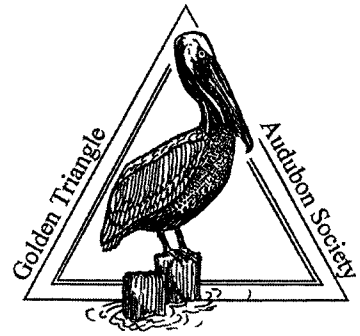


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 13 No. 9

September 2007

**Membership Meeting
Thursday, September 20, 2007
7:00 PM, "The Green Barn"
adjacent to the Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont**

The Ducks of North America

**John Haynes
Haynes Financial Services**

Most of you will already know or have heard of John Haynes expertise in identifying ducks. John promises to reveal some of his secrets at this meeting. This presentation will be very timely, coming as it does just before the ducks begin to arrive to spend the winter in our area. John will illustrate his talk with slides and also recordings of duck calls.

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

Upcoming GTAS Elections

Our elections will soon be upon us. President Jeff Pittman has appointed a Nominating Committee consisting of himself, John Haynes and Jana Whittle. Please contact any of these individuals with you offer to serve or suggestions for others who will be willing. Contact information can be found on page 2. All offices and board positions are up for election at our November annual meeting. The term of the President is two years; the terms of all other officers and board members is one year. We are always looking for new blood and fresh ideas. The duties are not onerous. We typically hold two full evening board meetings (in January and August in recent years), and conduct other business by email and brief get-togethers at regular membership meetings.

There are a number of other positions that we would like to fill. We would welcome offers to become our Education Chair, a position which has been vacant since Jeannie Lanclos moved away from the area at the beginning of the year. We would like to separate the positions of Membership Chair and Publicity Chair. We would like to be able to do a few extra things such as sending welcome letters to new members, and perhaps gentle reminders to those whose membership lapses. The Publicity Chair would be asked to provide the media with information on our meetings well in advance of them. Contact any current officer or board member with your offer to help!

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Vol. 13, No.9 September 2007

Golden Triangle
Audubon Society

See Web Site for more
information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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3015 Nashville Ave.

Nederland, TX 77627-6749

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Calendar of Events

September 13 to 16. Hummer/Bird Celebration, Rockport. For more information, call 1-800-826-6441 or go to www.rockporthummingbird.com.

Saturday September 15. Jefferson County Fall Migration Count. Contact John Whittle (john.whittle@lamar.edu or 409-722-4193) to volunteer to help in this county-wide count.

Thursday September 20. Membership Meeting. See page 1 for details.

Saturday September 22 – Field trip to Smith Point Hawk Watch. To reach the Smith Point Hawk Watch site from Winnie, take Highway 124 south towards High Island. After 12 miles, turn right on FM1985 and follow it about 14 miles (two miles past the access road for Anahuac NWR) until it meets FM562. Follow FM562 (south) another 14 miles to Smith Point. At the end of FM562, there are usually signs to the Hawk Watch. Continue straight until almost reaching the bay, and turn left on a shell/limestone oilfield road, bearing left again to the parking area. It takes at least 90 minutes from the Golden Triangle to reach the site. Your leaders will be there by 8:30 a.m., but join us when you can. Be advised there will also be field trips of other groups at the Hawk Watch site on this day so look for our leader Steve Mayes.

The Smith Point Hawk Watch is conducted by the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.

Broad-winged Hawk migration typically peaks around the 25th-26th-27th of September in southeast Texas, but the exact timing is dependent on weather conditions along the routes the hawks take. However, the Hawk Watch is manned every day, and if the 22nd is not convenient, you could consider going a few days later. The Broad-winged Hawk migration is tracked quite extensively in New England and especially over the famous mountain ridges in Pennsylvania. But there are no organized Hawk Watches that we know of between the mid-Atlantic states and the Texas watches at Smith Point and Hazel Bazemore near Corpus Christi.

So it becomes somewhat of a interesting exercise to "guesstimate" the progress of the large concentrations of hawks as they work their way between the mid-Atlantic and Texas. (They usually takes about a week.) There is also another population of Broad-winged Hawks that funnels between Lakes Erie and Huron over the Detroit area, and presumably joins the other stream somewhere in Texas. There is some evidence that some of the flights go west of Hazel Bazemore, but all the Hawks certainly funnel through the east coast of Mexico at Veracruz where the coastal plain between the Gulf of Mexico and the Sierra Madre Oriental mountains is very narrow..

