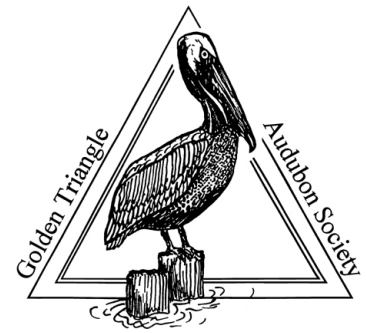


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 15 No. 12

December 2009

Sea Rim State Park Christmas Bird Count Sunday January 3, 2010 Meet in Sabine Pass at 7:00 a.m.

at the intersection of Highway 87 and FM3322 in Sabine Pass. This is at the stop sign in Sabine Pass, where Highway 87 turns west.

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

Please contact John Whittle at johnawhittle@aol.com or 409-722-4193 (H), 409-880-8276 (W) and let us know you plan to attend so we can make the best possible area assignments.

Orange County Christmas Bird Count Friday January 1, 2010 Meet in Orange at 7:00 a.m.

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

Contact Ken Sztraky 409-385-2835 (H) or berrysheepfarm@att.net.

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

Other local counts which will welcome your participation include the Turkey Creek Count (in the Big Thicket north of Kountze) on Saturday, December 19 (contact Dave Roemer, Big Thicket NP at 409-951-6820, Dave_Roemer@nps.gov or John Whittle at johnawhittle@aol.com), the Beech Creek Count (in the Steinhagen Lake area) on Tuesday December 22 (contacts as for Turkey Creek), the Bolivar Peninsula Count on Sunday December 27 (contact Bill Graber 409-866-5452), and the Johnson Bayou count on Wednesday December 30 (contact Ken Sztraky, 409-385-2835, berrysheepfarm@att.net). More details and other counts on page 3.

The Brown Pelican

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Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

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Calendar of Events

**Christmas Bird Counts, December 14
through January 3.** Please see the list
on the page opposite for details of local
counts. As the coast continues to
recover from hurricane Ike, it is
important that all count circles be
counted

**Thursday January 15, 2010.
Membership Meeting.** Speaker: See next
month's issue for details.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to
provide the refreshments at our
membership meeting. **We need volun-
teers to bring items for all the spring
2010 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!
Even if you would like to bring drinks
and cookies or something similar, please
call Jennifer Armacost at (409) 790-7222
(or email her at armacostj@yahoo.com)
as far in advance as possible. Please
help if you can!

Saturday January 17, 2010 Field Trip to Katy Prairie/West Harris County.

Houston is rapidly advancing towards
the heart of this excellent birding area,
with its wintering waterfowl, sparrows
(including Fox and Harris's) and raptors
(including Caracara, Bald Eagle and
White-tailed Hawk). While this trip uses
car caravanning to get from place to
place, most of the birding is done from
the sides of generally lightly traveled
but good, mostly paved roads. The
meeting time and place will be as in
previous years: 7:30 a.m. at the
Randall's Supermarket on the northeast
corner of Barker-Cypress Road and Clay
Road, west of Houston. To reach this
location, take IH-10 west through
Houston and across Loop 610 on the
west side to Barker-Cypress Road – exit
748. This exit is 15 miles west of Loop
610, is beyond Beltway 8, and just
beyond Highway 6 Turn right (north)
on Barker Cypress and proceed three
miles to the Intersection with Clay.

February 12-15, 2010. 12th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

A joint project of the Cornell Lab of
Ornithology and the National Audubon
Society, this free event is an
opportunity for families, students, and
people of all ages to discover the
wonders of nature in backyards,
schoolyards, and local parks, and, at the
same time, make an important
contribution to conservation.
Participants count birds and report their
sightings online at www.birdcount.org.
Anyone can take part, from novice bird
watchers to experts, by counting birds
for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as
they wish) on one or more days of the
event and reporting their sightings
online at www.birdcount.org.

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.

Election Results

We held our elections at the
November meeting. The following
officers were elected for 2008: President
Dr. James Armacost; Vice-President;
Gerald Duhon; Treasurer Christine Sliva
and Secretary John Whittle. The
following were elected to at large
positions on the board: Edra Bogucki,
Sherry Gibson, Dr. Frank Giglio, John
Haynes, Gary Kelley, Steve Mayes,
Sherrie Roden; Paula Shaw; Jana
Whittle.



Christmas Bird Counts -- Upper Texas Coast

Galveston: Tuesday, December 15, 2009

Covers Galveston Island and Bolivar Flats If you'd like to participate, please contact Gordon Nunn. (gletha@comcast.net 409-740-0082 (h) 409-770-7034 (c)) or Dick Peake (409-744-4301).

Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR: Wednesday, December 16, 2009

Anyone interested in participating in this CBC must contact Sumita Prasad prior to the CBC date so that we have a head count. Questions, contact the compiler, Sumita Prasad (sumita@alumni.utexas.net or 832-453-4374 messages).

