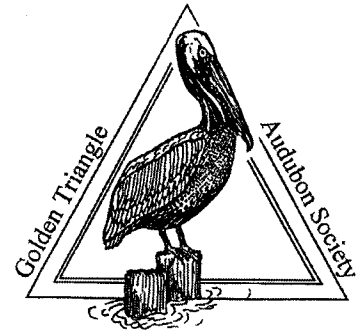


Brown Pelican

Scanned from Originals

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 13 No. 5

May 2007

**Membership Meeting
Thursday, May 17, 2007, 6:00 PM
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont
Backyard Birdwatching
David Baker**

David Baker graduated from Colorado State University with a B.S. degree in outdoor recreation. However, he notes that he did not take a course in ornithology, a gap that he eliminated by taking such a course at Lamar University under the tutelage of Dr. Jed Ramsey.

During his career with the National Parks Service, David worked at assignments at Lehman Caves National Monument, National Capitol Parks, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, Natchez Trace Parkway, and lastly the Big Thicket National Preserve.

David currently spends his summers in Colorado, and volunteers for the Rocky Mountain National Park. He lives in Beaumont from October through May, and works part time for Wild Birds Unlimited.

We will plan on having the refreshments ready by 6:00 p.m. and the program will start at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

Our Meeting Place

The successful April meeting proved to us that "The Green Barn" at the Garden Center is a satisfactory place for us to meet while the main Garden Center building is undergoing major renovation and expansion. While the interior is indicative of its function as a maintenance shed, every effort is being made to keep it in a clean condition for our and other meetings. We particularly thank Ann Harder for all her efforts in this regard.

We are planning to routinely schedule "doors open" at 6:00 p.m. so that we can start the programs promptly at 7:00 p.m. and be finished, with the tables etc cleaned, and out of the park by 9:00 p.m.

The Brown Pelican

Vol. 13, No.5 May 2007

Golden Triangle
Audubon Society

See Web Site for more
information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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Calendar of Events

Saturday May 12. North American 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 again the day before Mother's Day! We try to cover all of Jefferson County. For this count, it is not necessary to commit to the whole day. Some of the areas can be covered in three or four hours, or you can cover a relatively small area of you neighborhood that we would not ordinarily have the resources to cover thoroughly.. Alternatively, if you wish to cover some "off-road" area(s), especially if you have, or can obtain access to, property in a rural area of the county.

Thursday May 17. Membership Meeting. Full details on page 1.

Saturday June 2. 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. Check our website or call Steve Mayes at 722-5807 to confirm the date of the trip if you miss the May Membership Meeting.

The meeting place will be at **7:00 a.m.** (note the necessary early start if we are to find the breeding birds!) 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. 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 have usually recommend a trip to Boykin Springs, site 007 on the UTC Birding Trail. However, large areas in the vicinity of the woodpecker colony have been burned recently, and we do not know the status of the birds this year. 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.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank Jana Whittle, Pat and Don Jeane, Sherrie Roden and for bringing refreshments in April. **We need volunteers to bring all items for May and all later 2007 meetings.** Please do not wait until the last minute to volunteer! 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 far in advance as possible.** Please help if you can!

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.



Earth Share
OF TEXAS

Earth Share of Texas represents the Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society in payroll deduction plans for charitable giving. For information, call 1-800-GREENTX or email estc@earthshare-texas.org.

Bird Sightings – March 2007

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. 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." The range of dates for which the species was reported is shown in parentheses in a column before the sighting details or report summaries.

Commentary: March is always a teaser month. Spring migrants just make it into the month, mostly late in the month. This year, the effect was very much heightened by a very exciting March 31, with lots of migrants around, and 15 warbler species recorded, including a very early Blackburnian. This total also included a bird of the Audubon's race of the Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Those who maintain hummingbird feeders reported a good variety and number of hummingbirds during the month, and we have not condensed their reports, so that the exact dates are shown.

The two Bald Eagles that are nesting along FM105 in Orange County continued to attract much attention. Strangely enough, we have only oral reports of sightings (which we have not included below), but the overall picture is that two eaglets were successfully fledged. One eaglet seemed to be significantly ahead of the other in development, and probably left the nest much earlier than the other.