September 27-27 – Texas Ornithological Society Meeting Winnie, Texas. For details go to www.texasbirds.org.

September Thursday October 18. Membership Meeting. Dr. Brent Ortego of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Since we have a hummingbird topic lined up for November, we hope we can persuade Dr. Ortego to talk on Bald Eagles in Texas.

Saturday November 10. Operation Green Streets. The Golden Triangle Group of the Sierra Club, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, the Texas Forest Service, and Time Warner Cable, is organizing Operation Green Streets, a program to replace and replenish the urban tree canopy that was destroyed by Hurricane Rita by distributing free trees to be planted in front yards of residential homes within city limits in Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange and Tyler counties. Volunteers are being solicited to help with distribution of the trees at multiples sites within the listed counties. The distribution days will be November 10, 2007 and February 9, 2008. To volunteer to help distribute trees, you may email ogs@tfs.tamu.edu or call toll free 1-800-512-8733. For more information on the program, go to <http://operationgreenstreets.tamu.edu>

Thursday November 15. Annual Meeting. Sid and Shirley Rucker on Hummingbirds.

Saturday December 29. Sea Rim State Park Christmas Bird Count. Please mark your calendars. More details in future issues.

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. The date prefixed by AU is the date your National Audubon Society subscription expires. Although this contribution towards the cost of the *Brown Pelican* is voluntary for National Audubon Society members living in the official chapter territory, we will appreciate your support. Our official chapter territory is defined by zip codes, but is basically Jefferson, Hardin and Orange Counties and one or two localities close to those Counties.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank Jeff Pittman, Sherry Gibson and Jana Whittle for providing the refreshments at the August meeting. **We need volunteers to bring all items for all remaining Fall 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!

Silent Auction

At the September meeting, we will have a silent auction of books donated by Jeannie Lanclos and a signed numbered print of a shrimper donated by Jay Huner. The books and print will be on display from 6 p.m. on the evening of the meeting.

Conservation Issues

Here we present a brief summary of the state of various projects and plans of possible conservation impact locally.

The two LNG plants being constructed on the Sabine-Neches Waterway by Golden Pass LNG and Chenier Energy are progressing, and the storage tanks can now be seen from Highway 87 and from Pilot Station Road. We have heard nothing further on the Sempra LNG project, and assume it is currently on hold.

The proposal to widen and deepen the Sabine-Neches Waterway and the Neches River up to Beaumont continues on a low key basis. There are still issues of hydrological modeling, locations for disposal or use of the dredge material, and continuing concerns about the wisdom of providing a channel that will greatly increase the amount of storm surge water that will be carried upstream to Beaumont in a future hurricane.

A new proposal involves leaching natural gas storage caverns out of the Spindletop salt dome in south Beaumont by Golden Triangle Storage Inc. The project includes new pipelines from the site across the Neches in the vicinity of the Bessie Heights marsh to join existing interstate gas pipelines.

Another new project is to build a plant to convert "biomass" into ethanol for fuel use. The plant would be located near China in west Jefferson County, and the promoters are seeking contracts with local farmers to grow switchgrass to provide the biomass.

As the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Texas Chenier Plains NWR Complex approaches completion, there is news that the Trinity River NWR is to begin its CCP. This could be a more "open" process, in that the Trinity River Refuge is relatively new, has fewer established programs and users, and is still in an active land acquisition stage.

More disappointing is the news that Sea Rim State Park is not now expected to reopen until Spring next year. The area, after suffering through Hurricane Rita and recovering for the most part in a year or so, deserves a much more expeditious repair and reopening of this important beachfront park.

Earth Share Workplace Campaign

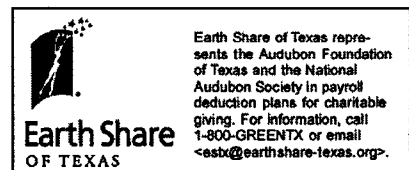
September marks the start of workplace campaigns for Earth Share of Texas and other charitable organizations. If your workplace offers the Earth Share option, that's where we'd like to urge you to direct your contribution.

And specifically, we'd like to encourage you to contribute to the Audubon Foundation of Texas (AFT), one of Earth Share's member organizations. AFT's mission is to support the National Audubon Society's 20 Texas chapters. Among other things, it provides funding for new chapters just getting off the ground. And it helps established chapters meet their operating expenses.

