

This issue has plagued birders for as long as I can remember. And, for as long as I can remember, no substantial action has ever resulted from the debate. Hunters go back to hunting, birders return to birding, and we await the next irruption.

Hunting, when viewed nationally and over the long-term, has been declining relative to population. From 1955 to 2000 hunting grew 31% in absolute numbers, while the U.S. population expanded by 71%. In more recent years that decline has been absolute as well. In 1991 there were 14,063 million hunters age 16 and older (the age class that the USFWS measures), while in 2001 that number had declined to 13,034 million.

The short-term increase in Texas in 2003 is, I fear, just that. Just as declines in state park attendance in drought years are not indicative of any long-term trend, no one should assume that a 3% increase in a wet year (with the attendant rise in quail numbers) should be the long awaited "light in the tunnel."

I suspect, no, I predict, that hunting will continue to decline. The reason is straightforward. Hunting remains a white, male, rural activity when compared to the general population. Of the 13 million American hunters, 12.6 million are white, 11.8 million are male, and 41% live in areas outside of "Metropolitan Statistical Areas" (compared to 19% of the general population). America is an increasingly diverse urban nation, and unless hunting is able to adapt itself to these socio-demographic shifts it will become less and less relevant as an outdoor recreation.

Funding for game conservation efforts by the game and wildlife resource agencies is derived from two primary sources related to hunting - the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson or PR) and license sales. PR funds are:

"...derived from an 11 percent Federal excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and a 10 percent tax on handguns. These funds are collected from the manufacturers by the Department of the Treasury and are apportioned each year to the States and Territorial areas (except Puerto Rico) by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Appropriate State agencies are the only entities eligible to receive grant funds. Funds for hunter education and target ranges are derived from one-half of the tax on handguns and archery equipment."

"Each state's apportionment is determined by a formula which considers the total area of the state and the number of licensed hunters in the state. The program is a cost-reimbursement program, where the state covers the full amount of an approved project then applies for reimbursement through Federal Aid for up to 75 percent of the project expenses. The state must provide at least 25 percent of the project costs from a non-federal source."

Of course there are other hunter-funded mechanisms such as the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act (the Federal Duck Stamp), the turkey stamp, etc. However, as has been noted by Paul Baicich recently (in his attempt to see the duck stamp expanded to appeal to non-hunters), the duck stamp sales have been declining as well.

If the number of hunters continues to decline, then we can assume that the money made available for conservation through excise taxes and license/stamp sales will decline as well. The issue then becomes important for Texas bird conservation and Texas birding, since birders depend on these dollars to maintain (or at least contribute to) many of the programs that, at least indirectly, benefit birders. This is precisely why the agencies proposed Teaming with Wildlife nearly a decade ago, an expanded excise tax that would include equipment and supplies used by nonhunters as well. That measure failed, and we remain wedded to a conservation funding mechanism, largely unchanged since 1937, that is dependent on a declining revenue source.

With the demise of Teaming with Wildlife and the full-fledged Conservation And Restoration Act (CARA), states and conservationists remain wedded to a shopworn funding mechanism born in the 1930s. Admittedly the CARA effort led to the State Wildlife Grant program, which in FY 2004 will invest \$70 million in state conservation projects (such as wildlife diversity planning). Yes, a portion of that will come to Texas. But \$70 million is a pittance compared to the \$100s of millions generated annually by PR and its fishing component (the Sport Fish Restoration Act or Dingell-Johnson). More importantly, the CARA-Lite funds are not directly contributed by birders and other nonconsumptive users, so the potential political clout of such funding is diluted. There remains, in the wildlife agencies throughout this nation, the palpable impression that birders do not pay their fair share of the conservation costs. Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) is no exception.

To be accurate, birders and wildlife viewers (the appreciative sector) do pay a share (if not always fair). Birders (by my definition, those who find their way to nature through birds) do contribute to conservation organizations such as Nature Conservancy and National Audubon. Birders are park users, and pay entrance fees. A portion of state sales taxes wend their way to parks, and birders do contribute their proportionate share to sales tax revenues. Bird organizations such as the Texas Ornithological Society and regional Audubon chapters (such as Houston Audubon) have been aggressive in conserving Texas bird habitats in the past couple of decades.