WHISTLING-DUCK, Black-bell.	(11-11)	JEF 1 rep(6)	
DUCK, Wood	(10-10)	JEF-TX87 3/10(2) JAW	
DUCK, Mottled	(16-16)	JEF-SW 3/16(1) HMWW;	
		JEF-TX87 3/16(1) HMWW	
TEAL, Blue-winged	(11-31)	JEF 2 reps(47)	
SCAUP species	(16-16)	JEF 1 rep(40)	
SCOTER, Black	(11-11)	JEF-MCFW 3/11(5) JAW	
GREBE, Pied-billed	(4-4)	JEF 1 rep(12)	
GANNET, Northern	(4-16)	JEF-MCFW 3/4(3) MW;	
		JEF-MCFW 3/11(21) JAW; JEF-MCFW 3/16(2) HMWW	
PELICAN, Brown	(4-16)	JEF 4 reps(36)	
CORMORANT, Neotropic	(4-31)	JEF 7 reps(30)	
CORMORANT, Double-crest.	(2-12)	JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 3	
		reps(102)	
CORMORANT, Species	(31-31)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
ANHINGA	(11-31)	JEF 2 reps(2)	
EGRET, Great	(4-21)	JEF 9 reps(82)	
EGRET, Snowy	(3-31)	JEF 8 reps(80)	
HERON, Little Blue	(4-4)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
HERON, Tricolored	(31-31)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
EGRET, Cattle	(10-21)	JEF 2 reps(31)	
HERON, Green	(31-31)	JEF-SW 3/31(2) MW	
NIGHT-HERON, Black-crown.	(21-31)	JEF 2 reps(2)	
NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-cr.	(4-16)	JEF-MCFW 3/4(1) MW;	
		JEF-SW 3/16(1) HMWW	
IBIS, White	(11-31)	JEF-TX87 3/11(20) JAW;	
		JEF-TX87 3/16(1) HMWW; JEF-TX87 3/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW	
		3/31(20) MW; JEF-TX87 3/31(10) MW	
IBIS, Plegadis	(11-16)	JEF-TX87 3/11(50) JAW;	
		JEF-TX87 3/16(15) HMWW	
SPOONBILL, Roseate	(3-31)	JEF-TX87 3/3(1) JAW;	
		JEF-TX87 3/31(1) MW	
VULTURE, Black	(4-31)	HAI 1 rep(12); JEF 6	
		reps(18)	
VULTURE, Turkey	(2-31)	ANG 1 rep(1); HAI 2	
		reps(5); JEF 8 reps(28)	
OSPREY	(4-4)	JEF-MCFW 3/4(1) MW	
KITE, Swallow-tailed	(16-24)	JAS 3/16(1) LC; JAS	
		3/24(1) LG	
KITE, White-tailed	(4-16)	JEF 4 reps(7)	
EAGLE, Bald	(30-30)	ANG-SRR 3/30(1) MG	
		(See also commentary above.)	
HARRIER, Northern	(3-16)	JEF 6 reps(12)	
HAWK, Cooper's	(20-20)	JEF-BMT 3/20(1) RHJ	
HAWK, Red-shouldered	(2-15)	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 5 reps(5)	
HAWK, Red-tailed	(1-21)	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 11	
		reps(30)	
CARACARA, Crested	(3-13)	JEF-SW 3/3(1) DJ; JEF-	
		MCFW 3/10(1) JAW; JEF 3/13(1) RHJ	
KESTREL, American	(4-31)	JEF 6 reps(24)	
MERLIN	(15-15)	JEF-SRSP 3/15(1) JHH;	
		JEF-SW 3/15(1) JHH	
FALCON, Peregrine	(30-30)	ANG-SRR 3/30(2) MG	
SORA	(31-31)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
MOORHEN, Common	(3-31)	JEF 5 reps(6)	
COOT, American	(10-31)	JEF 4 reps(36)	
PLOVER, Black-bellied	(4-31)	JEF 4 reps(11)	
PLOVER, Semipalmated	(11-11)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
PLOVER, Piping	(4-11)	JEF 2 reps(5)	
KILLDEER	(11-31)	JEF 4 reps(8)	
STILT, Black-necked	(31-31)	JEF 1 rep(4)	
WILLET	(4-31)	JEF 6 reps(45)	
WHIMBREL	(11-11)	JEF-MCFW 3/11(1) JAW	
SANDERLING	(4-11)	JEF 2 reps(82)	
SANDPIPER, Western	(16-16)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
SANDPIPER, Least	(16-16)	JEF 1 rep(1)	
DUNLIN	(4-11)	JEF 2 reps(31)	
GULL, Laughing	(4-31)	JEF 5 reps(111)	
GULL, Bonaparte's	(11-16)	JEF 2 reps(16)	
GULL, Ring-billed	(4-16)	JEF 4 reps(104)	
GULL, Herring	(4-31)	JEF 4 reps(11)	
TERN, Caspian	(4-4)	JEF 1 rep(2)	
TERN, Common	(16-16)	JEF-MCFW 3/16(2)	
		HMWW	
TERN, Forster's	(4-16)	JEF 3 reps(50)	
TERN, Royal	(4-16)	JEF 2 reps(17)	
TERN, Sandwich	(16-16)	JEF-MCFW 3/16(2)	
		HMWW	
JAEGER, Pomarine	(11-11)	JEF-MCFW 3/11(1) JAW	
PIGEON, Rock	(8-31)	HAI 1 rep(24); JEF 6	
		reps(25)	
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	(4-31)	JEF 9 reps(18)	
DOVE, White-winged	(3-30)	JEF 12 reps(64)	
DOVE, Mourning	(3-31)	HAI 4 reps(90); JEF 13	
		reps(86)	
DOVE, Inca	(12-30)	HAI 4 reps(5); JEF 2	
		reps(4)	
ROADRUNNER, Greater	(2-2)	ANG 3/2(1) JAW	
OWL, Barn	(4-12)	JEF-SW 3/4(2) MW; JEF-	
		SW 3/12(1) JAW	
SCREECH-OWL, Eastern	(15-15)	JEF-NEDR 3/15(1) JFW	
OWL, Great Horned	(4-12)	JEF-SW 3/4(1) MW; JEF-	
		SW 3/12(1) JAW	
SWIFT, Chimney	(7-31)	HAI-SILS 3/7(2) KS; JEF-	
		BMT 3/25(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/29(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 3/29(3)	
		JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/30(3) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/31(3) MW	
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.	(11-31)	HAI 3/13(1) JM; HAI-SILS	
		3/18(1) MG; HAI-SILS 3/19(5) MG; HAI-SILS 3/20(4) MG; HAI-	
		SILS 3/21(1) MG; HAI-SILS 3/23(7) MG; HAI-SILS 3/24(11)	
		MG; HAI-SILS 3/25(8) MG; HAI-SILS 3/26(2) MG; HAI-SILS	
		3/28(4) MG; HAI-SILS 3/29(9) MG; HAI-SILS 3/30(10) MG;	
		JEF-BMT 3/11(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/12(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR	
		3/14(1) JFW; JEF-BMT 3/15(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/16(1) RHJ;	
		JEF-BMT 3/17(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/18(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR	
		3/18(1) JFW; JEF-BMT 3/19(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/20(1) RHJ;	
		JEF-NEDR 3/20(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 3/21(1) JFW; JEF-BMT	
		3/22(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/23(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/24(1) RHJ;	