The AFT also provides grants to support chapters' special projects. Some recent grants include \$1000 to Travis Audubon for work at Chaetura Canyon, the Chapter's newest sanctuary. Big Country Audubon Society used a grant to construct an observation blind in Abilene State Park. Other grants have supported conservation work in Latin America. Working with the Houston Audubon Society, AFT helped fund Niños y Crias, an educational organization in the Yucatan which works to protect Caribbean Flamingos and to encourage sustainable development. And together with the Nature Conservancy, AFT helped supported a conference of Central American researchers studying the wintering grounds of the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler.

For a complete list of workplaces participating in the Earth Share campaign, visit <http://www.earthshare-texas.org/workplace.htm>.

*John Kelly, President
Audubon Foundation of Texas*



Field Trip to Bolivar Flats – August 25, 2007

August is a tough month to bird in southeast Texas. It's hot, humid and many of the usual birding spots are filled with a variety of blood-sucking insects. Couple that with the always unpredictable nature of birding and the fact that August is still early enough in the "Fall" migration to sometimes produce few land bird migrants, and many birders consider it easier to just wait for cooler weather before starting to bird again. Indeed, many birders seem to skip directly from Spring migration to Christmas Counts! But those who do so are missing out. There are still places to go in the heat of August that are birdy and (relatively) pleasant. One of these places is Bolivar Flats.

Some might question the need for an August field trip to Bolivar considering the group always does a trip there in March as well. But a great spot like Bolivar Flats cannot be kept to just one visit per year! Would anyone suggest that Sabine Woods should only be visited once per year? Of course not. Bolivar Flats is a world class birding destination and you never know what might turn up there. And as far as birding in August goes, it is one of the top spots in the area. Not only is Bolivar Flats relatively bug free but it is often cooler than much of the area because of its proximity to the Gulf. Also, the shorebird migration is well under way by August so there is plenty to be seen. Along with the resident birds of the area, the migrants create a wonderful birding experience.

On this trip, the Reddish Egrets were among the first birds seen. Although quite commonly seen at Bolivar Flats, these handsome birds have a very restricted range in the United States being common only in Texas and Florida. A good number were seen on this trip including both, the dark and white forms (or "morphs") of the bird. Birders should know that these color variations are not related to the age of the bird and are not just a phase the birds go through. Just as humans can be blondes or brunettes, Reddish Egrets are born either dark or white and will remain that way for life. The white form of the bird can be confused with Great or Snowy Egrets but, with experience, is relatively easy to identify. A check of the leg and bill color is a good first step in the identification process. Bolivar Flats is as good a place as anywhere to sort through these identification issues as there are usually multiple Reddish Egrets to observe.

Shorebirds are the stars of the Bolivar Flats experience and there were plenty on display on this day. Sanderlings were abundant and a couple of Greater Yellowlegs were studied. A Whimbrel was found down the beach and allowed comparison to the more numerous Long-billed Curlews seen on the day. Colorful Ruddy Turnstones gave good looks and did duller-colored Short-billed Dowitchers. Several Western Sandpipers were picked out but only one American Oystercatcher could be found. Willets were common while Black-necked Stilts and Marbled Godwits had to be worked for.

Plovers were numerous on the day as always seems to be the case at this shorebird preserve. Endangered Piping Plovers were evident from the moment the group turned on to the beach and continued to be seen all along the flats. Unlike past trips no color banded Piping Plovers were seen on this day. Good numbers of Semipalmated Plovers were on the mud flats

while only a few Snowy Plovers were located. Larger Black-bellied Plovers were seen in a variety of plumages from colorful breeding finery to dull winter drabness. Wilson's Plovers were especially abundant on the day. Hopefully, this is a sign that it was a good breeding year for this scarce species.

Shorebirds were not the only inhabitants of Bolivar Flats on this day. An Osprey hunted over the surf eventually catching a fish. Numerous tern species were identified including Caspian, Royal, Sandwich, Forster's, Least and Black Terns. Many of the adult terns were still being harassed by begging juvenile birds (by now as large as their parents). Extremely distant Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen (barely) but should be easier to see on the September trip to Smith Point. An immature Crested Caracara flew behind the dune line stirring up clouds of ibis. Odd-looking Black Skimmers were easily seen while Horned Larks took a little more work before finally giving good looks. A Common Nighthawk flew overhead while Laughing Gulls and Brown Pelicans loafed on the beach.

