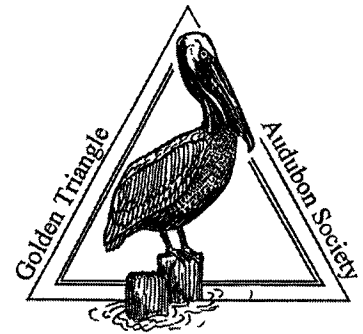


Brown Pelican

Scanned from Originals

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 11 No. 5

May 2005

Membership Meeting
Thursday, May 19, 2005
6:30 PM, Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

J. D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area

Tucker Slack
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Tucker Slack will describe the activities and programs being carried out at the J. D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area, which is located south of Highway 73 on the western edge of Port Arthur.

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

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker

We are sure that no-one reading this has not heard of the confirmation of the existence of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in the swamps of the Big Woods area of Arkansas. This area is about 40 miles east of Pine Bluff, or about 80 miles southeast of Little Rock and approximately the same distance southwest of Memphis, Tennessee. The White River runs through the area which is in the center of an upside down triangle the sides of which are formed by the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers. The discovery of at least one Ivory-billed Woodpecker 60 years after the most recent previous sighting (in 1944) that most accept as fully confirmed gives additional credence to the reports from the Pearl River area of southeastern Louisiana (about 250 miles from the Big Woods area), despite the failure of the search effort in 2002. There is sure to be renewed effort to search the Pearl River area. If Ivory-billed Woodpeckers exist also in the Pearl River area, this would be a second isolated remnant population, making the recovery of the species so much less dependent on one small population, which must surely have experienced considerable inbreeding. The existence of one bird does not constitute a viable population and the life span of the species is reported as up to 15 years.

The discovery is sure to increase the number of reports of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers, so we offer a few comments. The call of the species is a nasal yank reminiscent of the White-breasted Nuthatch (but louder) and unlike the well known Pileated Woodpecker call. The Ivory-billed Woodpecker seems to exist today in swampy areas with very old Cypress trees, although in its Cuban range, it was found in pine forests in eastern Cuba. Although the wing pattern visible when perched is similar to the Red-headed Woodpecker, the Ivory-billed is about two-and-one half times the size. In flight, the Ivory-billed has white upper and lower surfaces of the secondaries and innermost primaries and a restricted area of white in the wing linings, whereas the Pileated has (on the wings) white only on the undersides on the wing linings and a little beyond. While the male Ivory-billed has a red crest, the female shows no red at all on the crest or anywhere else. There are also more subtle differences in the face pattern. A good side by side comparison may be viewed on the web at <http://www.50birds.com/givorypileatedcompare.htm>

The Brown Pelican

Vol. 11, No.5 May 2005

Golden Triangle
Audubon Society

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3015 Nashville Ave.

Nederland, TX 77627-6749

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Calendar of Events

Saturday May 14. Jefferson County Spring Migration Count. Contact John Whittle (john.whittle@lamar.edu or 409-722-4193) to volunteer to help in this county-wide count. Note that this is not the day before Mother's Day this year!

Tuesday May 17. Sabine Woods Work Day. Once again, we find all the Saturdays in the time frame we need to use are occupied with other events. Therefore, we have scheduled a work day for Tuesday May 17 with the full knowledge that those of you without flexible work schedules will be unable to help. We will start about 7:30 a.m., and usually these work days do not run much beyond noon. Sabine Woods is located on Highway 87 about 4.1 miles west of the stop sign in Sabine Pass, on the north side of the highway just beyond the Petroleum Helicopters Base, and is across Highway 87 from Texas Point NWR near its western boundary. We will try to provide refreshments, but bring water and insect repellent. Also bring gloves, heavy duty pruning tools, machetes. We can use riding mowers, probably one chain saw and one or two push mowers for areas heavier equipment cannot reach, but a lot of the most urgent hand work will involve pruning to clear trails and removal of vines.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank Michelle Nunez, Dora Siragusa, Linda Lang, Art Mackinnon for bringing refreshments in March. Claire and Bob Collier have volunteered to bring the sandwiches but we still **need volunteers to bring drinks and desserts in May and all items for all the remaining 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!

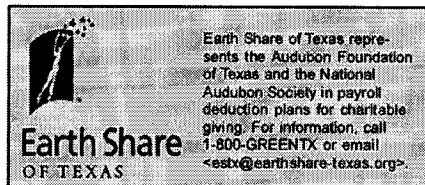
Thursday May 19. Membership Meeting. Speaker: Tucker Slack, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, J. D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area.

Saturday June 4. Field trip to Hardin County. We plan to run a field trip to Hardin County to look for the nesting species of the area – Hooded, Pine, Prairie and Swainson's Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chat, Indigo and Painted Bunting, Gray Catbird, Summer Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher, Brown-headed Nuthatch and others.

