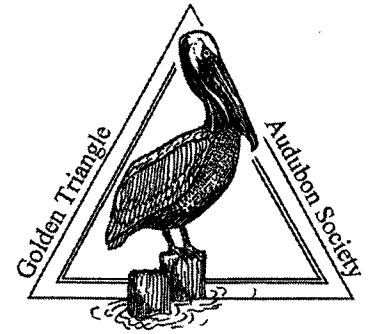


Brown Pelican

Scanned from Originals

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 11 No. 1

January 2005

Membership Meeting
Thursday, January 20, 2005
6:30 PM, Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

Bluebirds
Charles Post
Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club

Charles Post is a charter member of the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club, and served as its president for two years. He has a special interest in bluebirds and has maintained a Bluebird Trail since 1989, monitoring 20-30 boxes in and around Liberty. He is a member of the North American Bluebird Society and contributes to their nest monitoring program. He is also a member of the board of the Texas Bluebird Society, which was organized in 2001. Charles has a B.S. degree from Stephen F. Austin State University, and retired from Sun Pipeline Company in February 2004.

Refreshments are served at 6:30 p.m. The program begins at 7:15 p.m. As always, the public is invited.

Bluebirds

Because of the efforts of many people putting up bluebird boxes and maintaining bluebird trails, it appears that the bluebird is making a comeback. This has been very noticeable in our local area. It used to be that bluebirds were rarely seen south of Interstate 10. However, in the last two or three years, they have become quite regular in open areas adjacent to woods in all of Jefferson County, such as along and near FM 365, and even along Highway 87 between Sabine Pass and Sea Rim State Park.

There are three species of bluebirds that live in North America: Eastern, Western and Mountain. Field guides show the differences in the three species and their ranges. The Eastern Bluebird is the only species normally seen in our area. Bluebirds are secondary cavity nesters, making their nests in old woodpecker holes, holes in old dead trees and manmade nest boxes. At our January meeting Charles will discuss bluebird history, habitat, mating, eating, nesting, pests and predators, banding and monitoring boxes. Bluebird boxes are not only just for bluebirds but several other welcomed birds could use the boxes. These include tree swallows, chickadees, titmouse, wrens, White-breasted Nuthatches, and flycatchers. Besides providing bluebird boxes, you might attract bluebirds to your yard by providing water.

The Brown Pelican

Vol. 11, No.1 January 2005

Golden Triangle
Audubon Society

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

www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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Calendar of Events

Thursday January 20, 2005.

Membership Meeting. Garden Center,
Tyrrell Park, Beaumont, 7:00 p.m.
Charles Post will talk about Bluebirds.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank Leah and Ken Sztraky, Linda Lang, Lynn Otto and Jean Hollingsworth for bringing refreshments in December. Lu and Grady Skillern have volunteered to bring sandwiches in January. **We need volunteers to bring ice and drinks in January, and for all other 2005 meetings.** 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!

Saturday January 22. Field Trip to West Harris County.

The Katy Prairie area is good for a wide variety of birds, including raptors, sparrows and waterfowl. Prairie Falcon and Short-eared Owl have been reported. Bear Creek Park has been reliable this winter for Purple Finch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Merlin, Red-headed Woodpecker, Rusty Blackbird and Vermilion Flycatcher. and The meeting time and place will be the same location as in previous years: 7:30 a.m. at the Randall's Supermarket on the northeast corner of Barker-Cypress Road and Clay Road, west of Houston. To reach this location, take IH-10 west though Houston to Barker-Cypress Road - exit 748. This exit is 15 miles west of Loop 610, is beyond Beltway 8 and just beyond Highway 6. Turn right (north) on Barker Cypress and proceed just under three miles to the Intersection with Clay. The Randall's parking lot can be entered from Barker-Cypress immediately north of the intersection. Please be sure to check at the Membership Meeting on January 20 or

check the GTAS web-site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org or call Steve Mayes at 722-5807 two or three days before to confirm details of both date and meeting place.

The meeting place is about 105 miles from Beaumont and the travel time at that hour of the morning is a little under 2 1/2 hours.

Car pooling from Beaumont is desirable. The fewer cars we have in the rural areas of west Harris County, the better. The area has had a lot of rain over the past two months. Maps and the opportunity to arrange car pooling will be available at the January Membership meeting on Thursday January 20.

Should you be late, the plan is to first proceed to Bear Creek Park. We will probably enter the park by turning south off Clay Road, just east of the golf course.

**Tuesday, February 8, 2005.
Whooping Crane Trip: Rockport-Fulton.**

Join Audubon Texas for a day of coastal birding in beautiful Rockport, Texas during the peak of Whooping Crane season. The day will begin with an optional early morning birding trip to Cape Valero to observe the many species of ducks, waders and shorebirds, followed by a talk about the Audubon Texas Coastal Program and "History of the Whooping Crane" given by Audubon Texas Important Bird Areas Coordinator, Ned Wright. Lunch will be provided during the presentation at the Lighthouse Inn. Participants will then meet at the dock in Rockport-Fulton for an afternoon of boating aboard the shallow draft "Skimmer" which allows us to access the best sites in the area for viewing Whooping Cranes, including Audubon-managed Ayres Island sanctuary. Our tour will finish by 5 p.m., and participants will be on their own for dinner and relaxation that evening, or to get an early start home.

2005 tour price: \$150 per person. Tour limited to 25 participants. Price includes light breakfast during the morning field trip, lunch, boat admission, and an Audubon Texas guide.