JEF-BMT 3/25(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/29(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/30(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/31(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 3/31(4) MW
HUMMINGBIRD, Broad-tailed (30-30) HAI-SILS 3/30(1) MG
HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous (1-26) HAI-SILS 3/21(5) MG; HAI-SILS 3/22(2) MG; HAI-SILS 3/25(1) MG; JEF-BMT 3/1(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/2(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/3(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/4(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/5(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/6(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/7(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/8(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/9(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/10(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/11(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/12(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/13(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/14(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/15(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/16(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/17(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/18(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/19(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/20(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/21(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/22(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/23(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/24(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/26(1) RHJ
HUMMINGBIRD, Allen's (3-3) JEF-BMT 3/3(1) RHJ
HUMMINGBIRD, Selasphorus (26-26) JAS 3/26(1) LG
HUMMINGBIRD species (3-28) JEF-BMT 3/3(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/4(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/7(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/13(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 3/18(2) JFW; JEF-BMT 3/21(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/25(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/28(1) RHJ
KINGFISHER, Belted (3-31) JEF 10 reps(31)
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied (7-25) HAI 4 reps(8); JEF 3 reps(3)
SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied (4-24) HAI 7 reps(9); JEF 3 reps(6)
WOODPECKER, Downy (3-31) HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 15 reps(18)
WOODPECKER, Hairy (15-15) HAI-SILS 3/15(1) MG
FLICKER, Northern (15-22) HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(2)
WOODPECKER, Pileated (11-29) HAI 3 reps(4); JEF 2 reps(2)
WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
PHOEBE, Eastern (4-31) JEF 8 reps(20)
FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested (15-15) JEF-SW 3/15(1) JHH
FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed (31-31) JEF-TX87 3/31(1) MW
SHRIKE, Loggerhead (4-31) JEF 9 reps(27)
VIREO, White-eyed (1-31) HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 8 reps(19)
VIREO, Yellow-throated (15-16) JEF-SW 3/15(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(2) HMWW
VIREO, Red-eyed (31-31) JEF-SRSP 3/31(1) MW; JEF-SW 3/31(2) MW
JAY, Blue (4-31) HAI 3 reps(9); JEF 5 reps(13)
CROW, American (2-2) ANG 1 rep(2)
CROW, species (31-31) JEF 1 rep(3)
MARTIN, Purple (1-31) HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 5 reps(25)
SWALLOW, Tree (4-31) JEF 5 reps(53)
SWALLOW, N Rough-winged (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(10) MW
SWALLOW, Barn (1-31) HAI-SILS 3/1(2) KS; JEF-SW 3/16(2) HMWW; JEF-TX87 3/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
CHICKADEE, Carolina (1-21) HAI 4 reps(7); JEF 4 reps(6)
TITMOUSE, Tufted (19-24) HAI 3 reps(10)
NUTHATCH, Brown-headed (2-2) ANG 3/2(1) JAW
WREN, Carolina (4-24) HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 3 reps(5)
KINGLET, Golden-crowned (1-21) JEF-SW 3/1(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/3(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/4(5) MW; JEF-SW 3/12(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/15(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(3) HMWW; JEF-SW 3/18(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/21(2) JWW
KINGLET, Ruby-crowned (2-31) ANG 1 rep(1); JEF 8 reps(20)
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (4-23) JEF 8 reps(16)
BLUEBIRD, Eastern (1-28) HAI 6 reps(14)
THRUSH, Hermit (4-31) JEF 4 reps(8)
ROBIN, American (1-31) HAI 1 rep(2); JAS 1 rep(26); JEF 17 reps(137)
CATBIRD, Gray (4-31) HAI-SILS 3/13(1) MG; JEF-SW 3/4(3) MW; JEF-SW 3/12(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/15(6) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(1) HMWW; JEF-SW 3/18(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 3/24(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/30(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 3/31(1) SM
MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (2-31) HAI 1 rep(2); JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 9 reps(26)

