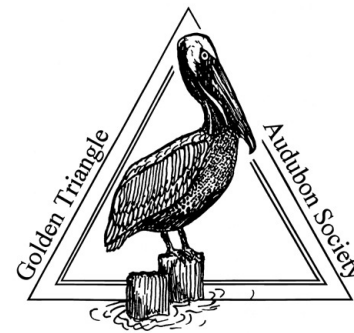


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 19 No. 4

April 2013

**Membership Meeting
Thursday April 18, 2013 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont**

**Nature from the Rio Grande Valley
John Park**

Born and raised in northern Ohio, John has always preferred the outdoors, especially when (as a child) he was viewing the surrounding nature from the top of a tree! As a young man, John explored many different types of art mediums. However, it wasn't until moving to Texas that he began focusing on photography.

John worked in the IT Department at Goodyear's Corporate Office in Akron, Ohio. In 1986 Goodyear offered John a position at the Goodyear Chemical Plant in Beaumont, Texas. He and his family happily moved to the Beaumont area and although years later he was offered the opportunity to transfer back to corporate, Texas was already ingrained in his heart.

John is enthusiastic about nature in general and believes SE Texas offers a wonderful variety of habitats for all types of flora and fauna to enjoy and photograph. John chose to travel the back roads to work rather than the speedier I-10, so he could enjoy beauty this area has to offer. The plethora of birds along the route encouraged him to learn more. Since identifying them by memory didn't seem to work, the camera became a constant companion.

After a GTAS Audubon presentation on Attracting Bluebirds, John joined the Texas Bluebird Society and has served on the TBS Board of Directors and still volunteers for various functions and events.

Since retirement from Goodyear in 2010, John has made three trips in January to the Rio Grande Valley to photograph birds, butterflies, flowers, and anything else that moves. John is happy to share his photos with you.

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

Important Note: Field Trip notices published here should always be regarded as needing confirmation just before the date. We want to be able to take advantage of any good concentrations of interesting birds and to adjust in cases where access has changed. Changes will always be posted on the web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org. Confirmation of the location will also normally be available at the Membership Meeting that is usually, but not always, two days prior to each trip, or by contacting Field Trip Committee chair, Steve Mayes at 409-722-5807 or sgmayes@hotmail.com

April Yellow Rail Walks at Anahuac NWR. Join birding expert David Sarkozi for a chance to view yellow rails in addition to other rails and species. Meet at the Visitor Information Station just inside the gate at the Refuge. Boots and insect repellent strongly advised.

Saturday April 7; 7 am and 4 pm

Saturday April 13; 7 am and 4 pm

Sunday April 14; 7 am and 4 pm

Saturday April 20; 7 am and 4 pm

Sunday April 21; 7 am and 4 pm

Thursday April 18. Membership Meeting. John Park on Nature in the Rio Grande Valley. See page 1 for full details

Saturday April 20. Field Trip to Sabine Woods and Sabine Pass Area.

This trip will look for Neotropical migrants, and does not necessitate extensive walking.

We will assemble at Sabine Woods at 7:30 a.m. While we may go to Pilot Station Road or the Sea Rim and McFaddin areas, we are likely to be in Sabine Woods for at least the first couple of hours, and you should be able to find the group if you are late.

At Sabine Woods, there is a small parking area, with additional parking is improvised using the roadside verges.

Sabine Woods is on the north side of Highway 87, 4.1 miles west of the stop sign in Sabine Pass. Take Highway 87 from Port Arthur to Sabine Pass, turn right at the stop sign, and go 4.1 miles.

This trip involves relatively easy walking on the trails at Sabine Woods to look for migrant songbirds, although another option is to sit at the drip and wait for the birds to come to you. However, Hurricane Ike completely destroyed the boardwalks, and the trails may be muddy and slippery if it has rained in the prior day or two. Armadillos are active, so there may be holes to avoid! There is a \$5 sanctuary pass donation at Sabine Woods for those who are not members of Golden Triangle Audubon or Texas Ornithological Society. This field trip is especially suited for not-very-experienced birders.

Bring insect repellent. Most participants will bring lunch. Facilities in Sabine Pass are limited, although food and gasoline are now available.

Birding in late April can be exciting. However, we cannot promise anything, as the number of birds in the coastal woodlots is strongly dependent on the weather conditions over the Gulf. Immediately after a cold front passes and the following day are usually considered to be among the most likely days to have a good concentration of migrants at favored coastal locations.