The meeting place will be at 7:00 a.m. (note the necessary early start!) at the shopping center on the northeast corner of the intersection of FM92 and FM418 in the northern part of Silsbee. To reach this from Beaumont, take US 69 north and then US96 north. Take **Business 96** into and through downtown Silsbee. When Business 96 turns right a short distance after crossing the railroad, continue straight ahead on FM92 for about a mile to the shopping center. There is a Bealls, a Dominos and an O'Reilly Auto Parts store in the center. We will bird the Firetower Road/Gore Store Road/Camp Waluta area and any nearby areas that are brought to our attention as being productive. We will probably finish before noon.

For those interested in Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman's Sparrow, we would recommend a trip to Boykin Springs, site 007 on the UTC Birding Trail. For further details see www.tpwd.state.tx.us/birdingtrails/ As you drive in heading west from Texas 63 north of Jasper along Forest Road 313, after two or three miles, there is a marked Red-cockaded Woodpecker colony on the north side of the road with a marked trail through it. The area on the north side of FR313 just before you reach the colony is excellent Bachman's Sparrow habitat.

Thursday August 18. Membership Meeting. See August *Brown Pelican* for details



Sea Rim State Park Bird Walk – April 16, 2005

On a beautiful April day, approximately 30 people assembled at the headquarters of Sea Rim State park for our annual Spring Bird Walk. Beautiful weather, however, especially with winds including a southerly component, does not necessarily lead to fantastic birding during spring migration. Fortunately, however, there were enough migrants remaining from the previous two days of northerly winds to provide a reasonably good number of interesting birds.

While waiting for everyone to assemble, a male and a female Blue Grosbeak were seen in the vegetation along the beach. The group then headed out towards "The Willows" – a grove of willow trees growing in the wet area between the beach and Highway 87 just west of park headquarters. First bird to pop up was a nice male Orchard Oriole. The few participants were lucky to glimpse a Sora as it rose briefly before plunging back into the tall vegetation. Two others repeated the process later. A Loggerhead Shrike, one of two that apparently reside in the area, posed nearby. Common Yellowthroats are common residents of the area, and a singing male was soon located near the top of a patch of cane. Others would be seen later. Two male Indigo Buntings were feeding in the low weeds on the other side of the highway. A Swamp Sparrow appeared briefly while a number of Tree Swallows milled overhead. Surprisingly, since most had departed for their more northern breeding grounds by mid-April, three Northern Harriers were seen in the distance quartering over the marshes of McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge. An Eastern Meadowlark was detected perched on the top of some forbs on the north side of the highway.

Once on the boardwalk, logistics essentially require that the group split up into parties of four or five, so each party then had a slightly different experience, as the birds moved into and out of areas where they were visible. A hummingbird, presumably a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, was glimpsed by some. A Green Heron emphatically announced its presence and was seen in the base of the willows. Two cooperative Swainson's Thrushes were patrolling the boardwalk. Scanning the northern horizon, we found two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks circling repeatedly before landing. Although they were a long way off, the bold white wing stripe and the bright orange feet could be clearly seen. Four more arrived somewhat later.

Attention was focused back on the willows, whereupon two Prothonotary Warblers, a male and female, allowed good looks. There had been some concern earlier in the migration season about the low numbers of Prothonotary Warblers seen in the coastal "stopover" sites this year. However, the numbers in the breeding areas – and the species breeds even in Jefferson County in suitable habitat in the Taylor Bayou bottomlands as well as in Tyrrell Park – seem to be normal. It must be concluded that the big "push" of migration of this species occurred during a period without north winds or other unfavorable weather.

Yellow-rumped Warblers – a familiar wintering species in the Golden Triangle even if the birds we were seeing were migrants passing through from further south – were next to appear. Then a male Scarlet Tanager, with starkly contrasting

black wings and tail on an otherwise bright scarlet bird, drew all eyes. Another was seen later, as was a female, dull lemon yellow with grayish wings and tail. A male Summer Tanager, its own shade of red and somehow looking less crisp was next to show. A pair of Yellow Warblers was working the tops of the willows, the female yellow almost all over and the male with sharp red streaks on the breast. Some participants were able to see a Northern Waterthrush, some a Tennessee Warbler and most one or two Red-eyed Vireos.

On the way back towards headquarters, Dickcissels could be heard in the tall grasses north of the highway, but none was perched high enough to be visible. Back at the Sea Rim headquarters building, the group paused to view the Cliff and Barn Swallows which were seemingly unconcerned with the frequent human traffic just below as they continued attaching their mud nests to the wooden beams supporting the elevated main deck.