San Bernard NWR: Friday, December 18, 2009

You can join us by contacting either of the co-compilers below or by showing up at the refuge headquarters on CR306 at 0630 hours the morning of December 18th. Co-compilers Ron Weeks (ronweeks@sbcglobal.net or phone evenings 979-299-0066) and Jennifer Wilson (jennifer_wilson@fws.gov or phone daytime 979-964-4011).

Brazos Bend State Park: Saturday, December 19, 2009

Contact Bill Godley (fribbish@msn.com or 281-341-6684) for details.

Spring Creek: Saturday, December 19, 2009

This count, sponsored by the Pinev Woods Wildlife Society, covers a 15-mile diameter circle that is roughly centered in The Woodlands at I-45 and Rayford-Sawdust road. Contact compiler Al Barr, (albbar@comcast.net or 281-443-6629) for more information.

Turkey Creek: Saturday, December 19, 2009

This count in Hardin and Tyler Counties includes the Turkey Creek and Hickory Creek Savannah Units of the Big Thicket National Preserve. Meet at the Big Thicket Visitor Center on Highway 69 at FM 420, about seven miles north of Kountze at 6:30 AM. Sponsored by the Big Thicket National Preserve. Contact Dave Roemer (dave_roemer@nps.gov or 409-951-6820) or John Whittle (johnawhittle@aol.com or 409-722-4193) for more information.

Freeport: Sunday, December 20, 2009

First-time participants should contact co-compiler Mike Austin (maustis@hotmail.com or 281-992-8888). The count is organized and reported by compilers Mike Austin and Ron Weeks.

Beech Creek: Tuesday, December 22, 2009

This count takes places in Tyler and Jasper Counties and includes Steinhagen Lake, the Beech Creek unit of Big Thicket National Preserve and Martin Dies State Park. Meet at the Corps of Engineers Picnic Area on FM92 immediately north of the intersection with FM1746 in Town Bluff at 6:30 AM. Sponsored by the Big Thicket National Preserve. Contact Dave Roemer (dave_roemer@nps.gov or 409-951-6820) or John Whittle (johnawhittle@aol.com or 409-722-4193) for more information.

Bolivar Peninsula: Sunday, December 27, 2009

The count circle in Chambers County includes High Island and Anahuac NWR. Newcomers are welcome to join! Please contact compiler Bill Graber at 409-866-5452 to participate. This is Bill's 48th year to lead the count.

Trinity River: Monday, December 28, 2009

Areas to be counted include the Trinity River NWR, Tarkington Prairie, and Gaylor Lake. We will meet at 7:00 AM at the Valero Gas station located at the intersection of Highway 105 and 321, about 6 miles southeast of Cleveland. Bring a sack lunch, rubber knee boots and other appropriate outdoor clothing. Birdwatchers of all levels are welcome.. If you have any questions, contact Stuart Marcus at 936-336-3610 (h), 936-336-9786 (w) or stuartma@sbcglobal.net.

Johnson Bayou CBC: Wednesday, December 30, 2009

Johnson Bayou CBC has a rich history beginning in 1976 to present. While much of the area is private, local land owners have allowed access to their property for this count, areas rarely birded and normally inaccessible to birders at other times offering a good chance for oddities. We have permission from the land owners i.e. Gray Estate and Crain Brothers to be on their properties. Areas covered include beach, coastal cheniers, marsh and grasslands. Johnson Bayou is located off Hwy 82 in Louisiana just across from Pleasure Island, TX (east of Sabine Pass). From Port Arthur take Hwy 82 east for about 15 miles into Louisiana. Meet at 7:00 AM at the Johnson Bayou School, which sits between a store and Head-of-the-Hollow Cemetery. This count has great potential with enough observers. We always need more birders on this count and this is a chance to find a "one-of-a-kind" bird for a CBC. Every birder WILL make an impact on the results of this count. Please contact Ken Sztraky telephone 409-385-2835, for more information, assignments and directions.

Old River: Wednesday, December 30, 2009

How to Join the Count:(1) Join the group at 6:30 AM in the area between McDonald's and DJ's Country Store on the corner of I-10 and Hwy 61 (take the Hankamer exit off I-10). (2) Contact last year's area leader or Count Compiler and make special arrangements to join the group birding in a specific area. Hankamer and Anahuac. Barbara Tilton (936-258-5807). Lake Charlotte, Stuart Marcus (936-336-3610). Sulphur Lakes (Help Needed). Hwy 565 Loop, Harry Elliott (832-444-0965). Hwy 1409, Brian Baird (281-467-9683). Wallisville (help needed) (3) Stay at home and be a "Feeder Watcher". E-mail your results to the count compiler or come to the count dinner, they will be a good source of information. For more information contact count compiler Harry Elliott (832-444-0965).