THRASHER, Brown (3-31) HAI 3 reps(3); JEF 13 reps(33)
STARLING, European (1-31) HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 10 reps(130)
WAXWING, Cedar (19-19) JEF 1 rep(20)
WARBLER, Blue-winged (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
WARBLER, Tennessee (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
WARBLER, Orange-crowned (4-31) HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 4 reps(8)
PARULA, Northern (1-31) HAI 3/13(1) JM; JEF-SW 3/1(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/4(1) MW; JEF-SW 3/12(6) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/15(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/15(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(1) HMWW; JEF-BMT 3/24(2) RHJ; JEF-SW 3/31(5) MW
WARBLER, Yellow-rumped (1-31) JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 17 reps(187)
WARBLER, Y-r (Audubon's) (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
WARBLER, Blackburnian (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) SK
WARBLER, Yellow-throated (3-31) JEF-SW 3/3(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/4(1) MW; JEF-SW 3/12(1) JAW; JEF-SRSP 3/15(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/15(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
WARBLER, Pine (2-31) ANG 1 rep(1); HAI 2 reps(5); JAS 1 rep(2); JEF 4 reps(4)
WARBLER, Black-and-white (1-31) JEF-SW 3/1(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/3(1) HM; JEF-SW 3/4(1) MW; JEF-SRSP 3/15(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/15(4) JHH; JEF-SW 3/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/31(5) MW
WARBLER, Prothonotary (18-31) JEF-SW 3/18(4) JAW; JEF-SW 3/31(9) MW
WARBLER, Worm-eating (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(2) MW
WATERTHRUSH, Louisiana (15-31) JEF-SRSP 3/15(2) JHH; JEF-SW 3/15(8) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(3) HMWW; JEF-SW 3/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/21(3) JWW; JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
WATERTHRUSH, La./N. (3-3) JEF-SW 3/3(1) JAW
WARBLER, Kentucky (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
YELLOWTHROAT, Common (3-31) JEF 6 reps(9)
WARBLER, Hooded (15-31) JEF-SW 3/15(3) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(6) HMWW; JEF-SW 3/18(2) JAW; JEF-SW 3/21(1) JWW; JEF-SRSP 3/31(2) MW; JEF-SW 3/31(13) MW
TANAGER, Summer (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
TOWHEE, Spotted (1-16) JEF-SW 3/1(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/16(1) HMWW
TOWHEE, Eastern (1-31) JEF-SW 3/1(1) JHH; JEF-SW 3/3(1) JAW; JEF-SW 3/16(1) HMWW; JEF-SW 3/31(1) MW
SPARROW, Chipping (2-26) HAI 6 reps(185); JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 1 rep(1)
SPARROW, Song (4-21) HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 2 reps(2)
SPARROW, Swamp (4-31) JEF 5 reps(19)
SPARROW, White-throated (1-31) JEF 33 reps(424)
CARDINAL, Northern (2-31) HAI 2 reps(63); JAS 1 rep(1); JEF 9 reps(29)
BUNTING, Indigo (20-31) HAI-SILS 3/20(1) MG; JEF-SW 3/31(5) MW
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged (3-31) JEF 9 reps(233)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern (15-15) JEF 1 rep(3)
MEADOWLARK species (4-31) JEF 4 reps(12)
GRACKLE, Common (4-24) HAI 8 reps(267); JEF 4 reps(84)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed (3-31) JEF 7 reps(86)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed (4-31) HAI 2 reps(5); JEF 9 reps(166)
GRACKLE, Gt./Boat tailed (4-31) JEF 5 reps(68)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed (22-28) HAI 3 reps(6)
ORIOLE, Orchard (31-31) JEF-SW 3/31(21) MW
FINCH, House (2-30) JEF-BMT 3/2(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/3(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/5(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/6(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/8(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/12(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/15(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/16(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/17(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/18(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/19(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/20(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/24(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/26(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 3/30(1) RHJ
GOLDFINCH, American (1-31) HAI 13 reps(64); JEF 15 reps(73)
SPARROW, House (1-30) HAI 2 reps(14); JEF 4 reps(28)
Number of Species 146
Number of Individuals 5427