To make your reservation or for more information, please contact Lk Loflin at Audubon Texas, 512-306-0225 ext 15 or lloflin@audubon.org.

Thursday February 17, 2005. Membership Meeting. Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont, 7:00 p.m.. See next month's issue for details of the program.

February 15-17, 2005. Brownsville International Birding Festival. The 5th Annual Brownsville International Birding Festival, scheduled for February 17 thru the 20th, offers Birders and other nature lovers a complete program of field trips, seminars and other fun events that will explore the bio-diversity of South Texas and Northern Mexico. The Brownsville International Birding Festival is your introduction to the wonderful semi-tropical paradise that is the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The schedule is planned so that you will have a chance to enjoy our famous border hospitality during the festival, travel to El Cielo Nature Festival in southern Tamaulipas, Mexico, Feb. 20-23, 2005, and return to "fiesta" in Brownsville during our traditional 67th Annual Charro Days Celebration of two cultures Feb. 23-27, 2005. Please go to website: www.brownsville.org for more details.

Brownsville, Texas, a semi-tropical paradise where parrots roost in swaying palms and butterflies flit amongst flowering Wild Olive trees, is known to nature-lovers around the world as a top destination for bird- and butterfly-watching.

A highlight of the festival will be the beautiful and unique 557 acre natural native Palm Forest – The Sabal Palm Audubon Sanctuary. The Sabal Palm Audubon Sanctuary is located Southeast of Brownsville and on the banks of the Rio Grande River.

Bluebird Boxes Needed for January Meeting

It is getting close to the new year of 2005 and we are again asking all the woodworkers in our organization to build at least one bluebird house to be given away at our January meeting. Remember to bring your receipts for all of the materials that you spend and GTAS will reimburse you. We truly

appreciate all of the talent that we have in our organization and this way, you can help people to observe bluebirds better. One lady in Buna who was a recipient of one of our giveaway houses, constantly tells me about how much it means to her. For people who don't understand how this works, we simply give them away to people who want them. If we don't have enough to go around, we have a little drawing for them. If you need plans to build a bluebird house please go to http://nabluebirdsociety.org/e_wbox.htm for very detailed plans. If you do not have a computer, e-mail me at janafw@aol.com and I will mail you a copy. Thank you again for working hard to keep GTAS strong.

Jana Whittle

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.

FERC scoping meeting for the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Sempra LNG plant N of Keith Lake: Wed. Jan. 12, Holiday Inn, Jimmy Johnson Blvd, Pt Arthur, 7:00 p.m.

Recent Audubon News

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Receives Corporate Sponsorship for Education Programs

San Antonio, TX, Wednesday, December 22, 2004 - Audubon Texas is pleased to announce that Tesoro Corporation and Alcoa Fujikura

Limited, a division of Alcoa Foundation, are both sponsoring educational programming at the newly opened Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, a wildlife refuge and education center located on the south side of San Antonio. Tesoro Corporation is sponsoring the Docent Training Program and Alcoa Fujikura Limited will sponsor various education programs.

Opened to the public in October, the Mitchell Lake Audubon Center offers programs that relate to nature, ecology, scientific observation and identification, resource management, and citizenship.

"Learning science outdoors in nature is exciting and makes it easier for children to understand concepts that are sometimes difficult to grasp in the classroom," says Iliana Peña, director of the Center. "For example, offering children the opportunity to actually collect insects from water to measure water quality, brings classroom messages to life and creates an experience children will remember."

The Tesoro sponsorships will allow individuals to complete a 10-week docent-training workshop held at the center in January. The workshop will educate docents about the history of Mitchell Lake and the National Audubon Society, teach them how to educate others about the natural history of the area, and familiarize volunteers in the art of interpretation. Alcoa Fujikura Limited will sponsor educational programs at the Audubon center geared toward schoolchildren and families in San Antonio and the surrounding communities. Hands-on outdoor activities customized to the area's unique ecosystem will help visitors better understand the local environment, and encourage a sense of long-term stewardship.

To view the entire release, visit <http://www.tx.audubon.org/news/news.htm>. For more information on Audubon Texas, please visit <http://www.tx.audubon.org/>.



Bird Sightings – November 2004

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) 880-7977. 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: November 2004 produced few surprises in a month which, judging from reports elsewhere in the country, should have produced some surprises. It has been widely reported that many species that normally winter to our north have been making

incursions further south, and the Rio Grande Valley seems full of interesting species from south of the border. In that regard, all we can report are Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins in Silsbee, and continuing Least Grebes in Tyrrell Park. It seems the northern birds haven't made it this far south (yet?) and the southern species haven't come this far north. Given the colder than normal weather in December so far, it seems more likely that we might see northern irruptive species rather than southern ones.

The sightings below represent a relatively normal November with waterfowl arriving more or less on schedule. We do have to note that although the number and variety of ducks in Cattail Marsh in Tyrrell Park in Beaumont have been fairly normal, there have not been glowing reports from the coastal areas or from west Jefferson county. Sparrows have also been reported in near normal numbers except that Savannah Sparrow numbers may well be lower than in recent years. Accessible good sparrow habitat is not too plentiful in this area, and has been further diminished by extensive mowing at Cattail Marsh.