An optional extension of this trip, as usual, was a visit to Texas Ornithological Society's Sabine Woods Sanctuary, six miles east on Highway 87. Again, the group split into smaller parties, so we will merely note the highlights reported to us. Scarlet Tanagers were numerous, even if probably only a fraction of those which arrived a day or two earlier. Larger birds tended to dominate the sightings as they had for most of the preceding ten days or so. However, there were certainly more than ten warbler species present, although not all were seen by everyone who participated in this part of the trip. Noteworthy were one or possibly two Prairie Warblers – maybe not even migrants, as we know that at least one spent the entire winter at Sabine Woods – a male Blackpoll Warbler, and a Yellow-throated Warbler, the last mentioned verging on being "late." Likewise, a female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was unusually late. Several Yellow-billed Cuckoos and a lot of Wood Thrushes were present. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen, but, surprisingly, no Baltimore Orioles remained from earlier in the week. One Philadelphia Vireo was seen, and, much later in the day, a male Painted Bunting thrilled everyone who was there to see it.

Some of the group also visited the new wetlands area created at the entrance to McFaddin Refuge, the beach at Sea Rim and the McFaddin Beach further west. A good day's birding – much better than on last year's walk – with good weather conditions and a wide variety of birds to see.

The following is a list, almost certainly incomplete, of the birds noted at The Willows and Sabine Woods. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (SRSP 6); Double-crested Cormorant (SRSP 2); Great Egret (SW 1); Tricolored Heron (SW 3); Green Heron (SRSP 1; SW 1); Roseate Spoonbill (SW 2); Northern Harrier (SRSP 3); Sora (SRSP 3); Sanderling (SRSP 175); Laughing Gull (SRSP 2); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (SW 6); Hummingbird species (SRSP 1); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (SW 1); Downy Woodpecker (SW 1); Eastern Kingbird (SRSP 1); Eastern Kingbird (SW 3); Loggerhead Shrike (SRSP 2); Philadelphia Vireo (SW 1); Red-eyed Vireo (SRSP 2; SW 5); Blue Jay (SW 2); Tree Swallow (SRSP 20); Cliff Swallow (SRSP 10); Barn Swallow (SRSP 4); Carolina Wren

(continued on page 7)

Bird Sightings – March 2005

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: A rather good start to the spring migration season is detailed below. There is a very good selection of warblers including a very early Nashville Warbler seen at the Willows at Sea Rim, and a very early Cerulean, unfortunately without details, seen at Sabine Woods in mid-March. Ordinarily, a Prairie Warbler and a Magnolia Warbler in March would also be classified as very early migrants. However, we know that both birds spent the entire winter in Sabine Woods. The male Prairie was seen many times, while the female Magnolia was much more reticent, and still in winter plumage when seen on March 26. The Great Kiskadee continues to be seen occasionally. A female Western Tanager appeared on March 31.

WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous JEF-SRSP 3/16(55) AM
GADWALL JEF 2 reps(105)
DUCK, Mottled JEF 3/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/28(2) AM
TEAL, Blue-winged JEF 5 reps(366)
SHOVELER, Northern JEF 3 reps(1560)
PINTAIL, Northern JEF 1 rep(2)
TEAL, Green-winged JEF 2 reps(370)
DUCK, Ring-necked JEF 1 rep(100)
SCAUP, Lesser JEF 4 reps(145)
SCOTER, Surf JEF 3/17(3) AM
BUFFLEHEAD JEF 1 rep(3)
MERGANSER, Red-breasted JEF 1 rep(80)
DUCK, Ruddy JEF 1 rep(20)
LOON, Common JEF 1 rep(1)
GREBE, Pied-billed JEF 1 rep(9)
GREBE, Eared JEF 1 rep(15)
GANNET, Northern JEF-SRSP 3/11(24) AM; JEF 3/17(17) AM
PELICAN, Amer. White JEF 3 reps(90)
PELICAN, Brown JEF-SRSP 3/11(16) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/16(14) AM; JEF 3/17(60) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/28(14) AM
CORMORANT, Neotropic JEF 7 reps(103)
CORMORANT, Double-crested JEF 6 reps(13)
CORMORANT, Species JEF 1 rep(20)
ANHINGA JEF 1 rep(2)
HERON, Great Blue JEF 5 reps(23)
EGRET, Great JEF 12 reps(97)
EGRET, Snowy JEF 10 reps(111)
HERON, Little Blue JEF 11 reps(96)
HERON, Tricolored JEF 8 reps(28)
EGRET, Cattle JEF 8 reps(63)
HERON, Green JEF-SRSP 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SRSP 3/16(1) AM; JEF 3/17(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SRSP 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
NIGHT-HERON, Black-cr. JEF 2 reps(6)
NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-cr. JEF-SRSP 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SRSP 3/16(12) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/16(3) GD; JEF-TX87 3/16(5) GD; JEF 3/17(1) AM; JEF 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-NEDR 3/28(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM; JEF-NEDR 3/30(1) JAW
IBIS, White JEF 3/6(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/11(16) AM; JEF-TX87 3/27(3) JAW
IBIS, Glossy JEF 3/6(1) JAW
IBIS, White-faced JEF 3/6(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/11(40) AM
IBIS, Plegadis JEF 3/3(20) JAW; JEF 3/4(170) JAW; JEF 3/6(25) JAW; JEF 3/19(20) JAW; JEF-SW 3/20(30) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/20(15) JAW; JEF 3/22(20) JAW; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/25(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(60) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/26(9) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/27(20) JAW
SPOONBILL, Roseate JEF 3/6(4) JAW; JEF 3/17(6) AM; JEF 3/19(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/28(1) AM
VULTURE, Black HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 8 reps(18)
VULTURE, Turkey HAI 1 rep(9); JAS 1 rep(6); JEF 9 reps(49)