County Abbreviations:

ANG — Angelina; HAI — Hardin; JAS — Jasper; JEF — Jefferson

Location Codes:

BMT — Beaumont; MCFW — McFaddin NWR; NEDR — Nederland; SILS — Silsbee; SRR — Sam Rayburn Reservoir; SRSP — Sea Rim State Park; SW — Sabine Woods; TX87 — Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP

Observer Abbreviations:

DJ — Don Jeane; HM — John Haynes and Steve Mayes; HMWW — John Hayes, Steve Mayes, John & Jana Whittle; JAW — John Whittle; JFW — Jana Whittle; JHH — John H. Haynes; JJW — John and Jana Whittle; JM — John Mariani; JP — John Park; KS — Ken Sztraky; LC — Lanet Coleman; LG — Lana Gau; MG — Melanie Goetsell; MW — Steve Mayes and John Whittle; RHJ — Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; SK — Steve Kuritz; SM — Steve Mayes.

Field Trip to Sabine Woods and Vicinity April 21, 2007

Last year, the Golden Triangle Audubon Society's April field trip to Sabine Pass topped twenty species of warbler along with many other nice migrants. The number of warbler species seen on a day in the spring is often used as a bench mark for how successful a day it was. A 15 warbler day is usually pretty good and a twenty warbler day is excellent. Experienced birders will repeat tales many times over the years of the days they have seen twenty four or twenty five species of warbler and are in constant pursuit of the possibly mythical thirty warbler day. But as fun as it is to see many different warbler species in a day, the number of these birds seen never tells the whole story of a day during spring migration on the upper Texas coast. This was well reflected on the Golden Triangle Audubon Society's annual April trip to Sabine Pass.

As a general rule, a north wind means good birding in the spring on the coast while a south wind means few birds. On the day of the April field trip, strong south wind had been blowing for several days. This left expectations low for the trip though enthusiasm was still high. As it turns out, both the low expectations and the high enthusiasm were justified. Warblers were few and far between (as one might expect with strong south winds) but bigger birds put in a pretty good showing (so the enthusiasm was rewarded). The started, as so many days do in the spring for birders, at Sabine Woods.

It was a little quiet at the Texas Ornithological Society's Sabine Woods preserve when the field trip participants arrived. Purple Martins zoomed overhead and Tree Swallows were common out over the adjacent marsh land. An occasional Clapper or King Rail called from across the road along with more numerous Soras. Tricolored Herons flew along Highway 87 and a small flock of Blue-winged Teal jumped up from a hidden pond. Other birds seen in the Sabine Woods area included White Ibis, Black-necked Stilt and Roseate Spoonbill.

It became obvious soon into the trip that finding warblers would be a problem. Often in migration, this patch of mature oaks can be swarming with warblers but such was not the case on this date. A few Tennessee Warblers worked the tree tops and gave decent looks. A nice male Black and White Warbler worked up and down the tree branches looking for small insects hidden in the bark. A Kentucky Warbler popped into the open for many of the birders and an Ovenbird, another often secretive warbler species, walked into view. A Northern Waterthrush or two were seen (and heard) bobbing their tails along the edges of the preserves ponds. This drab species is usually pretty cooperative during migration and can often be located by its loud, sharp chip notes long before it is visible. A single Yellow-rumped Warbler was located on the day. This bird is so common during the winter that it is often virtually

ignored by birders but by late April, this species' numbers have thinned considerably and each one seen is prized. This individual was a beautifully plumaged male of the eastern or "Myrtle" race and it barely resembled the drab birds so often ignored during the winter. Eventually, bright Yellow Warblers were also located at Sabine Woods. The resident Common Yellowthroat rounded out the warbler list at Sabine Woods for the day — not an impressive list for April twenty first. Trips to the Willows at Sea Rim State Park and "The Mulberries" along Highway 87 near the entrance to McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge added only a few species for the day. American Redstart was a welcome addition to the trip list as it zipped from tree to tree in constant flycatching mode.