Orange County: Friday, January 1, 2010

Habitat covers marsh, woodlands, and the Cow Bayou watershed. Meet in Orange at 7:00 AM at the Service Station at the intersection of Highway 105 and FM 1442. All are invited, even if you are not an experienced birder or are only able to bird for part of the day. Feeder watchers are welcome to participate. Let us know in advance and we will find a suitable group for you to join. The more pairs of eyes in a group, the more birds will be seen. Contact Ken Sztraky, (berrysheepfarm@aol.com or 409-385-2835), for more information and assignments.

Buffalo Bayou: Saturday, January 2, 2010

The Buffalo Bayou CBC is centered at the Houston Audubon's Edith L. Moore Sanctuary. It extends from Memorial Park on the east to beyond Hwy 6 on the west; from the Southwest Freeway at West Belt on the south to FM 529 near Jersey Village on the north. Contact co-compilers Michael Williams (txbfcbc@houstonarboretum.org, preferably by email, phone 832-723-0653) or Adam Wood (birdsondabrain@earthlink.net, 713-515-1692).

Sea Rim State Park: Sunday, January 3, 2010

This count in Jefferson County includes Sea Rim SP, Texas Point NWR and Sabine Pass area. Sponsored by Golden Triangle Audubon Society. Contact John Whittle (johnawhittle@aol.com, 409-722-4193) for details.

Brazoria: Sunday, January 3, 2010

We are back. The Brazoria CBC (the center of the count circle is just north of Highway. 35 about halfway between Angleton and West Columbia) and includes Bar-X Ranch, Columbia Lake, Hudson Woods (USFWS), Brazoria Reservoir, Harris Reservoir, and southern Nash Ranch.. For more information contact Tom Taroni (taroni@comcast.net).

Bird Sightings –October 2009

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 johnawhittle@aol.com or call (409) 880-8276. For "very rare" birds, or very much out-of-season species, 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: Although all observers in our part of the world look forward to September for fall migration, and especially for a few species of neotropical migrants that are often much easier to find in the fall, such as Canada and Mourning Warblers, October actually

has a heavier migration, and, in addition, usually offers many of the species that winter along the Gulf coast. This year was no exception. October brought a good selection of migrant warblers and other species, along with the early arriving raptors and sparrows. Both groups seem to have been a little late arriving this year, perhaps two or even three weeks behind normal. Many of our wintering species come from the northeast where the summer was unusually cold and wet. This may have had the almost counter-intuitive effect of delaying the maturation of fruits and seed producing grasses, resulting in food supplies lasting further into the fall than is normal. However, many birds are believed to time their migration mostly on the photo period – the length of day and night – and variations rarely exceed the two or three weeks seen this year.

The "overshooting" of fall migrant woodland species all the way to the coast was detected, but not particularly pronounced this year, with one Brown Creeper and a few Golden-crowned Kinglets seen. The continuing Groove-billed Ani at Sabine Woods was the most noteworthy species seen during the month, but the Ash-throated Flycatcher also deserves mention, and these seem to be being seen more frequently east of their "normal" range.

WHISTLING-DUCK, Blk-bell. (18-18) JEF 10/18(30) JAW
GOOSE, White-fronted (17-24) JEF-SW 10/17(240) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/24(50) JAW
GOOSE, Snow (24-24) JEF-SW 10/24(2) JAW
GOOSE, White (17-17) JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
GOOSE, Canada (21-21) JEF-ORG 10/21(12) CSL
DUCK, Mottled (10-10) JEF 10/10(75) JAW
TEAL, Blue-winged (3-11) JEF 10/3(40) GD; JEF-MCFW 10/11(10) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/11(3) JAW
DUCK species (17-18) JEF 2 reps(13)
BOBWHITE, Northern (3-3) JEF 10/3(12) CSL
GREBE, Pied-billed (11-24) JEF-SRSP 10/11(4) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/24(1) JAW
PELICAN, Amer. White (10-24) JEF-TXPT 10/10(30) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(254) FTSW; JEF-TXPT 10/18(18) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(125) JAW
PELICAN, Brown (10-24) JEF 5 reps(46)
CORMORANT, Neotropic (11-24) JEF 5 reps(50)
ANHINGA (17-17) JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
HERON, Great Blue (10-25) JEF 5 reps(15)
EGRET, Great (10-25) JEF 9 reps(115)
EGRET, Snowy (10-25) JEF 10 reps(533)
HERON, Tricolored (10-25) JEF 5 reps(9)
EGRET, Reddish (11-11) JEF-MCFW 10/11(2) JAW
EGRET, Cattle (10-29) HAI-SILS 10/29(1) MG; JEF 10/10(182) JAW; JEF 10/18(519) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/24(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(147) JAW
IBIS, White (10-25) JEF 8 reps(440)
IBIS, Plegadis (18-25) JEF 10/18(250) JAW; JEF 10/25(270) JAW
SPOONBILL, Roseate (10-25) JEF 7 reps(177)
STORK, Wood (5-5) JEF-BMT 10/5(200) RHJ
VULTURE, Black (9-25) HAI 2 reps(11); JEF 2 reps(17)
VULTURE, Turkey (10-25) HAI 2 reps(4); JEF 6 reps(31)
OSPREY (11-31) JEF-TX87 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/24(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(1) JAW; JEF 10/31(1) KRO
EAGLE, Bald (15-15) JEF 10/15(2) JP
HARRIER, Northern (3-25) JEF 10/3(2) GD; JEF 10/10(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF-MCFW 10/18(2) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(1) JAW