GOOSE, White-fronted	JEF 3 reps(599)	NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-cr.	JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW
GOOSE, Snow	JEF 5 reps(1470); ORA 1 rep(12)	IBIS, White	JEF-TXPT 11/6(5) MHW; JEF
GOOSE, Ross's	JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW; JEF-SW		11/7(150) JAW; JEF 11/7(76) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(20)
	11/13(2) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(1) MHW; JEF 11/21(3) JJW;		MHW; JEF 11/14(50) JAW; JEF 11/21(1450) JJW; JEF
	JEF 11/26(8) JAW		11/26(2513) JAW
GADWALL	JEF 4 reps(317)	IBIS, Glossy	JEF 11/27(3) CTL
WIGEON, American	JEF 1 rep(1)	IBIS, White-faced	JEF 11/7(3) MHW; JEF 11/26(30)
MALLARD	JEF 1 rep(8)		JAW; JEF 11/27(20) CTL
DUCK, Mottled	JEF 11/14(1) JAW; JEF 11/26(5)	IBIS, Plegadis	JEF 11/7(100) MHW; JEF-TXPT
	JAW		11/13(65) MHW; JEF 11/21(470) JJW; JEF 11/26(150) JAW;
TEAL, Blue-winged	JEF 3 reps(449)		JEF 11/27(100) JAW
TEAL species	JEF 1 rep(20)	SPOONBILL, Roseate	JEF-TXPT 11/6(9) MHW; JEF
SHOVELER, Northern	JEF 6 reps(1746)		11/7(19) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(5) MHW; JEF 11/14(1) JAW;
PINTAIL, Northern	JEF 2 reps(8)		JEF-TXPT 11/24(2) KS; JEF 11/26(16) JAW
TEAL, Green-winged	JEF 4 reps(558)	VULTURE, Black	JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 5 reps(55)
CANVASBACK	JEF-PI 11/6(20) JAW; JEF-PI	VULTURE, Turkey	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 8 reps(26)
	11/13(20) MHW	OSPREY	JEF 11/6(1) JAW; JEF-TX87
REDHEAD	JEF 11/7(2) MHW		11/6(1) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW; JEF 11/8(2) JAW;
DUCK, Ring-necked	JEF 2 reps(86)		JEF-TXPT 11/13(1) MHW; JEF 11/26(3) JAW
SCAUP, Greater	JEF 11/26(2) JAW	KITE, White-tailed	JEF 1 rep(2)
SCAUP, Lesser	JEF 3 reps(388)	HARRIER, Northern	JEF 9 reps(30)
BUFFLEHEAD	JEF-PI 11/13(1) MHW; JEF	HAWK, Sharp-shinned	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(1)
	11/26(2) JAW	HAWK, Cooper's	JEF 11/6(1) MHW; JEF-TX87
GOLDENEYE, Common	JEF 11/26(1) JAW		11/6(1) JAW; JEF 11/14(1) JAW; JEF 11/21(1) JJW; JEF
MERGANSER, Hooded	JEF 11/7(1) MHW		11/26(2) JAW
DUCK species	JEF 1 rep(1000)	ACCIPITER species	JEF-TXPT 11/24(1) KS
DUCK, Ruddy	JEF 4 reps(126)	HAWK, Red-shouldered	JEF 4 reps(4)
GREBE, Least	JEF 11/7(7) MHW; JEF 11/26(2)	HAWK, Red-tailed	JEF 10 reps(57)
	JAW; JEF-TP 11/27(2) CTL	HAWK, Red-tailed (Krider's)	JEF 11/27(1) JAW
GREBE, Pied-billed	JEF 4 reps(26)	CARACARA, Crested	JEF-SW 11/13(2) MHW; JEF-
GREBE, Horned	JEF-TP 11/27(1) CTL		MCFW 11/16(1) MCF
GREBE, Eared	JEF 1 rep(2)	KESTREL, American	JEF 7 reps(70)
PELICAN, Amer. White	JEF 4 reps(135)	MERLIN	JEF-TXPT 11/13(2) MHW; JEF
PELICAN, Brown	JEF-PI 11/6(5) JAW; JEF-SRSP		11/21(2) JJW; JEF 11/26(2) JAW; JEF 11/28(1) RHJ
	11/6(4) JAW; JEF-TX87 11/6(3) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/6(6)	RAIL, Clapper	JEF 2 reps(6)
	MHW; JEF 11/13(3) MHW; JEF-PI 11/13(6) MHW; JEF-TX87	SORA	JEF 1 rep(3)
	11/13(22) MHW	MOORHEN, Common	JEF 5 reps(34)
CORMORANT, Neotropic	JEF 11/6(9) MHW; JEF-PI 11/6(4)	COOT, American	JEF 3 reps(713)
	JAW; JEF-TXPT 11/6(22) MHW; JEF 11/7(42) MHW; JEF	CRANE, Sandhill	JEF 11/7(14) MHW; JEF
	11/13(5) MHW; JEF-PI 11/13(1) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(65)		11/14(158) JAW; JEF 11/21(285) JJW; JEF 11/26(1000) JAW;
	MHW; JEF 11/26(29) JAW		JEF 11/27(750) JAW; JEF 11/28(1000) RHJ
CORMORANT, Double-crested	JEF 2 reps(6)	PLOVER, Black-bellied	JEF 3 reps(10)
CORMORANT, Species	JEF 2 reps(2)	PLOVER, Snowy	JEF-SRSP 11/6(7) JAW
ANHINGA	JEF 4 reps(5)	PLOVER, Wilson's	JEF-TXPT 11/24(1) KS
HERON, Great Blue	JEF 10 reps(42)	PLOVER, Semipalmated	JEF 1 rep(3)
EGRET, Great	JEF 12 reps(147)	KILLDEER	JEF 9 reps(185)
EGRET, Snowy	JEF 11 reps(352)	STILT, Black-necked	JEF 5 reps(128)
HERON, Little Blue	JEF 2 reps(2)	AVOCET, American	JEF 5 reps(384)
HERON, Tricolored	JEF 4 reps(22)	YELLOWLEGS, Greater	JEF 7 reps(46)
EGRET, Reddish	JEF 1 rep(2)	YELLOWLEGS, Lesser	JEF 4 reps(20)
EGRET, Cattle	JEF 5 reps(90)	SANDPIPER, Solitary	JEF-TXPT 11/24(1) KS
HERON, Green	JEF 11/7(4) MHW; JEF 11/26(3)	WILLET	JEF 3 reps(61)
	JAW	SANDPIPER, Spotted	JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW; JEF
NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned	JEF 2 reps(2)		11/7(1) MHW