Saturday April 27. Galveston Bay Foundation's "Marsh Mania." This is a volunteer shoreline planting event in coordination with Texas Parks and Wildlife. This year's event will be held at the Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area at Smith Point. Further details and registration are available at <http://galvbay.org/volunteer.html>.

Saturday May 11. Jefferson County Migrations Count. Contact John Whittle (johnawhittle@aol.com or (409) 722-4193) for details of or offers to help with this county-wide count.



EarthShare of Texas represents Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society in payroll contribution programs in workplaces throughout Texas. For more information about how you can support Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society at your workplace, call 1-800-GREENTX, or visit www.earthshare-texas.org.

Thursday May 16. Membership Meeting. Denise Ruffino on McFaddin and Texas Point Refuges. Full details in next month's issue.

Saturday June 1. Field Trip to Hardin County. We will focus on the area north of Silsbee to look for the breeding birds of the area. This is typically a half-day trip. We plan to look for the nesting species of the area – Hooded, Pine, Prairie and Swainson's Warblers (and possibly Prothonotary Warbler), Yellow-breasted Chat, White-eyed, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireo, Indigo and Painted Bunting, Gray Catbird, Summer Tanager, Acadian Flycatcher, Brown-headed Nuthatch and others. Some of these species are easier to see on the breeding grounds than on migration. Swainson's Warbler is a particular target of this trip. We have often been rewarded with excellent views of this normally very secretive species on this field trip. Yellow-breasted Chats, skulkers in migration, have often been seen perched high up in the open. We have even seen Greater Roadrunners on this trip, and four years ago, a singing Eastern Towhee was completely unexpected.

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.

Membership Dues

Effective January 1, all memberships will run from January through December. Membership dues will remain at \$15 per year. You may pay at the February meeting (checks preferred) or use the subscription/membership blank on the back page.

Dues for all members will be for the period ending on December. For 2013, if you wish, you may deduct

\$1.25 from your 2013 dues for each month remaining on your existing membership. Going forward, the memberships of new members joining in August or later in the year will extend to the end of the following calendar year. For new members joining National Audubon using the membership blank printed on the back page of each printed issue of the *Brown Pelican*, we receive a rebate of the entire first year's national dues, and no Chapter dues are expected for that first year.

As a reminder, dues are voluntary for National Audubon Society members living in the Chapter's official territory, which is defined by zip codes, but basically covers all of Jefferson, Orange and Hardin Counties and one or two zip codes adjacent to these counties. We do welcome members in other nearby counties!

Your dues cover the cost of printing and mailing the *Brown Pelican* to you, and help fund our other activities. We urge you to help us do more by receiving your *Brown Pelican* as a PDF attached to an email if you do not already. We will continue to post the Newsletter on the GTAS website at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org. The typical issue will be about 500 KB so it is not a large file. Please send an email to johnawhittle@aol.com with your request, including the name we are currently send the printed copy to, and the email address you want us to use.

Sponsor our Birdathon

Once again, we will be raising money for Golden Triangle Audubon in our Birdathon. You may be assured that all your contributions will stay close to home as it were. Royce Pendergast will again be joining with me in this year's Spring Birdathon.

A Birdathon is very similar to other "athons" you may be familiar with, such as telethons, walkathons, etc. The idea is for us to start birding at the crack of dawn on a day in mid to late April and make a run from the woods of the Southern Big Thicket through to the coast of east Jefferson County. We again plan to restrict our area to Hardin, Jefferson and Orange counties. We're

aiming for at least 120 species. We will pick an exact date guided by the weather forecasts. Our preferred day will be around April 25. We're hoping you will sponsor us at \$1.00 or more, \$0.75, \$0.50, or (or whatever amount you choose) per bird species. A flat donation is also welcome. Please take the time to make a pledge today -- your donation to our Birdathon will be earmarked to support our mission of protecting our natural heritage in Texas by supporting conservation, education and advocacy. As always, Sabine Woods is high on our list of projects. (If you wish, you may earmark your contributions for a specific use.)

Checks should be made out to Golden Triangle Audubon Society and all contributions are, of course, tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. We appreciate all of you who contributed generously last year, and hope you will consider supporting us again. Please contact me at 3015 Nashville Ave, Nederland, TX 77627 or at johnawhittle@aol.com or 409-722-4193 with your pledges and your suggestions. *John A. Whittle*

Paula Shaw

Recently, Paula Shaw has tendered her resignation as a member of our board of directors. Paula is moving to the Austin area in the near future, and we will greatly miss her. We appreciate all that she has done for us, and wish her and her husband Paul all the best in their "new life."