After leaving Bolivar Flats several of the other great birding spots of the area were also checked. A lunch stop at Fort Travis Park produced Marbled Godwits feeding in the grass and a Yellow Warbler zipping by. Yacht Basin Road saw Clapper Rails, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons and many Great and Snowy Egrets. Rollover Pass had almost nothing in the way of exposed mud so shorebirds were very few. Boy Scout Woods in High Island did produce some birds however. In addition to some permanent and Summer residents like Orchard Orioles, Carolina Wrens and Northern Cardinals there were some migrant land birds to be seen. These included Black and White Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and an unidentified Empidonax flycatcher (the most common kind!).

Although no super rarities were seen on the day, a trip to Bolivar is never wasted. Not only is it a chance to study difficult groups like shorebirds and gulls in abundance but it is a place for great Summer birding in southeast Texas. Okay, it's still hot but with no Deer Flies and a decent breeze it seems almost pleasant! Besides, you have to do some birding between Spring and that first Fall cool front and Bolivar Flats is the best place to do it!

The following species were recorded on the trip:

BF = Bolivar Flats; BR – Bob's Road; FT = Fort Travis; RP = Rollover Pass; TX87 = Highway 87, YBR = Yacht Basin Road.

Brown Pelican (FT 15), (BF 100), (RP 200), Neotropic Cormorant (BR 10), (BF 25), Magnificent Frigatebird (FT 2), (BF 2), Great Blue Heron (BF 1), Great Egret (BR 1), (BF 2), (YBR 1), Snowy Egret (BR 1), (BF 3), (TX87 5), Little Blue Heron (RP 1), Tricolored Heron (BR 1), (BF 2), (YBR 2), Reddish Egret (BF 21), (RP 1), Cattle Egret (TX87 20), Green Heron (RP 1), Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (YBR 2), White Ibis (BF 10), (TX87 50), (YBR 100), Roseate Spoonbill (BR 5), (BF 5), (TX87 1), Osprey (BF 1), White-tailed Kite (BF 1), Crested Caracara (BF 1), Clapper Rail (YBR 2), Black-bellied Plover (BF 10), (YBR 3), Snowy Plover (BF 2), Wilson's Plover (BF 35), Semipalmated Plover (BF 30), Piping Plover (BF 25),

continued on page 5

Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey

Preliminary results from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey indicate a total duck population estimate of more than 41 million birds in the traditional survey area. This represents a 14 percent increase from 2006 and is 24 percent above the 1955-2006 average.

"There's a lot of good news in the survey this year for the total duck population and waterfowl breeding habitat," said H. Dale Hall, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "We have five species that are at record or near record highs, including Canvasbacks, and there are good breeding conditions on the prairies. However, we remain concerned that [Northern] Pintails and scaup are well below long-term averages."

The Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey, the largest and most comprehensive survey of its kind in the world, samples 1.3 million square miles across the north-central United States, south-central and northern Canada, and Alaska. The survey estimates the number of ducks in the continent's most important nesting grounds.

Annual survey results help guide the {Fish and Wildlife} Service in managing waterfowl conservation programs under authority of the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Service works in partnership with State representatives from the four Flyway Councils - the Atlantic, Mississippi, Central and Pacific - to establish regulatory frameworks for waterfowl hunting season lengths, dates and bag limits.

Overall, habitat conditions for breeding waterfowl in 2007 were similar or slightly improved compared to conditions in 2006. The total pond estimate (Prairie Canada and United States combined) was 7.0 million ponds, 15 percent greater than last year's estimate of 6.1 million ponds and 44 percent higher than the long-term average of 4.9 million ponds.

For the third year in a row, habitat conditions were good or excellent in the northern grasslands and parklands of southern Saskatchewan and southern Manitoba. Conditions in the Eastern Dakotas, which experienced drought in 2006, were improved by abundant fall and winter precipitation, especially in eastern South Dakota.

Highlights from the survey in the north-central United States, south-central and northern Canada, and Alaska include:

The estimated number of 8.0 Mallard is 10 percent greater than last year's estimate of 7.3 million birds and 7 percent above the long-term average.

The estimated number of 6.7 million Blue-winged Teal is 14 percent greater than last year's estimate and 48 percent above the long-term average. This year is the third highest estimate on record.

The estimated number of 2.9 million Green-winged Teal is similar to last year and 55 percent above the long-term average.