SANDERLING	JEF 1 rep(22)	NUTHATCH, Red-breasted	HAI 11/25(1) SG; HAI 11/26(1) SG;
SANDPIPER, Western	JEF 3 reps(40)	HAI 11/27(1) SG; HAI 11/28(1) SG; HAI 11/29(1) SG; HAI	11/30(1) SG
SANDPIPER, Peep	JEF 1 rep(200)	NUTHATCH, Brown-headed	HAI 11/25(1) SG
SANDPIPER, Least	JEF 2 reps(74)	CREEPER, Brown	JEF-SRSP 11/5(1) DV; JEF-SW
DUNLIN	JEF 5 reps(135)	11/5(2) GD	
SANDPIPER, Stilt	JEF-PI 11/6(1) JAW; JEF 11/7(2)	WREN, Carolina	JEF 4 reps(12)
MHW; JEF 11/27(7) CTL; JEF-TP 11/27(18) CTL		WREN, House	JEF-SW 11/6(1) MHW; JEF-SW
DOWITCHER, Long-billed	JEF 3 reps(235)	11/13(1) MHW; JEF 11/21(2) JJW; JEF-SW 11/24(2) KS	
DOWITCHER species	JEF 4 reps(72)	WREN, Sedge	JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW
SNIPE, Common	JEF 3 reps(4)	WREN, Marsh	JEF-TXPT 11/6(6) MHW; JEF
GULL, Laughing	JEF 5 reps(781)	11/7(5) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(3) MHW	
GULL, Franklin's	JEF-SRSP 11/6(1) JAW; JEF	KINGLET, Ruby-crowned	JEF 7 reps(77)
11/27(4) CTL		GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray	JEF 6 reps(21); ORA 1 rep(2)
GULL, Ring-billed	JEF 5 reps(57)	BLUEBIRD, Eastern	HAI 1 rep(4); JAS 1 rep(28); JEF 6
GULL, Herring	JEF 1 rep(1)	reps(60); ORA 1 rep(4)	
TERN, Gull-billed	JEF-PI 11/13(1) MHW	THRUSH, Hermit	JEF-SRSP 11/5(21) DV; JEF-SW
TERN, Caspian	JEF 3 reps(54)	11/5(91) DV; JEF-SW 11/5(50) GD; JEF-TXPT 11/5(10)	
TERN, Royal	JEF 3 reps(23)	GD; JEF-SRSP 11/6(7) MHW; JEF-SW 11/6(15) MHW; JEF-	
TERN, Sandwich	JEF-SRSP 11/6(1) JAW	TXPT 11/6(4) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(1) MHW	
TERN, Forster's	JEF 2 reps(34)	ROBIN, American	HAI 11/7(6) KS; HAI 11/17(8) KS;
SKIMMER, Black	JEF 1 rep(1)	JAS 11/25(10) JJW; JEF-NEDR 11/3(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP	
DOVE, Rock	JEF 9 reps(168)	11/5(1) DV; JEF-SW 11/5(6) GD; JEF-NEDR 11/6(2) MHW;	
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	JEF 11/3(3) JAW; JEF-TX87	JEF-SRSP 11/6(1) JAW; JEF-SW 11/6(9) MHW; JEF-TX87	
11/6(1) JAW; JEF 11/7(5) JAW; JEF-TX87 11/13(7) MHW; JEF		11/6(2) JAW; JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW; JEF-NEDR 11/7(1)	
11/14(7) JAW; JEF 11/21(3) JJW		JAW; JEF-SW 11/24(4) KS; JEF 11/26(5) JAW; JEF 11/27(20)	
DOVE, White-winged	JEF-NEDR 11/6(15) MHW; JEF-	JAW; ORA 11/17(7) KS	
TXPT 11/6(2) MHW; JEF 11/7(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 11/7(7)		CATBIRD, Gray	JEF-SW 11/24(2) KS
JAW; JEF-NEDR 11/14(5) JAW; JEF-NEDR 11/21(2) JJW; JEF-		MOCKINGBIRD, Northern	JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 10 reps(85)
SRSP 11/24(1) KS		THRASHER, Brown	JEF 3 reps(5)
DOVE, Mourning	JEF 11 reps(413)	STARLING, European	JEF 9 reps(1074)
GROUND-DOVE, Common	JEF 11/7(1) MHW	PIBIT, American	JEF 3 reps(95)
OWL, Barn	JEF-SW 11/13(2) MHW	WAXWING, Cedar	HAI 11/6(13) KS; JEF-SRSP
OWL, Great Horned	JEF-SW 11/13(1) MHW	11/5(1) DV	
HUMMINGBIRD, Buff-bellied	JEF-NEDR 11/21(1) JJW	WARBLER, Orange-crowned	JEF 6 reps(22)
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.	HAI 11/7(1) KS; JEF 11/2(2) JFW;	WARBLER, Nashville	JEF-SRSP 11/5(1) DV; JEF-TXPT
JEF-NEDR 11/7(1) JAW		11/5(1) GD; JEF-SRSP 11/6(1) GD	
HUMMINGBIRD, Archilochus	JEF-NEDR 11/7(2) JAW; JEF-	PARULA, Northern	JEF-SRSP 11/6(2) GD