HAWK, Sharp-shinned (17-25) JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF 10/25(1) JAW
HAWK, Cooper's (6-24) HAI-SILS 10/6(1) MG; JEF 10/10(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF-BMT 10/20(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/22(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
HAWK, Red-shouldered (2-25) JEF 10 reps(15)
HAWK, Broad-winged (10-18) JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(536) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(14) JAW
HAWK, Swainson's (10-18) JEF 10/10(1) JAW; JEF 10/18(2) JAW
HAWK, Red-tailed (10-25) JEF 10/10(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW; JEF 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(3) JAW
CARACARA, Crested (10-25) JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(3) JAW; JEF 10/25(2) JAW
KESTREL, American (10-25) JEF 10/10(7) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW; JEF 10/18(5) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/23(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(23) JAW
MERLIN (11-24) JEF-TX87 10/11(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF-TX87 10/24(1) JAW
FALCON, Peregrine (17-18) JEF-SW 10/17(8) FTSW; JEF 10/18(1) JAW
RAIL, Clapper (10-24) JEF 4 reps(25)
COOT, American (18-25) JEF 3 reps(5)
PLOVER, Black-bellied (11-24) JEF-MCFW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/18(8) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(15) JAW
PLOVER, Snowy (24-24) JEF-MCFW 10/24(1) JAW
KILLDEER (1-25) HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 3 reps(18)
STILT, Black-necked (11-25) JEF 4 reps(27)
AVOCET, American (11-24) JEF-MCFW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(4) JAW
SANDPIPER, Solitary (17-17) JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
YELLOWLEGS, Greater (10-24) JEF-TXPT 10/10(2) SM; JEF-MCFW 10/18(2) JAW; JEF-TXPT 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-TX87 10/23(2) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(3) JAW
WILLET (10-24) JEF 3 reps(30)
SANDERLING (11-24) JEF 3 reps(52)
SANDPIPER, Western (11-24) JEF 3 reps(21)
SANDPIPER, Least (11-24) JEF 3 reps(18)
DUNLIN (18-24) JEF-MCFW 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(6) JAW
DOWITCHER, Short-billed (11-18) JEF-MCFW 10/11(12) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/18(4) JAW