Paula has been our Membership and Publicity Chair, and has been responsible for passing details of our membership meetings and field trips to the local media. We would welcome a volunteer to take over this task.

Contributions to the Brown Pelican

Contributions for the Brown Pelican are always welcome, and we would especially welcome more articles on conservation and related issues, particularly those with a local favor, like the article on the Texas Parks and wildlife Bridge City Marsh Restoration elsewhere in this issue.

Bird Sightings – February 2013

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) 722-4193. 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: Pride of place this month goes to the Pacific Loon found by Gerald Duhon on Pleasure Island on February 22. This bird was very cooperative, and stayed around for a few days to be seen by many at close range.

By the time you read this, spring migration will be substantially under way. Most unusual birds in this report reflect mostly continuation of wintering species that we have commented on in the past few months. Noteworthy among these include Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin and Harris's Sparrow. Purple Martins are always the first migrants to show up, and this year was no exception. This has been an amazing winter for hummingbirds, both in number and variety of species. The exceptional number and variety of hummingbirds continued, and we have again presented the Hummingbird sightings in the "short form." Notable waterfowl included Cinnamon Teal and Redhead at Cattail Marsh and Common Goldeneye at Pleasure Island.

WHISTLING-DUCK, Blk-bell. (9-16)	JEF-TX87 2/9(3) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(14) JHH; JEF-TX87 2/16(100) JAW	
WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous (14-14)	JEF-TP 2/14(2) JHH	
GOOSE, White-fronted (22-22)	JEF-SW 2/22(6) JHH	
GOOSE, Snow (22-22)	JEF-SW 2/22(650) JHH	
GOOSE, Ross's (22-22)	JEF-SW 2/22(4) JHH	
GADWALL (1-26)	JEF 7 reps(721)	
WIGEON, American (1-8)	JEF 2 reps(30)	
MALLARD (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(10) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(43) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(6) JHH	
DUCK, Mottled (1-14)	JEF 4 reps(27)	
TEAL, Blue-winged (1-20)	JEF 6 reps(401)	
TEAL, Cinnamon (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(1) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(4) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(3) JHH	
SHOVELER, Northern (1-27)	JEF 8 reps(1026)	
PINTAIL, Northern (1-14)	JEF 3 reps(73)	
TEAL, Green-winged (1-14)	JEF 4 reps(1663)	
CANVASBACK (22-22)	JEF-PI 2/22(3) JAW	
REDHEAD (14-14)	JEF-TP 2/14(5) JHH	
DUCK, Ring-necked (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(33) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(3) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(4) JHH	
SCAUP, Greater (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(4) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(5) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(2) JHH	
SCAUP, Lesser (1-27)	JEF 11 reps(353)	
BUFFLEHEAD (14-14)	JEF-TP 2/14(1) JHH	
GOLDENEYE, Common (26-26)	JEF-PI 2/26(1) JJW	
MERGANSER, Red-breasted (9-27)	JEF 6 reps(16)	
DUCK, Ruddy (1-27)	JEF 8 reps(701)	
LOON, Pacific (11-23)	JEF-PI 2/22(1) GD; JEF-PI 2/23(1) FTLA; JEF-PI 2/24(1) JAW;	