The estimated number of 3.4 million Gadwall is 19 percent greater than last year and 96 percent above the long-term average, and the second highest estimate on record for the traditional survey area.

The estimated number of 1.0 million Redheads is similar to last year and 60 percent above the long-term average. This is a record high for the traditional survey area.

The estimated number of 865,000 Canvasbacks is similar to last year and 53 percent above the long-term average. This is a record high for the traditional survey area.

The estimated number of Northern Shovelers at 4.6 million birds is 24 percent above last year and 106 percent above the long-term average. This is a record high for the traditional survey area.

The estimated number of American Wigeon at 2.8 million birds is 29 percent greater than last year and similar to the long term average for this species.

The estimated number of scaup (Lesser and Greater Scaup combined) at 3.5 million birds, similar to last year and 33 percent below the long-term average. This is the third lowest scaup estimate on record for the traditional survey area. The 2007 estimate for scaup was greater than in 2006; however, this increase was not statistically significant.

The abundance of Northern Pintails at 3.3 million birds is similar to last year and 19 percent below the 1955-2005 average.

For the eastern survey area -- which includes Maine, Maritime Canada, Newfoundland, Labrador, eastern and northern Ontario, and Quebec -- estimates for all species were similar to last year. Estimates for American Black Ducks and Ring-necked Ducks were significantly above their long-term (1990-2006) averages.

This preliminary report does not include information from surveys conducted by State or Provincial agencies or information on the status of geese and swans. The entire 2007 Trends in Breeding Duck Populations Report is available on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/> The 2007 Waterfowl Status Report is available at the same site. This report includes information from State and Provincial surveys as well as goose and swan information. Interviews with the pilot/biologists and video of the conditions can be seen at <http://www.fws.gov/video/wmv/statusprelim2007a.wmv>

Bolivar Flats Field Trip *(continued from page 4)*

Killdeer (TX87 1), American Oystercatcher (BF 1), Black-necked Stilt (BF 5), (YBR 3), Greater Yellowlegs (BF 2), Willet (BR 2), (BF 50), (YBR 6), Whimbrel (BF 1), Long-billed Curlew (BF 30), (YBR 1), Marbled Godwit (FT 4), (BF 3), Ruddy Turnstone (BF 20), (RP 2), Sanderling (BF 50), Western Sandpiper (BF 10), Short-billed Dowitcher (BF 35), Laughing Gull (FT 6), (BR 3), (BF 100), (RP 5), (YBR 8), Ring-billed Gull (BF 5), Least Tern (BF 20), Caspian Tern (BF 5), Black Tern (FT 4), (RP 2), (YBR 20), Forster's Tern (BF 1), (YBR 7), Royal Tern (BF 100), (YBR 8), Sandwich Tern (BF 20), Black Skimmer (BF 25), Eurasian Collared-Dove (HI 1), Inca Dove (HI 2), Hummingbird species (FT 1), Empidonax species (HI 1), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (TX87 1), Loggerhead Shrike (FT 1), Horned Lark (BF 4), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (FT 1), (HI 2), Yellow Warbler (FT 1), (HI 4), Black-and-white Warbler (HI 1), Seaside Sparrow (YBR 2), Northern Cardinal (HI 1), Boat-tailed Grackle (YBR 4), Great-tailed Grackle (TX87 10), Orchard Oriole (HI 1).

Bird Sightings – July 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: July has in the past been the month when the vast majority of our observers take a break from birding. Something to do with the heat, usually. This year, however, July was notable for the rain rather than the heat. We are grateful to Rose Ann And Harrison Jordan in the north part of Beaumont, and Melanie Goetsell in Silsbee for regular reports on the birds in their yards and nearby, giving us additional insight into the breeding species of the area. Brown Thrashers have bred this year in Nederland. Two Great Kiskadees were located in oilfields south of Highway 73 west of Port Arthur.