Luckily, other species were around to brighten the day. Thrushes were a well represented on the day. Swainson's Thrush may have been the most numerous but there were multiple Wood Thrushes around on the day as well. A rust-colored Veery was seen by some as it lurked under the branches of a Mulberry tree while a Gray-cheeked Thrush, drabber in color but still appreciated, was located at Sabine Woods. A late Hermit Thrush showed its breast spots and reddish tail to ensure the correct identification was given. Red-eyed Vireo was located several times through out the day at multiple locations not surprising considering this is one of our more common songbird migrants. Plain looking Warbling Vireos were also seen on the day providing an identification challenge for many. Yellow-throated Vireo topped off the vireo count for the trip as it showed its yellow spectacles in the upper branches of a live oak tree. A female Spotted Towhee, present at Sabine Woods most of the winter, gave some good looks. Though this individual has been seen numerous times through out the winter, this species is actually uncommon on the upper Texas coast.

Some of the (non-warbler) jewels of spring migration gave a better showing than the warblers. The Bunting/Grosbeak clan was well represented. Bright blue Indigo Buntings dotted every location visited on the day. Blue Grosbeak was one of the first species seen on the days and continued to give looks through out the day. It was easy to see the rusty wing bars, larger size and massive beak that distinguishes this species from the Indigo Bunting with the numerous close looks the group got at both during the trip. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks fed high in the mulberry and hackberry trees and gave great looks. The bright black, white and (especially) rose-pink plumage of the males combined with their "sneaker of a gym floor" squeaky call makes this one of the easier identifications of the spring. The females are bit more difficult but several were still seen and identified on the day. The prize of the Bunting clan is, of course, the male Painted Bunting. Luckily, one of these multi-colored beauties was spotted for the group to enjoy.

Tanagers and Orioles are also welcome on any trip. Summer Tanagers staked out the bee hives and picked off the stinging insects with seeming ease. Brilliant Scarlet Tanagers were easily seen as they worked the fruiting mulberries. The black and red males certainly must be counted as one of the most stunning species in North America. The female Scarlet is a bit more of a challenge but the yellow body combined with the browner wings separates them from the mustard colored female Summers. Orchard Orioles were also numerous on the day. The burnt orange and black adult males contrasted nicely with the yellow females and immatures. Baltimore Orioles, resplendent in orange and black, were less numerous on the day but still enjoyed by all.

So the warbler list on the day was, well ... disappointing. But, the poor showing of warblers did not fully represent the whole day. Although warblers were few, tanagers, grosbeaks, bunting and orioles more than made up for it. Any day that includes multiple good looks at Scarlet Tanagers and Baltimore Orioles, must be counted as a good day. In the rush to try and find more of those "little yellow birds", it may sometimes be forgotten that they are not the end all be all of migration. It may not have been a twenty warbler day but this April field trip will still be remembered as a good one.

The following species were recorded on the day:
 Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (24); Blue-winged Teal (3); Brown Pelican (5); Great Blue Heron (1); Great Egret (3); Snowy Egret (5); Tricolored Heron (2); Cattle Egret (18); Green Heron (4); Black-crowned Night-Heron (1); White Ibis (30); Turkey Vulture (14); White-tailed Kite (1); Northern