DOWITCHER species	(10-11)	JEF-TXPT 10/10(20) SM; JEF-MCFW 10/11(4) JAW
SNIFE, Wilson's	(10-10)	JEF 10/10(1) JAW
GULL, Laughing	(10-25)	JEF 7 reps(430)
GULL, Ring-billed	(11-24)	JEF-MCFW 10/11(2) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(1) JAW
TERN, Caspian	(10-24)	JEF-TXPT 10/10(4) SM; JEF- MCFW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/18(12) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(1) JAW
TERN, Forster's	(10-24)	JEF 3 reps(87)
TERN, Royal	(10-18)	JEF-TXPT 10/10(1) SM; JEF- MCFW 10/18(50) JAW
PIGEON, Rock	(11-25)	JEF 5 reps(87)
COLLARED-DOVE, Euras.	(8-31)	HAI 3 reps(22); JEF 2 reps(21)
DOVE, White-winged	(1-24)	JEF 9 reps(61)
DOVE, Mourning	(4-25)	HAI 3 reps(36); JEF 7 reps(308)
DOVE, Inca	(20-24)	HAI-SILS 10/20(1) MG; JEF- SW 10/24(2) JAW
CUCKOO, Yellow-billed	(10-17)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF- SW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW
ANI, Groove-billed	(10-17)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF- SW 10/17(1) FTSW
OWL, Barn	(10-24)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF- SW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/23(4) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(6) JAW
OWL, Great Horned	(5-23)	JEF-BMT 10/5(2) RHJ; JEF- BMT 10/6(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-BMT 10/15(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/23(1) JAW
NIGHTHAWK, Common	(12-12)	JEF 10/12(1) CSL
SWIFT, Chimney	(15-15)	JEF-NEDR 10/15(13) JAW
HUMMINGBIRD, Buff-bellied	(21-23)	JEF-BMT 10/21(1) RHJ; JEF- BMT 10/22(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/23(1) RHJ
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-th.	(1-31)	HAI 16 reps(105); JEF 40 reps(833)
HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous	(21-31)	JEF-BMT 10/21(1) RHJ; JEF- BMT 10/24(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/26(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/27(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/28(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/29(1) RHJ; JEF- BMT 10/30(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/31(1) RHJ
HUMMINGBIRD species	(25-31)	JEF 7 reps(16)
KINGFISHER, Belted	(4-25)	JEF 9 reps(15)
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied	(9-24)	HAI 2 reps(4); JEF 5 reps(7)
SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bell.	(17-24)	HAI-SILS 10/18(1) MG; JEF- SW 10/17(10) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(7) JAW; JEF-SW 10/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(4) JAW
WOODPECKER, Downy	(2-24)	JEF 8 reps(11)
FLICKER, Northern	(17-24)	JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
WOODPECKER, Pileated	(2-27)	HAI-SILS 10/13(1) MG; HAI- SILS 10/18(1) MG; HAI-SILS 10/19(1) MG; HAI-SILS 10/27(1) MG; JEF-BMT 10/2(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/6(1) RHJ
FLYCATCHER, Olive-sided	(10-10)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM
WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern	(4-24)	JEF-SW 10/4(3) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(10) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(10) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/23(4) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(2) JAW
FLYCATCHER, Yellow-bell.	(17-17)	JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
FLYCATCHER, Least	(4-17)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(2) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW
EMPIDONAX species	(4-17)	JEF-SW 10/4(2) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(3) SM; JEF-TXPT 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
PHOEBE, Eastern	(10-31)	JEF 6 reps(29)
FLYCATCHER, Ash-throat.	(17-17)	JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
KINGBIRD, Western	(4-4)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV
KINGBIRD, Eastern	(11-11)	JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW
FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tail.	(3-25)	JEF 11 reps(171); ORA 1 rep(3)
SHRIKE, Loggerhead	(10-25)	JEF 6 reps(44)
VIREO, White-eyed	(4-17)	JEF-SW 10/4(4) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(12) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(5) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW
VIREO, Yellow-throat	(11-17)	JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW; JEF- SW 10/17(1) FTSW
VIREO, Blue-headed	(17-17)	JEF-SW 10/17(4) FTSW
VIREO, Red-eyed	(4-17)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(3) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(8) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
JAY, Blue	(10-24)	JEF 7 reps(36)
CROW, American	(25-25)	JEF 10/25(3) JAW
SWALLOW, Tree	(10-25)	JEF 6 reps(7817)
SWALLOW, N Rough-wing.	(17-25)	JEF 4 reps(444)
SWALLOW, Barn	(10-25)	JEF 4 reps(20)
SWALLOW species	(10-10)	JEF 10/10(1) JAW
CHICKADEE, Carolina	(10-18)	HAI 2 reps(4); JEF 4 reps(7)
TITMOUSE, Tufted	(12-12)	HAI-SILS 10/12(2) MG
CREEPER, Brown	(24-24)	JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
WREN, Carolina	(5-24)	HAI 6 reps(12); JEF 6 reps(12)
WREN, House	(4-25)	JEF-SW 10/4(3) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(7) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(6) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(3) JAW; JEF 10/25(3) JAW
WREN, Marsh	(10-10)	JEF-TXPT 10/10(3) SM
KINGLET, Golden-crowned	(17-24)	JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
KINGLET, Ruby-crowned	(4-31)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 6 reps(56)
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray	(2-25)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 7 reps(156)
BLUEBIRD, Eastern	(11-28)	JEF-BMT 10/11(2) RHJ; JEF- BMT 10/28(2) RHJ
THRUSH, Swainson's	(11-11)	JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW
THRUSH, Hermit	(24-24)	JEF-SW 10/24(4) JAW
ROBIN, American	(3-18)	JEF 10/3(1) GD; JEF-NEDR 10/10(1) JAW; JEF-NEDR 10/18(1) JAW
CATBIRD, Gray	(2-18)	HAI-SILS 10/6(1) MG; JEF- BMT 10/2(2) RHJ; JEF-SW 10/10(5) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(5) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(2) JAW
MOCKINGBIRD, Northern	(2-25)	HAI 2 reps(3); JEF 8 reps(60)
THRASHER, Brown	(1-24)	HAI 3 reps(4); JEF 6 reps(54)
STARLING, European	(10-25)	JEF 6 reps(371)
WARBLER, Blue-winged	(4-10)	JEF-SW 10/4(2) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(2) SM
WARBLER, Tennessee	(10-18)	JEF-SW 10/10(3) SM; JEF- SW 10/11(5) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(2) JAW
WARBLER, Orange-crown.	(17-24)	JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
WARBLER, Nashville	(10-24)	JEF-SW 10/10(5) SM; JEF- SW 10/11(1) SUH; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(3) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
PARULA, Northern	(4-17)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(2) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(3) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW
WARBLER, Yellow	(3-11)	JEF 10/3(6) GD; JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW
WARBLER, Chestnut-sided	(4-11)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW
WARBLER, Magnolia	(4-18)	JEF-SW 10/4(3) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(3) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(6) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(1) JAW
WARBLER, Cape May	(17-18)	JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(1) JAW
WARBLER, Yellow-rumped	(17-17)	JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW
WARBLER, Black-thr. Green	(11-24)	JEF-SW 10/11(4) JAW; JEF- SW 10/17(7) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(2) JAW; JEF-SW 10/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(3) JAW
WARBLER, Blackburnian	(4-10)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM
WARBLER, Yellow-throated	(4-24)	JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
WARBLER, Pine	(2-24)	JEF-BMT 10/2(3) RHJ; JEF- SW 10/24(1) JAW
WARBLER, Palm	(3-11)	JEF 10/3(1) GD; JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW
WARBLER, Bay-breasted	(11-11)	JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW
WARBLER, Black-and-wh.	(4-17)	HAI-SILS 10/12(1) MG; JEF- SW 10/4(8) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(8) JAW; JEF-SRSP 10/12(1) RHJ; JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW
REDSTART, American	(4-24)	JEF-SW 10/4(10) DV; JEF- SW 10/10(15) SM; JEF-TXPT 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(20) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(4) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW

Sabine Woods

OVENBIRD	(10-11)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW
WATERTHRUSH, Northern	(4-4)	JEF-SW 10/4(2) DV
YELLOWTHROAT, Common	(3-24)	JEF 7 reps(20)
WARBLER, Hooded	(4-11)	JEF-SW 10/4(2) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(3) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW
WARBLER, Wilson's	(4-17)	JEF-SW 10/4(2) DV; JEF-TXPT 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW
WARBLER, Canada	(4-11)	JEF-SW 10/4(3) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(2) JAW
TOWHEE, Eastern/Spotted	(24-24)	JEF-SW 10/24(1) RHJ
SPARROW, Clay-colored	(24-24)	JEF-SW 10/24(1?) JAW
SPARROW, Lark	(3-3)	JEF 10/3(1) GD
SPARROW, Savannah	(18-25)	JEF-MCFW 10/18(2) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(11) JAW; JEF 10/25(8) JAW
SPARROW, Nelson's	(10-10)	JEF-TXPT 10/10(10) SM
SPARROW, Seaside	(10-10)	JEF-TXPT 10/10(4) SM
SPARROW, Lincoln's	(17-24)	JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
SPARROW, Swamp	(24-24)	JEF-SW 10/24(4) JAW
SPARROW, White-throated	(29-29)	JEF-BMT 10/29(1) RHJ
SPARROW, White-crowned	(18-24)	JEF-TXPT 10/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) RHJ
TANAGER, Summer	(10-24)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(3) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/24(1) JAW
CARDINAL, Northern	(10-25)	JEF-SW 10/10(3) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(5) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/18(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(2) JAW
GROSBEAK, Rose-breasted	(10-17)	JEF-SW 10/10(2) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(1) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW
GROSBEAK, Blue	(3-17)	JEF 10/3(24) GD; JEF-SW 10/4(1) DV; JEF-SW 10/10(6) SM; JEF-SW 10/11(3) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(2) FTSW
BUNTING, Indigo	(3-24)	JEF 8 reps(221)
DICKCISSEL	(3-17)	JEF 10/3(15) GD; JEF-SW 10/10(4) SM; JEF-TXPT 10/10(2) SM; JEF-SW 10/17(1) FTSW
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	(10-25)	JEF 8 reps(99)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	(10-25)	JEF 10/10(1) JAW; JEF-MCFW 10/24(1) JAW; JEF 10/25(3) JAW
MEADOWLARK species	(10-25)	JEF 10/10(6) JAW; JEF 10/25(2) JAW
GRACKLE, Common	(10-23)	JEF 10/10(8) JAW; JEF-SW 10/17(20) FTSW; JEF-SW 10/23(25) JAW
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	(10-24)	JEF 6 reps(82)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	(10-25)	JEF 8 reps(358)
GRACKLE, Gt./Boat-tailed	(11-24)	JEF 3 reps(291)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	(25-25)	JEF 10/25(375) JAW
ORIOLE, Orchard	(2-2)	HAI-SILS 10/2(1) MG
ORIOLE, Baltimore	(10-17)	JEF-SW 10/10(1) SM; JEF-BMT 10/14(2) RHJ; JEF-SW 10/17(3) FTSW
FINCH, House	(3-22)	JEF-BMT 10/3(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/4(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/5(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/6(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/16(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/17(2) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/20(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 10/22(1) RHJ
SPARROW, House	(10-18)	JEF 10/10(20) JAW; JEF 10/18(10) JAW

Number of Species 165
Number of Individuals 36950

County Abbreviations:

HAI — Hardin; JEF — Jefferson; ORA — Orange

Location Codes; BMT — Beaumont; MCFW — McFaddin NWR; NEDR — Nederland; ORG — Orange; SILS — Silsbee; SRSP — Sea Rim State Park; SW — Sabine Woods; TX87 — Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP; TXPT — Road to Pilot Station at Texas Point

Observer Abbreviations; CSL — Christine Sliva; DV — Don Verser; FTSW — Field Trip to Sabine Woods; GD — Gerald Duhon; JAW — John Whittle; JP — John Park; KRO — Kathi and Richard Orgeron; MG — Melanie Goetsell; RHJ — Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; SBE — Sheri Bethard; SM — Steve Mayes; SUH — Susan Heath

We are deeply indebted to Gary Kelley for ably taking on the task of managing the recovery and expansion projects at Sabine Woods this fall. Hopefully, by the time you read this, he will be close to having the projects completed.

The water system, which suffered corrosion damage, has been repaired and three additional outlets for hoses installed. Plans are well advanced to replace the picnic shelter, and both gates and adjacent fencing. Forty 2-3" live oak trees and a few hackberry trees have been ordered and will be planted for us by the nursery soon. We have scheduled a work day for December 5 to plant mulberry trees. We have approximately 100 young mulberry trees that Jim Anding propagated from seeds of the mulberry trees that before Ike were along Highway 87 near the Sea Rim Willows, and kindly donated to Sabine Woods. We hope to be able to plant these on the work day. Thank you, Gary, for all your efforts on behalf of Sabine Woods!

The board of the Texas Ornithological Society has voted to extend the free entry to Sabine Woods to all members of Golden Triangle Audubon in recognition of our work in recovering and maintaining the Woods.

Bird Alert

The time that necessarily passes between the *Brown Pelican* closing for press and your receiving it in the mail means that up to the minute reports here of specific birds being seen tend not to be timely. We do put these onto the web site and we have an email list of those wishing to receive them that way. (Send an email to johnawhittle@aol.com if you wish to be added to the list.) However, we are able to present more general indications.

As the report on the field trip elsewhere in this issue indicates, west Jefferson County is recovering nicely from the effects of hurricanes Rita and Ike. It now appears that, north of Highway 73 at least, Rita disrupted bird life more than Ike. Rita's winds were much stronger and must have removed more of the understory, and may even have had more effect on the insects and mammals. North of Highway 73, in the fall and winter after Rita, a number of species were very significantly reduced in numbers, including Northern Harriers and Loggerhead Shrikes and even American Kestrels and Red-tailed Hawks. This year, these same species are present in the highest numbers in many years. Eastern Meadowlarks are also unusually numerous this late fall. However, we could not find a single meadowlark on the Migration Count in mid-September. No matter how well they may have hidden themselves in September, it is absolutely clear that there are many more out there now! All this strongly suggests that the meadowlarks that are present locally in the summer leave and go further south before the meadowlarks that come down to winter have arrived.

No matter what, there is good birding on the "South China Prairie" this year. The best area is bounded by US90 on the north, the county line (including Nolte and Ebner Roads) on the West, the county line to League Road on the south and League/Heisig/Johnson/South China Roads on the east.

Field Trip to West Jefferson County – November 21, 2009

With two exceptional field trips in a row, it had to be expected that a more difficult one would eventually occur. Weather is the most likely culprit to put a damper on a bird outing and the Golden Triangle Audubon Society has had more than its share of bad weather trips (or cancelled trips) in the past. The November field trip to west Jefferson County started out gray, damp, windy and cold but that did not stop a good turn out for the annual hunt for sparrows, shorebirds, cranes and water fowl on the “South China Prairie”.

Starting along a grassy field on Johnson Road, the sparrow hunt commenced right away. These fields have been productive in the past for species such as LeConte’s Sparrow but the birds were elusive on this day. The windy, wet conditions kept birds hiding in the grass with only a few chips to betray their presence. Recent changes to the fields may have also led to changes in the species present but only time will tell. Sparrows were eventually found by the group however. Savannah Sparrows were amongst the most numerous (as is usual at this time of year) but Song Sparrows also made a good showing with one particularly cooperative individual perching up on a fence post for all to admire. Some were even singing! Swamp Sparrows were found in the wetter areas while a good number of beautiful White-crowned Sparrows were coaxed out of brush piles and wooded areas.

Shorebirds were a bit more difficult as most were only seen flying overhead. The first of these were small numbers of Wilson’s Snipe seen zigzagging over the group. Dowitchers were also seen flying by on a number of occasions. With the freshwater habitats nearby, it is likely that these were Long-billed Dowitchers but none allowed close enough examination to determine the species for certain. A wet area in someone’s front yard (!) produced more Dowitchers and a few Least Sandpipers. Wet fields allowed for looks at Black-bellied Plovers well away from the beach and mud flat habitats that most birders are used to seeing this species on. By far the most numerous shorebirds seen were Killdeer as they occupied much of the pasture land in numbers.