NEDR 11/8(1) JAW; JEF-SW 11/13(1) MHW		WARBLER, Yellow-rumped	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 11 reps(112);
HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous	JEF-BMT 11/15(1) MH	ORA 1 rep(2)	
HUMMINGBIRD species	JEF-NEDR 11/4(2) JFW; JEF-	WARBLER, Black-thr. Green	JEF-SRSP 11/5(2) DV; JEF-SW
NEDR 11/5(1) JFW; JEF-NEDR 11/6(1) MHW; JEF-NEDR		11/5(1) GD	
11/10(1) JFW		WARBLER, Pine	JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 3 reps(3)
KINGFISHER, Belted	JEF 8 reps(17)	WARBLER, Palm	JEF 11/14(3) JAW; JEF 11/21(1)
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied	JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 6 reps(10)	JFW	
SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied	JEF 2 reps(9); ORA 2 reps(2)	WARBLER, Black-and-white	JEF-SW 11/6(1) MHW
WOODPECKER, Downy	JEF 2 reps(2)	REDSTART, American	JEF-SRSP 11/24(1) KS
FLICKER, Northern	JEF 5 reps(8)	YELLOWTHROAT, Common	JEF 4 reps(9)
FLYCATCHER, Least	JEF-SW 11/5(2) DV; JEF-SW	SPARROW, Chipping	JAS 11/25(3) JJW; JEF-SW
11/13(1) MHW		11/6(5) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/13(3) MHW	
PHOEBE, Eastern	HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 10 reps(86);	SPARROW, Field	JEF-TXPT 11/5(2) GD; JEF-TXPT
ORA 1 rep(1)		11/6(2) MHW	
FLYCATCHER, Vermilion	JEF 11/21(1) JJW; JEF 11/27(2)	SPARROW, Vesper	JEF-PI 11/6(1) JAW
JAW		SPARROW, Savannah	JEF 9 reps(213)
KISKADEE, Great	JEF-SW 11/4(1) JHH	SPARROW, Grasshopper	JEF-SW 11/5(2) DV; JEF-TXPT
FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed	JEF 11/7(27) JAW	11/5(7) GD; JEF 11/7(1) MHW	
SHRIKE, Loggerhead	JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 14 reps(164)	SPARROW, LeConte's	JEF-TXPT 11/5(1) GD
VIREO, White-eyed	JEF 11/7(1) MHW; JEF-SW	SPARROW, Nelson's Sharp-tail.	JEF 2 reps(11)
11/24(1) KS		SPARROW, Seaside	JEF 3 reps(14)
VIREO, Blue-headed	JEF 4 reps(14)		
JAY, Blue	JEF 6 reps(15)	SPARROW, Song	JEF-TXPT 11/5(3) GD; JEF-TXPT
CROW, American	JAS 1 rep(1)	11/13(2) MHW; JEF 11/21(2) JJW	
CROW, Fish	JEF 11/7(2) MHW	SPARROW, Lincoln's	JEF-SRSP 11/5(5) DV; JEF-SW
SWALLOW, Tree	JEF 11/6(20) MHW; JEF-TXPT	11/5(5) DV; JEF-TXPT 11/5(8) GD; JEF-TXPT 11/6(3) MHW;	
11/6(3) MHW; JEF 11/7(30) JAW; JEF 11/7(500) MHW; JEF-		JEF 11/7(2) MHW; JEF-SW 11/13(2) MHW; JEF 11/21(1) JJW	
SW 11/24(12) KS; JEF 11/26(114) JAW		SPARROW, Swamp	JEF 6 reps(57)
SWALLOW, N. Rough-winged	JEF-SRSP 11/6(15) MHW; JEF-	SPARROW, White-throated	JEF 5 reps(33)
SW 11/6(2) MHW; JEF-TX87 11/6(1) JAW; JEF-TXPT 11/6(6)		SPARROW, White-crowned	JEF-SW 11/5(1) DV; JEF-TXPT
MHW; JEF 11/7(4) JAW; JEF 11/26(2) JAW		11/5(9) GD; JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW; JEF 11/7(7) JAW; JEF	
SWALLOW, Barn	JEF 11/6(2) MHW	11/7(1) MHW; JEF 11/21(13) JJW; JEF 11/27(1) JAW	
SWALLOW species	JEF 1 rep(30)	JUNCO, Dark-eyed	JAS 11/25(2) JJW; JEF-SRSP
CHICKADEE, Carolina	HAI 1 rep(2); JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 2	11/5(1) DV; JEF-TXPT 11/5(1) GD; JEF-TXPT 11/6(1) MHW	
reps(3)		CARDINAL, Northern	HAI 1 rep(3); JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 7
TITMOUSE, Tufted	JAS 1 rep(2)	reps(23)	
GROSBEAK, Blue	JEF-SRSP 11/6(1) GD; JEF-SRSP	BUNTING, Indigo	JEF-SRSP 11/6(3) MHW; JEF-SW
11/6(1) MHW		11/6(2) MHW; JEF-TXPT 11/24(4) KS	

BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	JEF 8 reps(1406)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	JEF 5 reps(33)
MEADOWLARK species	JEF 5 reps(36)
BLACKBIRD, Brewer's	JEF 11/27(16) JAW
GRACKLE, Common	JEF 8 reps(1059)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	JEF 3 reps(35)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	JEF 10 reps(265)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	JEF 1 rep(200)
BLACKBIRD species	JEF 4 reps(3645)
FINCH, Purple	JEF-SW 11/24(3) KS
SISKIN, Pine	JEF-SRSP 11/5(1) DV
GOLDFINCH, American	HAI 11/25(1) SG; JEF-SW 11/13(3)
MHW; JEF-BMT 11/15(1) MH; JEF-BMT 11/19(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 11/24(2) KS	
SPARROW, House	HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 1 rep(3)
Number of Species	180
Number of Individuals	30972

County Abbreviations:

HAI -- Hardin; JAS -- Jasper; JEF -- Jefferson; ORA -- Orange.

Location Codes

BMT -- Beaumont; MCFW -- McFaddin NWR; NEDR -- Nederland; PI - Pleasure Island, Port Arthur; SRSP -- Sea Rim State Park; SW -- Sabine Woods; TP -- Tyrrell Park incl. Cattail Marsh; TX87 -- Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP; TXPT -- Road to Pilot Station at Texas Point.

Observer Abbreviations

CTL -- Cin-Ty Lee; DV -- Don Verser; GD -- Gerald Duhon; JAW -- John Whittle; JFW -- Jana Whittle; JHH -- John H. Haynes; JJW -- John and Jana Whittle; KS -- Ken Sztraky; MCF -- McFaddin and Texas Pt NWRs (Patrick Walther); MH -- Margo Holst; MHW -- Steve Mayes, John Haynes, John Whittle; RHJ -- Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; SG -- Sherry Gibson.

Bird Alert

It is always risky to attempt a bird alert in the *Brown Pelican* because of the delay that unavoidably elapses between these words being written and your reading them. All alerts are posted on the web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org and are emailed to those who have requested to be on the list.

Least Grebes are still present in multiple areas of Cattail Marsh. The three in the southeast corner of cell 8 -- the far southeast corner of the main marsh -- are the least shy, and are usually found very close to the levee. Unfortunately, the location is about as far from the entrance as is possible within the main area of the Marsh. There is a map at

www.cattailmarsh.org. At the time of writing, cell 4 -- along Hillebrandt Bayou opposite from the entrance -- had the most ducks, although water levels are being changed. Extensive work to attempt to mechanically remove water hyacinth from cells 6 and 7 (the southwest and south main cells) may also be causing some changes. Lesser Scaup immediately started using cell 6 after it was cleared. It is not clear whether this hyacinth removal will include other cells. Bald Eagles -- two or perhaps three adults and two sub-adults -- have been seen in the Marsh over Hillebrandt Bayou in the northeast corner. One or two Eared Grebes have usually been in Cell 1 and sometimes in Cell 2. Female Hooded Mergansers have been seen in Cells 4 and 5. Cattail Marsh is one of the few places in the area with any significant number of ducks. Another accessible location with ducks, although they are usually so distant that a scope is necessary is the South Impoundment of Pleasure Island. There have been as many as 3,000 Canvasback in that area, along with a large number of Bufflehead. Is it coincidence that all the ducks that are here are in areas which cannot be hunted?

The Sandhill Cranes in west Jefferson County are seemingly not always present -- at least in areas where they are visible. There are two locations which seem to be favored: south and west of League Road near where it joins Heisig Road, and to the east of Ebner Road, about 1.2 miles south of Willis Road. The total flock may number as many as 2,000. They seem to have settled in more, and are not flying much. Also in west Jefferson County, the male Vermilion Flycatcher is back again this year at the driveway to 4815 Thompson Road, usually near the road. There is also a female in the area. Thompson Road runs south from US90 to Mason Road. Brewer's Blackbirds have been fairly regular associating with cattle near the pipeline crossing on Ebner Road, three-quarters of a mile north of Willis Road. This they are not there, they might try following Ebner Road north and then west (left). At the T-junction, turn right (north) along Liberty County road 1010 and check all the areas where cattle are fed along CR1010.

Recently in Sabine Woods have been a Prairie Warbler and a Fox Sparrow. The Great Kiskadee is also still in the area, probably mostly in the wooded area well north of the Woods and south of Backridge Road.

Thank You Golden Triangle Audubon

Big Thicket National Preserve sponsors two Audubon Christmas Counts. We would have a very difficult time doing the counts if it weren't for the Golden Triangle Audubon group. The Turkey Creek count was held on December 18 with 12 people volunteering and the Beech Creek count took place on December 29 with 13 participants.

David Baker, Bruce Bishop, Sherrie Gibson, Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan, Jeff Pittman, and John Whittle survived the extremely muddy conditions at the Turkey Creek count and came back through dense fog for the Beech Creek count. Also there for Turkey Creek were John Haynes, Curtis Hoagland (a preserve employee who came on his day off), Don Jeane, Steve Mayes, and Ken Sztraky. Additional participants for the Beech Creek count were Bill Bailey, Brian Henderson, Dorothy Holmes, Nick Hylton, Tony Hylton, and

Art MacKinnon. Thank you one and all! Park Ranger Merle King is the organizer of the count with assistance from preserve volunteer Bruce Bishop.