OSPREY JEF-TX87 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/28(1) AM
KITE, Swallow-tailed JAS 3/15(1) LC; JEF-SW 3/27(1) LPP
KITE, White-tailed JEF 6 reps(10)
EAGLE, Bald ANG-SRR 3/8(1) SG
HARRIER, Northern JEF 6 reps(8)
HAWK, Sharp-shinned JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW
HAWK, Cooper's JEF 3/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/5(1) GD
HAWK, Broad-winged JEF 3/27(2) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/28(2) AM
HAWK, Red-tailed JEF 6 reps(11)
CARACARA, Crested JEF 3/17(2) AM
KESTREL, American JEF 6 reps(43)
MERLIN JEF 3/17(2) AM; JEF 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
FALCON, Peregrine JEF-SRSP 3/16(1) AM
SORA JEF 1 rep(1)
MOORHEN, Common JEF 1 rep(2)
COOT, American JEF 1 rep(111)
PLOVER, Black-bellied JEF 5 reps(52)
GOLDEN-PLOVER, Amer. JEF-MCFW 3/1(4) CD; JEF-MCFW 3/11(5) GD; JEF-SRSP 3/16(4) AM; JEF 3/17(4) AM; JEF-MCFW 3/25(4) JAW; JEF-MCFW 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(6) AM
PLOVER, Snowy JEF-SRSP 3/11(4) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/12(39) SM; JEF-SRSP 3/16(40) AM; JEF 3/17(42) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/26(10) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(40) AM
PLOVER, Wilson's JEF 2 reps(3)
PLOVER, Semipalmated JEF 3 reps(4)
PLOVER, Piping JEF 3 reps(22)
KILLDEER JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 7 reps(70)
STILT, Black-necked JEF 9 reps(49)
AVOCET, American JEF 2 reps(60)
YELLOWLEGS, Greater JEF 3 reps(4)
YELLOWLEGS, Lesser JEF 2 reps(5)
WILLET JEF 6 reps(72)
SANDPIPER, Spotted JEF 3/17(1) AM
SANDPIPER, Upland JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
WHIMBREL JEF 3/17(8) AM
CURLEW, Long-billed JEF 1 rep(2)
TURNSTONE, Ruddy JEF 2 reps(5)
SANDERLING JEF 5 reps(2670)
SANDPIPER, Western JEF 1 rep(43)
SANDPIPER, Least JEF 3 reps(85)
SANDPIPER, Pectoral JEF-MCFW 3/26(3) FMW
DUNLIN JEF 6 reps(299)
DOWITCHER, Long-billed JEF 3 reps(233)
SNIFE, Common JEF 2 reps(2)
WOODCOCK, American JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM
GULL, Laughing JEF 9 reps(1380)
GULL, Bonaparte's JEF 7 reps(484)
GULL, Ring-billed JEF 8 reps(902)
GULL, Herring JEF 6 reps(65)
GULL, Lsr. Black-backed JEF-MCFW 3/3(1) MCF; JEF-SRSP 3/11(1) AM