WHISTLING-DUCK, Blk-bellied	(29-29)	JEF 1 rep(19)			
CORMORANT, Neotropic	(19-29)	JEF 2 reps(102)			
ANHINGA	(28-28)	JEF 1 rep(1)			
HERON, Great Blue	(28-28)	HAI 1 rep(1)			
EGRET, Great	(3-29)	HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 7			
		reps(23)			
EGRET, Snowy	(14-29)	JEF 4 reps(28)			
HERON, Little Blue	(6-29)	JEF 4 reps(144)			
HERON, Tricolored	(28-29)	JEF 2 reps(5)			
EGRET, Cattle	(3-29)	JEF 8 reps(554)			
HERON, Green	(6-31)	HAI 4 reps(5); JEF 2			
		reps(2)			
NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned	(28-29)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1			
		rep(18)			
NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-crown.	(2-2)	JEF 1 rep(1)			
IBIS, White	(14-29)	JEF 3 reps(34)			
IBIS, Plegadis	(28-29)	JEF 2 reps(17)			
SPOONBILL, Roseate	(9-29)	JEF-NEDR 7/9(1) JAW;			
		JEF 7/28(1) JAW; JEF 7/29(1) LRW			
STORK, Wood	(17-19)	JEF 7/17(40) JP; JEF			
		7/19(40) JP			
VULTURE, Black	(10-31)	HAI 3 reps(9); JEF 1			
		rep(3)			
VULTURE, Turkey	(10-31)	HAI 3 reps(5); JEF 2			
		reps(4)			
KITE, Swallow-tailed	(24-24)	ORA-TX87 7/24(1) SR			
KITE, Mississippi	(29-31)	JEF-BMT 7/29(1) RHJ;			
		JEF-BMT 7/31(1) RHJ			
HAWK, Red-shouldered	(6-28)	JEF 6 reps(6)			
CARACARA, Crested	(14-14)	JEF 7/14(2) JP			
RAIL, Clapper	(5-5)	JEF 1 rep(4)			
MOORHEN, Common	(29-29)	JEF 1 rep(5)			
KILLDEER	(28-29)	JEF 2 reps(31)			
STILT, Black-necked	(29-29)	JEF 1 rep(25)			
SANDPIPER, Spotted	(29-29)	JEF-PI 7/29(3) LRW			
GULL, Laughing	(29-29)	JEF 1 rep(12)			
GULL, Herring	(29-29)	JEF-PI 7/29(1) LRW			
TERN, Least	(29-29)	JEF 1 rep(5)			
PIGEON, Rock	(1-30)	HAI 1 rep(4); JEF 11			
		reps(62)			
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	(2-28)	JEF 8 reps(30)			
DOVE, White-winged	(2-31)	JEF 36 reps(122)			
DOVE, Mourning	(2-29)	HAI 4 reps(46); JEF 15			
		reps(134)			
DOVE, Inca	(18-18)	JEF 1 rep(1)			
CUCKOO, Yellow-billed	(31-31)	HAI 1 rep(1)			
OWL, Great Horned	(27-28)	HAI-SILS 7/27(1) MG;			
		HAI-SILS 7/28(1) MG			
OWL, Barred	(28-28)	HAI-SILS 7/28(1) MG			
NIGHTHAWK, Common	(19-29)	JEF 2 reps(2)			
SWIFT, Chimney	(2-31)	JEF 15 reps(111)			
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-throated	(1-31)	HAI-SILS 7/1(36) MG;			
		HAI-SILS 7/4(18) MG; HAI-SILS 7/11(35) MG; HAI-SILS			
		7/22(12) MG; HAI-SILS 7/27(12) MG; JEF-NEDR 7/1(1) JAW;			
		JEF-BMT 7/2(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/2(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/3(1)			
		RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/4(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/4(3) JAW; JEF-BMT			
		7/5(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ JEF-NEDR 7/7(2) JAW; JEF-			
		NEDR 7/8(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/9(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/10(1)			
		RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/10(3) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/11(3) RHJ; JEF-			
		BMT 7/12(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/13(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/14(2)			
		RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/15(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/16(2) RHJ; JEF-			
		NEDR 7/16(2) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/17(2) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/17(1)			
		JAW; JEF-BMT 7/18(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/19(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT			
		7/21(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/21(2) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/22(1) RHJ;			
		JEF-NEDR 7/22(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/23(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT			
		7/25(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 7/25(2) JAW; JEF-NEDR 7/26(2)			
		JAW; JEF-NEDR 7/28(2) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/29(1) RHJ; JEF-			
		NEDR 7/29(3) LRW; JEF-BMT 7/30(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR			
		7/30(4) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/31(1) RHJ			
HUMMINGBIRD species	(12-12)	JEF-NEDR 7/12(1) JAW			
KINGFISHER, Belted	(15-28)	HAI-SILS 7/15(1) MG;			
		HAI-SILS 7/28(1) MG			
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied	(18-29)	JEF 2 reps(2)			
WOODPECKER, Downy	(2-31)	HAI 3 reps(4); JEF 11			
		reps(14)			
WOODPECKER, Pileated	(1-31)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 3			
		reps(3)			
FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested	(12-30)	HAI-SILS 7/12(1) MG;			
		HAI-SILS 7/15(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/30(1) MG; JEF-BMT 7/12(1)			
		RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/24(2) RHJ			
KISKADEE, Great	(16-17)	JEF 7/16(1) CDU; JEF			
		7/17(2) CDU			
KINGBIRD, Eastern	(5-29)	JEF 3 reps(18)			
FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed	(13-29)	JEF 7 reps(15)			
SHRIKE, Loggerhead	(14-29)	JEF 3 reps(11)			
VIREO, White-eyed	(14-31)	HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 1			
		rep(2)			
JAY, Blue	(2-30)	HAI 2 reps(13); JEF 4			
		reps(4)			
CROW, American	(18-29)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 1			
		rep(4)			
CROW, species	(6-28)	JEF 6 reps(10)			
MARTIN, Purple	(3-28)	JEF 7 reps(102)			
SWALLOW, Barn	(2-28)	JEF 6 reps(32)			
CHICKADEE, Carolina	(14-23)	JEF 2 reps(2)			
TITMOUSE, Tufted	(26-26)	HAI 1 rep(12)			
WREN, Carolina	(14-25)	HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 2			
		reps(2)			
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray	(1-31)	HAI-SILS 7/1(2) MG;			
		HAI-SILS 7/8(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/10(3) MG; HAI-SILS 7/12(2)			
		MG; HAI-SILS 7/25(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/27(5) MG; JEF-BMT			
		7/31(1) RHJ			
BLUEBIRD, Eastern	(8-30)	HAI 4 reps(16); JEF 2			
		reps(3)			
THRUSH, Wood	(18-18)	JEF-BMT 7/18(1) RHJ			
ROBIN, American	(2-31)	HAI 1 rep(6); JEF 11			
		reps(16)			
CATBIRD, Gray	(8-31)	HAI-SILS 7/11(1) MG;			
		HAI-SILS 7/25(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/26(1) MG; JEF 7/8(1) RHJ;			
		JEF-BMT 7/10(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/11(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT			
		7/21(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/22(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/23(1) RHJ;			
		JEF-BMT 7/24(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/25(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT			
		7/29(1) RHJ; JEF-PI 7/29(10) LRW; JEF-BMT 7/30(1) RHJ;			
		JEF-BMT 7/31(1) RHJ			