By the way, we broke 100 for the first time on the Beech Creek count with 101 species! Our previous high for that count was 91 way back in 1991. White-breasted Nuthatches and a good variety of woodpeckers were seen on both counts. Purple Finch and Pine Siskin turned up on the Beech Creek count but we usually have more ducks represented on that count. Pine warblers and Eastern Phoebes were especially abundant this winter and sparrows were well-represented on both counts. Once again, thank you to all who participated. We would not have been able to find these birds without your help.

Rose Ann Jordan, volunteer, Big Thicket National Preserve

Sea Rim State Park Christmas Bird Count 2 January 2005

This was the tenth running (since the count was restarted with a relocated circle), and produced more species (164) than ever before, despite this being an abysmal year for "mainstream" duck numbers along the coast. With splendid cooperation from McFaddin and Texas Point National Wildlife Refuges and help from Andy Kasner of Lamar University, we were able to cover more of the count circle than ever before. Extensive sea fog hindered the observers early in the morning, and the air was very humid all day. Fortunately, however, rain threatened by the meteorologists stayed away until after dark.

Despite a general lack of significant numbers of the ducks normally sought by hunters, we were able to record a nice selection of waterfowl. Canada Geese were seen flying over after being missed last year. Although Northern Shoveler and Northern Pintails were not present in significant numbers, there were larger than usual numbers of American Wigeon. The presence of large numbers of Scaup may indicate they, at least on the day of the count, were favoring ponds in inland salt and brackish marshes rather than the offshore Gulf. Common Goldeneye were seen both on the edge of Clam Lake and in the Lost Lake area of Murphree WMA. Interesting were both White-winged and Black Scoters close to the shore at Sea Rim, and a male Surf Scoter in McFaddin NWR very near to the Intracoastal Waterway. Large numbers of Bufflehead were in the south impoundment of Pleasure Island.

A Least Grebe in a pond just west of Texas Point Refuge was new to the count, and another indication of that species spreading north from the Rio Grande Valley. Failing to find Eared Grebe was disappointing, but Horned Grebe made up for it. A Northern Gannet offshore from Sea Rim was good, especially considering the weather conditions.

Heron numbers very much matched last year's, with the addition of one Reddish Egret. The immediate area of the count circle does not, for some reason, normally have Reddish Egret, although one, usually an immature, does appear from time to time.

There is not a lot to say about raptors, except that Northern Harrier numbers seemed down. For the second year in a row, Crested Caracara were seen, this time four birds by two separate parties. This species is becoming increasingly common along the Upper Texas Coast.

We were able to find all the rails except Black. Two Yellow rails were in *Spartina patens* (Salt Meadow Cordgrass) in an area of Texas Point NWR which had been burned earlier. On the remote Texas Point shoreline, we found only three Whimbrel and three Long-billed Curlews, down from recent years. Marbled Godwits were nowhere to be found.

"True" shorebirds were scarce this year, except for Snowy Plovers, again present on the west beach at Sea Rim in impressive numbers. Most other expected species were seen in small numbers, including both dowitcher species. Among the terns, Sandwich Tern was a good find, but no one could confirm a Common Tern. The Black Skimmer flock that used to be regular was probably still at the north end of Sabine Lake (just inside the Orange County circle where it was seen the previous day!)

Inca Doves were not found for the second year in a row, but Groove-billed Ani was welcome. Woodpeckers were somewhat reduced, and Red-bellied seems to have retreated from the area.

Flycatchers were interesting, with a Vermilion Flycatcher, an Eastern Wood-Pewee, and a Great Kiskadee, the last in the wetlands area between the south end of Back Ridge Road and Sabine Woods. This was obviously the bird which has been seen on and off in Sabine Woods since mid-August. Another Valley species expanding up the coast!

A Cassin's Vireo - the second we have encountered in recent counts - is very interesting. The normal range limits of the three Vireo species that were previously lumped as "Solitary Vireo" are still being unraveled.

Southeast Texas seems to be a focal point for wintering Tree Swallows and the good number over the marshes maybe a small part of the huge flock of 3,000 or more that roosts southwest of Bridge City.

Perhaps influenced by the Christmas day cold snap, there were three times as many Carolina Chickadees as we have ever seen before. A Brown Creeper and 23 Eastern Bluebirds were also refuges from further north. It has obviously been a good year for American Robins, which are everywhere, including in the count circle, in huge numbers.

A Prairie Warbler is wintering in Sabine Woods for a second year; we found a Black-and-white Warbler; there were many Gray Catbirds. We didn't do well on Sparrows, but a Fox Sparrow in Sabine Woods partly offset missing Nelson's Sharp-tailed and White-crowned Sparrows.