Harrier (2); King Rail (1); Sora (3); American Coot (1); Black-bellied Plover (1); Semipalmated Plover (2); Killdeer (1); Greater Yellowlegs (1); Willet (6); Lesser Yellowlegs (1); Whimbrel (5); Ruddy Turnstone (3); Sanderling (10); Laughing Gull (9); Least Tern (1); Forster's Tern (4); Rock Pigeon (15); Mourning Dove (6); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (3); Common Nighthawk (1); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (2); Belted Kingfisher (1); Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1); Downy Woodpecker (2); Great Crested Flycatcher (2); Eastern Kingbird (10); Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (2); White-eyed Vireo (1); Yellow-throated Vireo (1); Warbling Vireo (1); Red-eyed Vireo (1); Blue Jay (2); Fish Crow (1); Crow species (1); Tree Swallow (50); Barn Swallow (13); Carolina Wren (1); Sedge Wren (1); Marsh Wren (1); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1); Veery (1); Gray-cheeked Thrush (1); Swainson's Thrush (4); Hermit Thrush (1); Wood Thrush (1); Gray Catbird (5); Brown Thrasher (5); European Starling (1); Tennessee Warbler (3); Yellow Warbler (2); Yellow-rumped Warbler (1); Black-and-white Warbler (1); American Redstart (1); Ovenbird (2); Northern Waterthrush (2); Kentucky Warbler (2); Common Yellowthroat (1); Summer Tanager (3); Scarlet Tanager (24); Lark Sparrow (1); Savannah Sparrow (1); Seaside Sparrow (1); Swamp Sparrow (1); White-throated Sparrow (6); Northern Cardinal (1); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (21); Blue Grosbeak (17); Indigo Bunting (12); Painted Bunting (1); Dickcissel (1); Red-winged Blackbird (26); Boat-tailed Grackle (5); Brown-headed Cowbird (15); Orchard Oriole (15); Baltimore Oriole (3); House Sparrow (1).

Steve Mayes

Golden Triangle Audubon Field Trips

Steve Mayes

Have you ever been on a field trip with the Golden Triangle Audubon Society? Many members have not. If you haven't you don't know what you have been missing! Maybe you thought that the trip was only for experts or that you have to be a member of the Audubon Society to participate. The truth is, birders of all skill levels are always welcome and the trips are open to anyone whether they are a member or not. Perhaps, you just don't know what to expect on a trip. Well, maybe I can enlighten you.

The Golden Triangle Audubon Society has conducted more than eighty field trips dating back to at least October of 1995 with a trip to High Island led by Margo Holst right up to the recent field trip to Sabine Pass you might have read about in this very newsletter. Many different locations have been featured for the trips and new ones will likely take place in the future. A typical year of field trips with the GTAS looks something like this:

In January, in recent years, the Katy Prairie has been the destination of choice. Though the distance to this destination puts off some birders, it provides relatively easy access to species that are just tough to find in the Golden Triangle area. Bald Eagle (when there is no convenient nest near a highway, anyway) are much easier to see here than in our area. Birds like White-tailed Hawk, Crested Caracara and Harris's Sparrow are almost a guarantee while they range from scarce

to rare in our area. Rarer birds seen on this trip have included such prizes as Ferruginous Hawk, Couch's Kingbird, Rusty Blackbird and Purple Finch. Another frequent January field trip destination has been Cattail Marsh. This spot provides many species of waterfowl and had produced Cinnamon Teal and Vermilion Flycatcher.

February has been a month to try new locations for our group. Originally, the Katy Prairie trip was done in this month until it was determined that January was more productive for this spot. Cattail Marsh has also been visited on this trip. Other locations for the February trip have included J.D. Murphree Wildlife Management area, Pleasure Island, Sabine National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana, The Nature Conservancy's Roy E. Larsen Sandylands Preserve in the Big Thicket, Lake Charlotte (Chamber County) and, most recently, Sheldon Lake State Park in Houston. Great birds seen on these trips have included Fox Sparrow, Harris's Hawk and an almost complete albino Red-tailed Hawk!

March has traditionally been reserved for Bolivar Flats. Not everyone appreciates shorebirding since, it seems, all those little brown/gray birds look alike. What these people may not realize is that Bolivar Flats is one of the best places in North America to begin to sort these birds out and the experienced birders in the group are happy to help you do it. There are few other places where you get to compare Snowy

Plovers, Semipalmated Plovers, Wilson's Plovers and Piping Plovers side by side. Western, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers are also often present in numbers allowing comparison. That's not to mention the hundreds, sometimes thousands of other shore birds often present. Scarce and rare birds also turn up here. Glaucous Gull and Lesser Black-backed Gull have been seen along with Red Knot and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. An added bonus of doing the Bolivar trip is the chance to visit High Island or Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge after the birding at Bolivar is done. This gives the chance to view early migrant warblers or the High Island rookery. In 1996, it allowed for viewing of a vagrant Red-naped Sapsucker at Smith Oaks.

April is the time of spring migration as all birders know and this usually means a trip to Sabine Pass. In fact, Sabine Pass has been visited more often than any other spot on our field trips, more than 20 trips over the years. If you read this month's field trip report, you know that big numbers of warbler are not always a guarantee but there is always something good to be seen. Plus, sometimes those big fall out days do coincide with the field trip. 2005's trip saw 21 species of warbler, 1996 saw 23 species, 2000 gave us 24 warblers and for the April 1998 trip, an incredible 28 species of warbler were recorded! April also gives some of the biggest overall species list for our field trips. That 1998 trip to the Sabine Pass area recorded more than 150 species of birds. Rarities have also been seen with birds like Western Kingbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Townsend's Warbler and last year's Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher.