One of the main targets of this trip every year is Sandhill Crane. These tall gray birds occupy fields and wetland habitats and can often be found in numbers this time of year in the areas around Johnson Road, League Road, FM 1406 and nearby areas. It wasn’t long before the birders spotted their first cranes of the day as the stately birds flew overhead. As the birders travelled around the area more and more cranes were seen. They were mostly in small groups in wet fields or, sometimes, flying overhead giving their bugling calls. The birds proved quite shy as they would inevitably fly out of the fields as the cars of the group approached. Nevertheless, the birders got good looks at Sandhill Cranes. Unfortunately, there were no Whooping Cranes among them. I guess you still have to go to Aransas for those!

Stops at the small wooded areas scattered around the area produced some typical woodland birds. Carolina Chickadees were heard more often than seen while Eastern Phoebes were easily seen. Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were typically common while only one Blue-headed Vireo was spotted. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were vocal and a number were seen along with a Yellow-bellied

Sapsucker. A couple of American Robins were spotted in a tree top while Gray Catbirds haunted the thickets. Brown Thrasher was spotted and Carolina Wrens fussed at the group from cover. Small flocks of Yellow-rumped Warblers chipped from the trees but it took a bit of looking to get the only Pine Warbler of the day. Common Yellowthroat was coaxed out of hiding but Orange-crowned Warbler proved difficult. Perhaps the best bird of the day was a female Vermilion Flycatcher perched on a lowboy trailer in someone’s yard! It gave everyone great looks.

Raptors and waterfowl are prime targets this time of year as many individuals from numerous species spend the winter in our area. Geese had been scarce so far this fall but they came through for the field trip. Hundreds of Snow Geese rose in clouds from the wet fields of the area. A few of the smaller Ross’s Geese flew among them. Later in the day, a flock of Greater White-fronted Geese (“Speckle-bellies” to the hunters) flew down toward a nearby field. Ducks were harder to come by but Mottled Ducks, Northern Pintail and Northern Shoveler were noted on the day. Among raptor, Northern Harrier was the first spotted. These low flying “marsh hawks” proved quite common in the area as they cruised over the wet fields. Red-tailed Hawks, on the other hand, soared high overhead while most of the American Kestrels were perched on telephone lines. A distant raptor perched on a post was probably a Merlin while a small raptor that burst from a group of trees appeared to be a Cooper’s Hawk. A group of three Crested Caracaras flying by together was a nice addition to the day list.

Unfortunately, contrary to the weather forecast, the light rain did not end by the early afternoon. This led to the birders going their separate ways soon after lunch. But even with less than ideal conditions, great birding is always close by in southeast Texas! With only a quick drive out to west Jefferson County, you too could be enjoying hundreds of Sandhill Cranes and Snow Geese along with Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers, so get out there and enjoy the birding!

The following species were recorded on the trip:

Greater White-fronted Goose (60), Snow Goose (1055), Ross’s Goose (1+), Mottled Duck (6), Northern Shoveler (1), Northern Pintail (14), Great Blue Heron (8), Great Egret (3), Snowy Egret (11), White Ibis (6), Plegadis species Ibis (2), Roseate Spoonbill (2), Turkey Vulture (17), White-tailed Kite? (1), Northern Harrier (9), Cooper’s Hawk (1), Red-shouldered Hawk (3), Red-tailed Hawk (7), Crested Caracara (3), American Kestrel (12), Merlin? (1), Sandhill Crane (507), Black-bellied Plover (2), Killdeer (241), Greater Yellowlegs (3), Least Sandpiper (5), Dowitcher species (78), Wilson’s Snipe (5), Mourning Dove (58), Barn Owl? (1), Belted Kingfisher (1), Red-bellied Woodpecker (4), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1), Northern Flicker (2), Eastern Phoebe (5), Vermilion Flycatcher (1), Loggerhead Shrike (5), American Crow (9), Tree Swallow (3), Carolina Chickadee (2), House Wren (2), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (3), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (2), American Robin (2), Gray Catbird (3), Northern Mockingbird (1), Brown Thrasher (1), European Starling (10), American Pipit (7), Yellow-rumped Warbler (9), Pine Warbler (1), Common Yellowthroat (1), Chipping Sparrow (1), Savannah Sparrow (21), Song Sparrow (2), Swamp Sparrow (2), White-crowned Sparrow (16), Northern Cardinal (8), Red-winged Blackbird (30), Eastern Meadowlark (31), Meadow species (11), Brown-headed Cowbird (50), American Goldfinch (3)

Steve Mayes

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Brown Pelican

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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/> Email alerts are also available for a small fee. Most rare bird sightings in Texas are posted on the TEXBIRDS listserv. Archives of the listserv are at <http://lists.texbirds.org/texbirds.html> It is not necessary to subscribe to the listserv to view the archives, which include postings up to the most recent..

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>.

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