TERN, Gull-billed JEF-SRSP 3/11(1) AM; JEF 3/17(1) AM
TERN, Caspian JEF 6 reps(52)
TERN, Royal JEF 6 reps(299)
TERN, Sandwich JEF-SRSP 3/11(12) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/16(14) AM; JEF 3/17(18) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/28(22) AM
TERN, Common JEF-SRSP 3/11(1) AM; JEF 3/17(2) AM
TERN, Forster's JEF 6 reps(225)
SKIMMER, Black JEF 1 rep(1)
DOVE, Rock HAI 1 rep(15); JEF 11 reps(146)
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian HAI 3/24(1) KS; JEF 3/2(1) JAW; JEF 3/9(1) JAW; JEF 3/10(3) JAW; JEF 3/16(2) AM; JEF-TX87 3/20(1) JAW; JEF 3/22(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/28(2) AM; JEF 3/29(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/30(1) JAW
DOVE, White-winged JEF-NEDR 3/1(5) JAW; JEF 3/9(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/9(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/10(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/19(9) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/20(4) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/21(5) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/22(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/24(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/25(14) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/26(8) FMW; JEF-NEDR 3/27(5) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM; JEF-NEDR 3/29(6) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/30(2) JAW
DOVE, Mourning HAI 3 reps(6); JEF 18 reps(144)
DOVE, Inca HAI 2 reps(3); JEF 2 reps(2)
OWL, Barn JEF-SW 3/16(2) AM
OWL, Great Horned JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/11(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) JS; JEF-SW 3/16(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
WILL'S-WIDOW, Chuck- JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
WHIP-POOR-WILL, JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
SWIFT, Chimney HAI 3/24(2) KS; JEF-NEDR 3/26(1) FMW
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr. HAI 3/24(2) KS; HAI 3/30(3) KS; JEF-SW 3/11(2) AM; JEF-NEDR 3/23(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/25(3) JAW; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(5) FMW; JEF-NEDR 3/27(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/28(4) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(4) AM; JEF-NEDR 3/29(6) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/30(1) JAW
HUMMINGBIRD, Black-chinned JEF-NEDR 3/1(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/3(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/6(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/7(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/8(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/10(1) JAW; JEF 3/20(1) JFW; JEF-NEDR 3/23(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/28(1) JAW
HUMMINGBIRD, Archilochus JEF-NEDR 3/4(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/25(1) JAW
HUMMINGBIRD species JEF-NEDR 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/24(2) JAW
KINGFISHER, Belted JEF 4 reps(12)
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(1)
WOODPECKER, Downy JEF 9 reps(21)
PHOEBE, Eastern JEF 7 reps(10)
FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(17) AM
KISKADEE, Great JEF-SW 3/11(1) AM
KINGBIRD, Eastern JEF-SRSP 3/16(1) GD; JEF 3/17(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/18(1) LB; JEF-SRSP 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(4) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(2) AM
FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed JEF-TX87 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-TX87 3/20(1) JFW; JEF-TX87 3/28(12) AM
SHRIKE, Loggerhead JEF 11 reps(33)
VIREO, White-eyed HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 9 reps(20)
VIREO, Yellow-throated JEF-SW 3/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/16(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
VIREO, Blue-headed JEF 8 reps(8)
JAY, Blue HAI 2 reps(6); JEF 13 reps(31)
CROW, American HAI 1 rep(2); JAS 1 rep(2)
CROW, Fish JEF 3/6(22) JAW; JEF-SW 3/16(1) AM; JEF-TX87 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/27(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(8) AM;
CROW, species JEF 6 reps(18)
MARTIN, Purple HAI 2 reps(6); JAS 1 rep(15); JEF 11 reps(93)