LOON, Common (11-27)	JEF-PI 2/22(5) JAW; JEF-PI 2/23(8) FTLA; JEF-PI 2/24(3) JAW; JEF-PI 2/26(4) JJW; JEF-PI 2/27(6) JAW	
GREBE, Least (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(2) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(3) JHH	
GREBE, Pied-billed (1-26)	JEF 7 reps(44)	
GREBE, Horned (11-27)	JEF-TP 2/14(1) JHH; JEF-PI 2/22(45) JAW; JEF-PI 2/23(42) FTLA; JEF-PI 2/24(6) JAW; JEF-PI 2/26(9) JJW; JEF-PI 2/27(17) JAW	
GREBE, Eared (1-27)	JEF-TP 2/1(1) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(2) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(2) JHH; JEF-PI 2/27(1) JAW	
GANNET, Northern (16-16)	JEF-MCFW 2/16(2) JHH	
CORMORANT, Neotropic (4-26)	JEF 10 reps(81)	
CORMORANT, Double-crest. (4-27)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 8 reps(58)	
CORMORANT, Species (23-26)	JEF 2 reps(8)	
ANHINGA (1-14)	JEF 2/1(1) JAW; JEF 2/7(1) JAW; JEF 2/8(3) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(1) JHH	
PELICAN, Amer. White (11-26)	JEF 5 reps(87)	
PELICAN, Brown (9-27)	JEF 8 reps(99)	
HERON, Great Blue (1-27)	JEF 11 reps(21)	
EGRET, Great (1-27)	JEF 13 reps(66)	
EGRET, Snowy (1-27)	JEF 15 reps(283)	
HERON, Little Blue (4-27)	JEF 7 reps(11)	
HERON, Tricolored (1-14)	JEF 3 reps(7)	
NIGHT-HERON, Black-cr. (1-14)	JEF 3 reps(13)	
IBIS, White (1-14)	JEF 6 reps(118)	
IBIS, Glossy (1-1)	JEF-TP 2/1(2) JAW	
IBIS, White-faced (1-14)	JEF 4 reps(100)	
IBIS, Plegadis (1-1)	JEF-TP 2/1(2) JAW	
SPOONBILL, Roseate (9-22)	JEF 3 reps(13)	
VULTURE, Black (1-17)	HAI 2 reps(11); JEF 8 reps(134)	
VULTURE, Turkey (1-28)	HAI 16 reps(42); JEF 14 reps(60)	
OSPREY (1-22)	JEF-BMT 2/1(1) JAW; JEF 2/4(1) KSA; JEF 2/7(1) JAW; JEF-PI 2/22(1) JAW	
KITE, White-tailed (22-27)	JEF-SW 2/22(1) JHH; JEF-PI 2/23(1) FTLA; JEF-PI 2/27(1) JAW	
EAGLE, Bald (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(1) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(1) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(2) JHH	
HARRIER, Northern (1-26)	JEF 9 reps(19)	
HAWK, Cooper's (4-23)	HAI 3 reps(3); JEF 2 reps(2)	
HAWK, Red-shouldered (1-26)	HAI 2 reps(2); JEF 6 reps(6)	
HAWK, Red-tailed (1-26)	HAI 4 reps(4); JEF 19 reps(115)	
HAWK, Red-tailed (Krider's) (23-23)	JEF-TX87 2/23(1) FTLA	
KESTREL, American (1-26)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 12 reps(62)	
MERLIN (22-22)	JEF-TX87 2/22(1) JAW	
RAIL, Virginia (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(2) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(1) JHH	
SORA (1-14)	JEF-TP 2/1(3) JAW; JEF-TP 2/8(1) JAW; JEF-TP 2/14(2) JHH	
GALLINULE, Common (1-20)	JEF 6 reps(84)	
COOT, American (1-14)	JEF 4 reps(633)	
CRANE, Sandhill (3-3)	JEF 2/3(4) CSL	
PLOVER, Black-bellied (11-16)	JEF-MCFW 2/16(7) JHH; JEF-PI 2/24(30) JAW	
KILLDEER (1-26)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 7 reps(55)	
STILT, Black-necked (1-26)	JEF 6 reps(191)	
AVOCET, American (9-26)	JEF 5 reps(469)	
SANDPIPER, Spotted (1-26)	JEF 6 reps(21)	
YELLOWLEGS, Greater (1-26)	JEF-TP 2/1(3) JAW; JEF-MCFW 2/9(2) JAW; JEF-PI 2/26(2) JJW	
WILLET (9-26)	JEF 6 reps(10)	
GODWIT, Marbled (16-22)	JEF-MCFW 2/16(1) JHH; JEF-PI 2/22(1) JAW	
TURNSTONE, Ruddy (16-16)	JEF-MCFW 2/16(2) JHH	
SANDERLING (9-16)	JEF 2 reps(29)	
SANDPIPER, Western (9-11)	JEF 2 reps(61)	
SANDPIPER, Peep (11-11)	JEF 1 rep(200)	
SANDPIPER, Stilt (11-11)	JEF-PI 2/24(3) JAW	
DOWITCHER, Long-billed (9-11)	JEF-PI 2/9(1) JAW; JEF-PI 2/24(50) JAW	
DOWITCHER species (22-22)	JEF-PI 2/22(400) JAW	
SNIFE, Wilson's (8-8)	JEF-TP 2/8(14) JAW	