But birding contributions do not help fund the TPW staff and programs in any significant fashion. In the 1990s, when state agencies were flush and were able to invest in the future, birding and other nontraditional outdoor recreations (those reflecting socio-demographic trends) gained a voice. TPW developed programs such as the Texas Wildlife Trails, the Great Texas Birding Classic, and the World Birding Center in order to meet the expected needs and demands of this growing constituency. More importantly (for the agency) these efforts were directed at replacing the dollars anticipated to be lost through declining hunting revenues.

But the tide has changed. The economic downturn has forced states to search for short-term economic solutions ("sweating payrolls") and therefore many of the wildlife agencies have returned to their core constituencies at the expense of birding and wildlife viewing. [Please note the 3-6 December 2003 7th Governor's Symposium on North America's Hunting Heritage in Houston. When do you suppose that we will see the first Governor's conference on the future of birding?] The shift in budget priorities after 9/11

only accelerated this process. Birding and these nontraditional recreations were always investments that the wildlife agencies believed would payoff at some indeterminate time in the future, and they now believe that can no longer afford to wait for these to mature. At this moment, at this point in time, birders and birding do not contribute significantly to their shrinking budgets. Birding is a cost center, not a profit center. Birders have little political clout at the legislature (even less in the most recent session). Therefore, birders are expendable.

Please understand that I do not blame TPW for this turn of events. Birders have shown little willingness to pay in a traditional fashion that the agencies recognize (license fees, excise taxes). In fact, at every turn there have been birders opposing any such measures by the agencies (in fact, that opposition has been repeatedly expressed here on Texbirds). Since the agencies have not yet developed an approach that would tap the revenues generated by birding, and see little prospect of doing so in the near future, they understandably have turned their attention to the recreations that do contribute - hunting and fishing.

No, I do not believe that birding and wildlife viewing will completely disappear from the TPW agenda (although any reflection of these activities has certainly been expunged from the TPW lobby here in Austin). There are incredibly committed and dedicated public servants such as John Herron, Cliff Shackelford, Linda Campbell, Brent Ortego, and Mark Lockwood (among others not named) who will continue, within their very limited capacities, to keep birding and wildlife viewing on the TPW radar screen. But I expect our recreation to enter an era of benign neglect, a period of exile. The wildlife trails will exist but not expand, and the World Birding Center will come into being as more pedestrian state park than world-class recreational center. In truth, birding never had a seat at the table, but for a few years we at least were allowed to enter the dining room.

We have no one to blame but ourselves. Birders are self titled, self determined, and self motivated (yes, and at times self centered). Birding has always been about the individual more than any collective group, never more than now. With technological advances such as the Internet groups such as Audubon and ABA have lost their proprietary rights to birding information. Texbirds, in truth, is a far more effective disseminator of birding information (particularly real time) than any single organization. More importantly, the growth in birding has taken place in nontraditional segments. Feeder watchers, for example, may have a relationship with their local Wild Birds Unlimited franchise rather than any bird club in town. At an institutional level the growth in birding has little impact. Birding does not directly contribute to the wildlife agency budgets, and birders have never been able to organize into a collective voice. No money, no voice, no power.

Exile offers an opportunity to find oneself, to refashion and refresh. The traditional approach to birding and bird conservation in Texas had its run. But anyone who believes that the "tried and true" approaches of the past will have credence in the future is in for a rude awakening.

In the mean time, I am off to Trinidad for a week of birding. I hope to return from my "exile" refashioned and refreshed, and prepared to help assist these new bird and birding efforts of the future.

*Ted Eubanks, Fermata Inc., Austin, Texas*



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## *Brown Pelican*

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## RARE BIRD ALERTS

Below is a listing of Rare Bird Alert telephone numbers for nearby areas. Transcriptions of some current tapes are available on the World Wide Web on Siler's Birding on the Net at <http://birdingonthe.net/hotmail.html> Detailed information (maps and text) on birding sites on the Upper Texas Coast is also available on the Web at <http://www.texasbirding.net>. This includes all the Jefferson County hotspots published in early issues.

<b>Golden Triangle</b>	<b>(409) 728-6957</b>
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N. E. Texas	(903) 839-4804
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