SWALLOW, Tree JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 9 reps(3301)
SWALLOW, Barn HAI 3/2(4) KS; HAI 3/30(4) KS; JEF 3/4(3) JAW; JEF 3/6(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/11(4) AM; JEF 3/16(4) AM; JEF 3/17(4) AM; JEF 3/19(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-MCFW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(5) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-TX87 3/27(3) JAW; JEF-TX87 3/28(30) AM
CHICKADEE, Carolina HAI 2 reps(7); JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 1 rep(2)
TITMOUSE, Tufted HAI 1 rep(4); JAS 1 rep(1)
NUTHATCH, Red-breasted HAI 3/8(1) SG; HAI 3/10(1) SG
NUTHATCH, Brown-headed HAI 3/8(2) SG
WREN, Carolina JEF 6 reps(7)
WREN, House JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
WREN, Sedge JEF 3/17(2) AM
WREN, Marsh JEF-SW 3/11(1) AM; JEF 3/17(4) AM
KINGLET, Ruby-crowned HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 9 reps(59)
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray HAI 1 rep(3); JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 14 reps(90)
BLUEBIRD, Eastern HAI 1 rep(3); JAS 1 rep(4); JEF 1 rep(1)
THRUSH, Hermit JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
THRUSH, Wood JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/20(1) SM; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
ROBIN, American JEF 25 reps(678)
CATBIRD, Gray HAI 3/30(1) KS; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
MOCKINGBIRD, Northern HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 14 reps(49)
THRASHER, Brown JEF 7 reps(20)
STARLING, European HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 12 reps(285)
PIBIT, American JEF 1 rep(14)
WAXWING, Cedar HAI 2 reps(15); JEF 3 reps(87)
WARBLER, Blue-winged JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW
WARBLER, Orange-crowned JEF 13 reps(39)
WARBLER, Nashville JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
PARULA, Northern JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/2(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/5(1) GD; JEF-SRSP 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/12(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/16(16) AM; JEF-SW 3/16(5) GD; JEF-SW 3/17(1) WRI; JEF-SRSP 3/18(4) LB; JEF-SW 3/18(1) LB; JEF-SRSP 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SW 3/20(6) JAW; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(6) FMW; JEF-SW 3/27(7) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(6) AM; JEF-SW 3/28(12) AM
WARBLER, Magnolia JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW
WARBLER, Yellow-rumped HAI 2 reps(9); JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 18 reps(409)
WARBLER, Black-thr. Green JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW
WARBLER, Yellow-throated JEF-SRSP 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/11(1) GD; JEF-SRSP 3/16(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/16(6) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/17(4) WRI; JEF-SW 3/17(1) WRI; JEF-SRSP 3/18(2) LB; JEF-SW 3/18(1) LB; JEF-SRSP 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SW 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SRSP 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
WARBLER, Pine JEF 6 reps(7)
WARBLER, Prairie JEF-SW 3/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/6(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/16(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/17(1) WRI; JEF-SW 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(2) WRI; JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
WARBLER, Palm JEF-SRSP 3/28(2) AM
WARBLER, Cerulean JEF-SW 3/17(1) WRI
WARBLER, Black-and-white JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/6(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/11(2) GD; JEF-SW 3/11(26) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/11(1) JS; JEF-SRSP 3/12(3) SM; JEF-SW 3/12(3) SM; JEF-TXPT 3/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/16(12) AM; JEF-SW 3/16(3) GD; JEF-SW 3/18(1) LB; JEF-

SRSP 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SW 3/20(7) JAW; JEF-SW 3/25(3) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(5) FMW; JEF-SW 3/27(4) JAW; JEF-SW 3/28(23) AM	
WARBLER, Prothonotary	JEF-SW 3/11(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/16(1) AM; JEF-SRSP 3/20(1) JAW
WATERTHRUSH, Northern	JEF-SRSP 3/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/16(1) AM
WATERTHRUSH, Louisiana	JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/2(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/9(1) JH; JEF-SW 3/11(6) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) JS; JEF-SW 3/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/16(2) AM; JEF-SW 3/18(1) LB; JEF-SW 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SRSP 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
WARBLER, Kentucky	JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM
YELLOWTHROAT, Common	JEF 11 reps(23)
WARBLER, Hooded	JEF-SW 3/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/16(2) AM; JEF-SW 3/16(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/17(1) WRI; JEF-SW 3/19(1) WTH; JEF-SW 3/20(2) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/26(3) FMW; JEF-SW 3/26(2) FMW; JEF-SW 3/27(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(10) AM; JEF-SW 3/28(25) AM
CHAT, Yellow-breasted	JEF-SW 3/16(1) AM
TANAGER, Western	JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) WRI
TOWHEE, Eastern	JEF-SW 3/11(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/12(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-SW 3/28(1) AM;
SPARROW, Bachman's	JAS 3/5(1) SM
SPARROW, Chipping	HAI 2 reps(12); JAS 1 rep(15)
SPARROW, Field	JEF-SW 3/5(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/16(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/20(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW
SPARROW, Savannah	JEF 4 reps(101)
SPARROW, Nelson's Sharp-tailed	JEF 1 rep(1)
SPARROW, Seaside	JEF 1 rep(1)
SPARROW, Fox	JEF-SRSP 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SW 3/1(1) CD; JEF-SRSP 3/6(1) SM; JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(2) AM; JEF-SW 3/11(1) GD; JEF-SW 3/12(1) GD
SPARROW, Song	JEF 8 reps(9)
SPARROW, Lincoln's	JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM; JEF 3/17(4) AM; JEF-SW 3/25(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/28(1) AM
SPARROW, Swamp	JEF 8 reps(49)
SPARROW, White-throated	JEF 10 reps(103)
SPARROW, White-crowned	JEF-SW 3/7(1) AM
CARDINAL, Northern	HAI 1 rep(4); JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 10 reps(26)
BUNTING, Indigo	JEF-SW 3/26(1) FMW
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	JEF 13 reps(1539)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	JEF 7 reps(43)
MEADOWLARK species	JEF 1 rep(1)
GRACKLE, Common	JEF 9 reps(277)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	JEF 8 reps(97)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	JEF 17 reps(374)
GRACKLE, Gt./Boat tailed	JEF 3 reps(19)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	JEF 4 reps(18)
FINCH, House	HAI 3/10(2) SG; HAI 3/24(2) KS; HAI 3/30(2) KS; JEF-NEDR 3/6(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/26(1) FMW; JEF-NEDR 3/30(1) JAW
SISKIN, Pine	HAI 3/6(1) SG
GOLDFINCH, American	HAI 5 reps(24); JAS 1 rep(25); JEF 7 reps(30)
SPARROW, House	HAI 2 reps(9); JEF 4 reps(6)
Number of Species	193
Number of Individuals	20992