The following list is preliminary and subject to verification:

GOOSE, Greater White-fronted (85); GOOSE, Snow (751); GOOSE, Snow (White) (763); GOOSE, Snow (Blue) (110); GOOSE, Ross's (4); GOOSE, Canada (102); GOOSE, species (615); GADWALL (1313); WIGEON, American (320); MALLARD (2); DUCK, Mottled (41); TEAL, Blue-winged (33); SHOVELER, Northern (324); PINTAIL, Northern (125); TEAL, Green-winged (2018); CANVASBACK (4500); DUCK, Ring-necked (802); SCAUP, Greater (3); SCAUP, Lesser (3232); SCAUP, Species (18); SCOTER, Surf (1); SCOTER, White-winged (6); SCOTER, Black (2); BUFFLEHEAD (305); GOLDENEYE, Common (2); MERGANSER, Hooded (6); MERGANSER, Red-breasted (11); DUCK, Ruddy (581); DUCK, species (20); LOON, Common (1); GREBE, Least (1); GREBE, Pied-billed (41); GREBE, Horned (3); GANNET, Northern (1); PELICAN, American White (1128); PELICAN, Brown (139); CORMORANT, Neotropic (1111); CORMORANT, Double-crested (105); ANHINGA (1); BITTERN, American (1); HERON, Great Blue (73); EGRET, Great (166); EGRET, Snowy (83); HERON, Little Blue (29); HERON, Tricolored (52); EGRET, Reddish (1); NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned (43); NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-crowned (7); IBIS, White (52); IBIS, Plegadis species (656); SPOONBILL, Roseate (142); VULTURE, Black (8); VULTURE, Turkey (42); OSPREY (5); KITE, White-tailed (5); HARRIER, Northern (28); HAWK, Sharp-shinned (3); HAWK, Cooper's (5); HAWK, Red-shouldered (2); HAWK, Red-tailed (23); CARACARA, Crested (4); KESTREL, American (20); MERLIN (2); FALCON, Peregrine (1); RAIL, Yellow (2); RAIL, Clapper (22); RAIL, King (7); RAIL, Virginia (2); SORA (5); RAIL, species (1); MOORHEN, Common (194); COOT, American (1074); PLOVER, Black-bellied (28); PLOVER, Snowy (35); PLOVER, Semipalmated (54); PLOVER, piping (10); KILLDEER (186); OYSTERCATCHER, American (2); STILT, Black-necked (250); AVOCET, American (118); YELLOWLEGS, Greater (14); YELLOWLEGS, Lesser (3); WILLET (138); SANDPIPER, Spotted (6); WHIMBREL (3); CURLEW, Long-billed (3); TURNSTONE, Ruddy (26); SANDERLING (191); SANDPIPER, Western (547); SANDPIPER, Least (716); DUNLIN (244); DOWITCHER, Short-billed (30); DOWITCHER, Long-billed (20); SNIPE, Wilson's (31); WOODCOCK, American (1); GULL, Laughing (395); GULL, Bonaparte's (28); GULL, Ring-billed (1246); GULL, Herring (57); TERN, Caspian (53); TERN, Royal (149); TERN, Sandwich (8); TERN, Forster's (37); PIGEON, Rock (21); COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian (59); DOVE, White-winged (1); DOVE, Mourning (144); ANI, Groove-billed (1); OWL, Barn (3); OWL, Great Horned (4); KINGFISHER, Belted (3); SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (6); WOODPECKER, Downy (20); FLICKER, Northern (8); WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern (1); PHOEBE, Eastern (61); FLYCATCHER, Vermilion (1); KISKADEE, Great (1); SHRIKE, Loggerhead (40); VIREO, White-eyed (6); VIREO, Blue-headed (11); VIREO, Cassin's (1); JAY, Blue (40); SWALLOW, Tree (285); CHICKADEE, Carolina (50); CREEPER, Brown (1); WREN, Carolina (11); WREN, House (20); WREN, Sedge (90); WREN, Marsh (25); KINGLET, Golden-crowned (5); KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (82); GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (42); BLUEBIRD, Eastern (23); THRUSH, Hermit (8); ROBIN, American (1260); CATBIRD, Gray (25); MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (44); THRASHER, Brown (26); STARLING, European (143); WAXWING, Cedar (38); WARBLER, Orange-crowned (43); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (380); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) (341); WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) (1); WARBLER, Pine (19); WARBLER, Prairie (1); WARBLER, Palm (1); WARBLER, Black-and-white (1); YELLOWTHROAT, Common (27); WARBLER, Wilson's (2); TOWHEE, Eastern (1); SPARROW, Field (4); SPARROW, Savannah (180); SPARROW, Le Conte's (38); SPARROW, Seaside (27); SPARROW, Fox (1); SPARROW, Song (19); SPARROW, Lincoln's (1); SPARROW, Swamp (109); SPARROW, White-throated (54); SPARROW, species (2); CARDINAL, Northern (58); BLACKBIRD, Red-winged (2128); MEADOWLARK, Eastern (32); GRACKLE, Common (141); GRACKLE, Boat-tailed (488); GRACKLE, Great-tailed (163); GRACKLE, species (151); COWBIRD, Brown-headed (2); FINCH, House (8); GOLDFINCH, American (104); SPARROW, House (21); SPECIES, total (164); INDIVIDUALS, total (33203); Observers (28): Marty Bray, Howard Davis, Gerald Duhon, Nancy and Don Fisher, Bill Graber, John Haynes, Jeannie Heltzer, Brian Henderson, Don Jeane, Rose Ann Jordan, Andy Kasner, Gary Kelley, Linda Lang, Carol Lynn and Andy Loker, Art Mackinnon, Steve Mayes, Royce Pendergast, Jeff Pittman, Sherrie Roden, Ken Sztraky, Kristi Thulin, Patrick Walther, Tex Wells, Colt Westbrook, Jana and John Whittle.

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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.

Golden Triangle	(409) 728-6957
Texas (Houston)	(713) 369-9673
Abilene	(915) 691-8981
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N. E. Texas	(903) 839-4804
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