Since the group does a Spring Migration Count for Jefferson County during May there has not always been an official May field trip. Unofficially, a group of Golden Triangle birders started a trip to look for nesting warblers in the Big Thicket in late May or early June and this eventually developed into an official trip. This trip regularly turns up species like Red-headed Woodpecker, Prairie Warbler and Swainson's Warbler and sometimes finds Greater Roadrunner.

No trips are generally conducted for much of the summer but come the end of August, the field trips return again. Although trip locations have varied to such locations as Cattail Marsh and "The Nature Classroom" Bayou trip in Orange, A second trip to Bolivar has been the most frequent destination. This has often paid off with a different mix of birds than you might see in March. In August of 1997, a California Gull turned up on one of these trips.

September is the time of the hawk migration (along with other birds) and we are lucky to have one of the best locations to view this phenomenon right in our area in the form of Smith Point. Although, the group has hit some slow days on this trip, we have also hit the jackpot with days where thousands of hawks passed overhead. Broad-winged Hawks are the mainstays of the show but species like Swainson's Hawks, Peregrine Falcons and other species of raptor are often seen. In addition, Magnificent Frigatebirds are usually on view from the tower. A Great Kiskadee flew by the tower on a trip in September 2002.

October has often been used to view the fall songbird migration in Sabine Woods but other trips during this month have featured locations such as High Island. Great warblers are not limited to spring migration as was demonstrated by a Black-throated Blue Warbler seen in Sabine Woods in

October of 1997. Other great birds seen on October trips have included Groove-billed Ani and, in October of 2000, a stray Green-tailed Towhee showed up to the delight of the participants.

The November field is traditionally the last of the year as December is filled with holidays and Christmas Counts. The November field trip has included outings to locations like Sabine Pass for the sparrow migration, Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, Cattail Marsh, south western Louisiana and, in recent years, western Jefferson County. Waterfowl, sparrows and raptors have been targets for these varied trips but there have been many surprises along the way. Bullock's Oriole at Cattail Marsh as was a Common Ground Dove on the same trip. Sandhill Cranes have provided a nice show in recent years but the best bird from a November field trip has to be the Red Phalarope that showed up at a flooded rice field last year in on McDermand Road in west Jefferson County. This bird was just accepted by the Texas Bird Record Committee as one of the few records of this species in the state.

All in all, more than 300 species of birds have been seen on the field trips of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society. This is an impressive number and could not be accomplished in many other areas of the North America. With visits to Jefferson, Chambers, Galveston, Harris, Waller, Hardin, Orange and Liberty Counties in Texas and Calcasieu and Sabine Parishes in Louisiana, most of the best birding locations in southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana have visited by Golden Triangle field trips and many more will be visited in the future. In fact, if you have an idea for a field trip location, let me know. We just might take you up on it! And if not, consider joining one of our field trips. They are casual birding fun for all levels of birder and, with numerous trips to varied locations (near and not so near) through out the year, you are bound to find one that can fit into your schedule and abilities. Whether it is on a Golden Triangle Audubon field trip or not, get out there and bird and enjoy one of the truly spectacular things about our area – the incredible birdlife of the upper Texas coast!

[Steve has compiled an impressive list of all the species seen on our Field Trips to date. Unfortunately, there is not room in this issue to print it. We will post the article and the list on our web-site at www.goldentrianglaudubon.org]

The Migration Season So Far

We always remark when we write any comments about the migration season that by the time you read this, things will have changed! We are writing this on April 25th just before a front is predicted to pass through, so the picture may have changed by tomorrow! We had a fairly good March, as can be seen from the sightings report, with a relatively slow period after about March 20 until the excellent birding of the weekend of March 31-April 1. The first half of April produced excellent birding with good numbers of species and good variety. After the middle of the month, the number of individual birds seen in the coastal woodlots reduced quite substantially, but the number of species did not. There were ones and two of a lot of different species!

NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

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RARE BIRD ALERTS

Unfortunately, almost all the local and regional telephone Rare Bird Alerts have been discontinued in favor of various Internet based means of distribution.

The Texas-wide Rare Bird Alert, maintained by Houston Audubon Society, is available on their web-site at <http://www.houstonaudubon.org/> and each new alert is posted on the TEXBIRDS listserv. The archives of this listserv can be accessed at <http://listserv.uh.edu/archives/texbirds.html> It is not necessary to subscribe to the listserv to view the archives.

Transcriptions of many current and recent email alerts are available on the 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 very early issues.

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