County Abbreviations: ANG - Angelina; HAI - Hardin; JAS - Jasper; JEF - Jefferson.

Location Codes: MCFW - McFaddin NWR; NEDR - Nederland; SRR - Sam Rayburn Reservoir; 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: AM - Art Mackinnon; CD - Carolyn Dill; FMW - Nancy Fisher, Steve Mayes, John Whittle; GD - Gerald Duhon; JAW - John Whittle; JFW - Jana Whittle; JH - Joe Halbrook; JS - Jace

Stansbury; KS - Ken Sztraky; LB - Lynn Barber; LC - Lanet Coleman; LPP - Miner Long, Marian and Frank Peace; MCF - McFaddin and Texas Pt NWRs (Patrick Walther); SG - Sherry Gibson; SM - Steve Mayes; WRI - William Risser; WTH - William and Teresa Hitchcock.

Details of Rare Birds

Nashville Warbler – 28 March 2005 – Art Mackinnon

The bird was observed at a distance of about 45 feet in a Willow off the boardwalk at the Willows at Sea Rim State Park. The bird was hanging upside down very yellow from the throat to the under tail covers, with a little white around the legs, green wings, gray head and back with a very clear and complete eye ring. The red patch was also very bright in the sun light atop the bird's head.

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.

Southeast Texas Outdoor Expo

Just a note to thank people and to let everyone know that we had a successful booth at the Southeast Texas Outdoor Expo which was held April 9-10 at the fairgrounds.

Jeannie Lancelos designed the booth with live plants that attract hummingbirds, a game for all the children to play (identifying birds), identifier for the children to hear bird-sounds, hand-outs of Audubon Adventures, handouts of how-to-build bird feeders, stickers, bird stamps for their hands and a hand-out for adults to plant for backyard birds. Children loved the games, the stamps on their hands, the stickers, and their bird sun-catchers to take home. Home-school teachers and regular ed. school teachers stopped by and took our new GTAS flyers and learned how to order Audubon Adventures. One person asked if someone professional set it up.

We had all kinds of people stop by and visit. One of them lives in Sabine Pass and was very happy to finally make contact with us. He wants our input on several possibilities there. We built even stronger relationships with TPWD and the Big Thicket people.

I would like to thank Jeannie Lancelos for planning, assembling, manning and taking down and storing all of our things that helped make out booth successful.

People who helped this week-end were: Jeannie, her husband Ricky, her brother Randy, Kathi and Richard Orgeron, Art MacKinnon and his son. Thanks to Rose Ann Jordan also for letting us know about this opportunity.

We now have some over 60 new names and addresses of potential members.

Thank you so very much.

Jana Whittle

Which nearly extinct species will we find next?

The exciting discovery of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas leads immediately to speculation about other species that haven't been seen in a while.

There are two candidates, Bachman's Warbler and Eskimo Curlew. In many ways, finding either of these species would be marginally less unexpected than the discovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, but exciting nonetheless.

The last fully accepted record of **Bachman's Warbler** was in Charleston County, South Carolina in 1962. Although the breeding male should be unmistakable if seen well, there could be confusion with slightly aberrant Hooded or Wilson's Warblers, or even Mourning Warbler. The female presents a much more difficult challenge, and probably most observers would be likely to conclude either female Common Yellowthroat or perhaps female Yellow Warbler.

The former US range of Bachman's Warbler is not entirely clear, but is said to include South Carolina (and perhaps originally north to Virginia and south to Georgia) and from central Alabama northwards in the southern Mississippi River drainage, reportedly primarily along the St. Francis River of northeast Arkansas and southeastern Missouri. None of the sight records from east Texas are plausible. The wintering range included Cuba and probably the Isle of Pines. The species is reported to prefer cane as nesting habitat, and several early observers specifically noted colonial nesting.

Just as mature cypress swamps offer very difficult travel conditions, so do extensive canebrakes. Generally, there is little of birding interest in thick canebrakes – perhaps some Common Yellowthroats – although many species will use the canes at the edges of canebrakes as vantage points offering a quick escape into virtually impenetrable cover.