MOCKINGBIRD, Northern reps(100)	(2-30)	HAI 5 reps(18); JEF 19
THRASHER, Brown HAI-SILS 7/21(1) MG; JEF-NEDR 7/2(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 7/9(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 7/10(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/14(1) RHJ	(2-21)	HAI-SILS 7/12(2) MG;
STARLING, European reps(346)	(5-31)	HAI 1 rep(13); JEF 13
WARBLER, Yellow	(29-29)	JEF-PI 7/29(1) LRW
WARBLER, Yellow-throated HAI-SILS 7/10(1) MG	(1-10)	HAI-SILS 7/1(1) MG;
WARBLER, Prothonotary reps(6)	(8-14)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 2
WARBLER, Swainson's	(27-27)	HAI-SILS 7/27(1) MG
WATERTHRUSH, Louisiana	(24-24)	HAI-SILS 7/24(1) MG
WARBLER, Hooded	(10-30)	HAI 5 reps(8)
TANAGER, Summer	(23-23)	HAI 1 rep(1)
CARDINAL, Northern reps(10)	(14-29)	HAI 1 rep(35); JEF 3
DICKCISSEL	(28-28)	JEF 1 rep(9)
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	(14-29)	JEF 3 reps(62)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	(28-28)	JEF 1 rep(1)
MEADOWLARK species	(14-28)	JEF 2 reps(6)
GRACKLE, Common reps(46)	(9-28)	HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 8
GRACKLE, Great-tailed reps(116)	(2-30)	HAI 1 rep(7); JEF 17
COWBIRD, Brown-headed reps(31)	(4-29)	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 2
ORIOLE, Orchard reps(21)	(5-29)	HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 2
FINCH, House HAI-SILS 7/11(1) MG; HAI-SILS 7/15(5) MG; HAI-SILS 7/18(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/21(2) MG; HAI-SILS 7/25(7) MG; HAI-SILS 7/28(5) MG; HAI-SILS 7/31(2) MG; JEF-BMT 7/2(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/3(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/4(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/5(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/6(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/7(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/9(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/10(3) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/12(4) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/13(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/14(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/15(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/17(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/18(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/19(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/22(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 7/24(1) RHJ; JEF-PTA 7/29(6) LRW	(2-31)	HAI-SILS 7/2(2) MG;
SPARROW, House reps(67)	(2-31)	HAI 3 reps(54); JEF 15