The records indicate that Bachman's Warbler is a very early migrant in both the spring and fall, arriving in the breeding areas in mid March and moving south as early as late July.

The habitat preference and the timing of migration both offer some hope that the species may also have continued to exist undetected for forty years.

The last fully accepted record of the **Eskimo Curlew** was in Barbados in 1963, although there are reports by experienced observers in Texas in 1964 and 1968. The species nests on the arctic tundra, and winters in Brazil, Argentina and Chile. Although Oberholser reports no sightings in Texas between 1905 and 1945, there was a flurry of sightings in the early sixties, centered on 7-mile road on west Galveston Island. The sightings ranged from late March to late April, with the majority in early April. However, there are no fall sightings, suggesting that the species follows a migration path reminiscent of that of the Golden Plover, through the middle of the continent in the spring, and across the Atlantic from New England direct to South America in the fall.

Identification of the Eskimo Curlew needs extreme care. The bird is very similar to a small Whimbrel. The bill may be both a little less curved and somewhat thinner. The bird is reported as having darker upperparts, but this may not be very useful. An important field mark is the presence of cinnamon wing linings, which are not shared by the Whimbrel or Little

Curlew, a possible but very unlikely (in Texas) possible vagrant from Siberia. The similar sized Bristle-thighed Curlew, another extremely unlikely, but theoretically possible, vagrant from Asia to Texas, has a bright buff rump and tail.

Although we have recently discovered that a small number of Whimbrels winter along the gulf shore of Texas Point NWR in Jefferson County, most of the population winters further south to Brazil and Colombia. In spring migration in recent years, we have several times encountered flocks of 500 or more Whimbrels in recently drained rice fields in both Jefferson and Chambers County. However, this Spring, in mid-April, the staff of McFaddin and Anahuac NWRs counted more than 5,000 Whimbrels flying south to roosting areas at dusk. Although there is a low degree of confidence in the population estimates, the Canadian population, to which these birds presumably belong, is estimated at only 20,000 (with an additional 50,000 in the Alaska breeding population). It seems clear that we have been detecting only a very small fraction of the Whimbrels that have presumably been passing through each spring. It therefore is entirely possible that a small number of Eskimo Curlews have been passing through Galveston, Chambers and Jefferson County undetected for the last forty years. This would be perfectly understandable if the birds associated with the large flocks of Whimbrels.

Let us not fail to carefully evaluate any "small" Whimbrel that we might encounter during spring migration and let us carefully scan any large flocks of Whimbrel that we do encounter!

Even if these two species are still extant, there must be concern, as there must be in the case of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, about the very small gene pool that will exist. It is vitally important to protect a declining species while the numbers are still high enough to provide a reasonable gene pool. In our area, we sometimes tend to forget when we see 100 Piping Plovers on Bolivar Flats that there may only be 5,000 to 10,000 in the world. Similarly, there may be only 5,000 Wilson's Plovers!

Sea Rim Bird Walk *(continued from page 3)*

(SW 1); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (SW 1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (SW 1); Swainson's Thrush (SRSP 2; SW 4); Wood Thrush (SW 9); Brown Thrasher (SW 3); Tennessee Warbler (SRSP 1; SW 2); Yellow Warbler (SRSP 2); Yellow-rumped Warbler (SRSP 3); Yellow-throated Warbler (SW 1); Prairie Warbler (SW 2); Blackpoll Warbler (SW 1); Prothonotary Warbler (SRSP 2; SW 2); Worm-eating Warbler (SW 1); Northern Waterthrush (SRSP 1; SW 1); Kentucky Warbler (SW 3); Common Yellowthroat (SRSP 3); Yellow-breasted Chat (SW 2); Summer Tanager (SRSP 1; SW 3); Scarlet Tanager (SRSP 4; SW 9); Swamp Sparrow (SRSP 1); White-throated Sparrow (SW 3); Northern Cardinal (SW 2); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (SW 1); Blue Grosbeak (SRSP 2); Indigo Bunting (SRSP 2); Dickcissel (SRSP 1 heard); Red-winged Blackbird (SRSP 5); Eastern Meadowlark (SRSP 1); Common Grackle (SRSP 1); Boat-tailed Grackle (SRSP 5); Orchard Oriole (SRSP 1; SW 3). [SRSP = Sea Rim State Park; SW = Sabine Woods.]

John A. Whittle

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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.

Golden Triangle	(409) 728-6957
Texas (Houston)	(713) 369-9673
Abilene	(915) 691-8981
Austin	(512) 926-8751
Ft. Worth (N. Cent)	(817) 329-1930
Lubbock	(806) 797-6690
N. E. Texas	(903) 839-4804
Rio Grande Valley	(956) 584-2731
San Antonio	(210) 308-6788
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