Number of Species 86
Number of Individuals 3637

County Abbreviations:

HAI — Hardin; JEF — Jefferson; ORA — Orange

Location Codes:

BMT — Beaumont; NEDR — Nederland; PI — Pleasure Island, Port Arthur; PTA — Port Arthur; SILS — Silsbee; SW — Sabine Woods; TX87 — Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim State Park

Observer Abbreviations:

CDU — Clay Dupuy; JAW — John Whittle; JFW — Jana Whittle; JJW — John and Jana Whittle; JP — John Park; LRW — Jeannie Lanclos, Sherrie Roden, Jana Whittle; MG — Melanie Goetsell; RHJ — Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; SR — Sherrie Roden.

Bird Alerts

September represents the traditional beginning of the fall migration season. However, shorebird migration begins much earlier, perhaps as early as mid July. The early returnees are believed to be mainly "failed" breeding birds — birds whose breeding attempt has failed for whatever reason: predation, flooding of the nest or whatever. In addition, in many shorebird species, not all one year old birds make the trip north, remaining in the wintering grounds all summer. Actually, observations locally on the coast suggest that many of these non-breeding individuals do actually leave their

coastal wintering grounds. Where they go is not clear. Perhaps some make a partial migration, or perhaps they just move to inland water for a period. However, for most shorebird species, the adults begin to return in number in August. Juveniles typically arrive on the wintering ground towards the end of the migratory period. Whether they are accompanied in migration by one parent is not clear, but based on the numbers, it seems unlikely that both parents wait until the juveniles start migration. Anyway, shorebird migration is in full swing by late August and continues through the middle of September for almost all species, and through to the end of September for most. Dunlins are a notable exception, with a Dunlin appearing before mid-September on the coast a very rare event. Most species will spend the winter rather than merely pass through.

The land bird migration is perhaps better understood. Whereas spring migration is, for the most part, compressed into the month of April, fall migration encompasses a longer span from perhaps mid-August to the end of October. For most species, we experience what the Europeans call passage, meaning the species neither breed nor winter but merely pass through. The normal fall migration "window" of an individual species is generally only a little longer than that species' spring migration window. That means that any given week falls into the migration window of fewer species in the fall than it does in the spring, and birders cannot expect to find as many species in one week in the fall.

There are some species that are much easier to see in the fall on the Upper Texas Coast. The Mourning Warbler and the Nashville Warbler are both circum-Gulf migrants — that is, they fly round the Mexican and Texas coasts rather than across the Gulf — and tend in the spring to head north rather than continuing east to the Upper Texas Coast. In the fall, they continue south until hitting the Gulf, and are typically seen in greater numbers in the fall in our area. Both species breed across eastern boreal Canada including all of Quebec and Ontario. On the other hand, there are species that bypass the interior of the country completely in the fall and fly across the western Atlantic from New England to South America non-stop. The best known of these are the Blackpoll Warbler and the American Golden-Plover.

Many of our winter residents tend not to arrive until October or November. This includes most sparrows and most waterfowl. Raptors may arrive a little earlier than this.

Having set the scene, you may be wondering what is happening this September. At the beginning of the month, warblers were to be found at Sabine Woods and the Willows at Sea Rim. Fourteen species were reliably reported over the Labor Day weekend, along with both Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Baltimore Orioles and Summer Tanagers. Empidonax flycatchers were quite common, many defying identification to species level. Shorebird migration could be seen in Cattail Marsh, where one cell was shallow enough to be attractive to them. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Stilt Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Western, Semi-palmated and Least Sandpipers, and a good number of Wilson's Phalaropes were all present, as were a few American Avocet.

Blue-winged Teal, in eclipse plumage, are here in considerable numbers. Belted Kingfishers have arrived. Cliff, Bank, Northern Rough-winged and Tree Swallows are all passing through.

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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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