GULL, Bonaparte's	(11-23)	JEF-PI 2/24(1) JAW; JEF-PI 2/22(20) JAW; JEF-PI 2/23(12) FTLA; JEF-PI 2/24(1) JAW
GULL, Laughing	(1-27)	JEF 9 reps(1233)
GULL, Ring-billed	(1-26)	JEF 10 reps(476)
GULL, Herring	(16-26)	JEF 3 reps(11)
TERN, Caspian	(9-22)	JEF 4 reps(11)
TERN, Forster's	(4-27)	JEF 8 reps(396)
TERN, Royal	(8-26)	JEF 5 reps(50)
SKIMMER, Black	(11-22)	JEF-PI 2/22(100); JAW JEF-PI 2/24(8) JAW
PIGEON, Rock	(4-28)	HAI 17 reps(247); JEF 6 reps(152)
COLLARED-DOVE, Eurasian	(3-27)	HAI 5 reps(27); JEF 4 reps(21)
DOVE, White-winged	(1-28)	HAI 19 reps(186); JEF 21 reps(95)
DOVE, Mourning	(1-28)	HAI 31 reps(268); JEF 14 reps(151)
DOVE, Inca	(13-13)	JEF-SW 2/13(1) JHH
OWL, Barn	(1-16)	JEF 2 reps(2)
SCREECH-OWL, Eastern	(17-24)	HAI-SILS 2/17(1) MG; HAI-SILS 2/24(1) MG
OWL, Great Horned	(1-22)	JEF 10 reps(19)
OWL, Barred	(12-12)	HAI-SILS 2/12(1) MG
HUMMINGBIRD, Buff-bellied	(1-28)	JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/28(1) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/28(1) HS
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.	(1-19)	JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/28(1) JJW; JEF-BMT 2/2(1, a 2nd bird) JJW
HUMMINGBIRD, Black-chin.	(1-26)	JEF-BMT 2/1(1) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/27(1), 2/2 thru 2/26(1, a 2nd bird) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/2 thru 2/28(1, a 3rd bird) JJW
HUMMINGBIRD, Broad-tailed	(1-28)	JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/28(1) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/28(1, a 2nd bird) JJW; JEF-BMT 2/16(1) RHJ
HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous	(1-28)	JEF-BMT 2/1 thru 2/28(1) RHJ; JEF-BMT 2/17, 2/18, 2/22(a 2nd bird) RHJ; JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/27(1) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/28(1) HS
HUMMINGBIRD, Allen's	(1-25)	JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/25(1) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/1 thru 2/2(1) HS
HUMMINGBIRD, Ruf./Allen's	(1-28)	JEF-NEDR 2/2 thru 2/21(1), 2/27 thru 2/28(1, a 2nd bird) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/7 thru 2/14(1) HS.
KINGFISHER, Belted	(4-26)	JEF 8 reps(20)
WOODPECKER, Red-headed	(4-26)	HAI 6 reps(11); JEF 2 reps(6)
WOODPECKER, Golden-fr.	(4-16)	JEF-SW 2/4(2) JAW; JEF-SW 2/16(1) JAW
WOODPECKER, Red-bellied	(1-28)	HAI 24 reps(47); JEF 10 reps(19)
SAPSUCKER, Yellow-bellied	(1-28)	HAI 7 reps(7); JEF 5 reps(6)
WOODPECKER, Downy	(1-25)	HAI 4 reps(4); JEF 10 reps(18)
FLICKER, Northern	(4-22)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 3 reps(4)
WOODPECKER, Pileated	(3-28)	HAI 14 reps(15); JEF 4 reps(4)
PHOEBE, Eastern	(1-25)	HAI 9 reps(9); JEF 13 reps(37)
SHRIKE, Loggerhead	(1-26)	HAI 6 reps(8); JEF 17 reps(57)
VIREO, White-eyed	(1-22)	JEF-SW 2/1(1) JHH; JEF-SW 2/22(1) JHH
VIREO, Blue-headed	(1-16)	HAI-VCSP 2/16(1) SG; JEF-SW 2/1(1) JHH; JEF-SW 2/9(1) JAW; JEF-SW 2/13(1) JHH
JAY, Blue	(1-28)	HAI 18 reps(103); JEF 12 reps(68)
CROW, American	(16-24)	HAI 3 reps(11)
CROW, Fish	(4-4)	JEF 2/4(3) KSA
CROW, species	(20-20)	JEF 2/20(1) JAW
MARTIN, Purple	(14-28)	HAI-SILS 2/28(6) MG; JEF-GROV 2/14(1) SR; JEF 2/17(3) JAW
SWALLOW, Tree	(1-27)	JEF 10 reps(868)
CHICKADEE, Carolina	(1-28)	HAI 27 reps(65); JEF 8 reps(14)
TITMOUSE, Tufted	(1-28)	HAI 25 reps(48)
NUTHATCH, Red-breasted	(3-28)	HAI-SILS 2/20(1) MG; HAI-SILS 2/24(1) MG; JEF-NEDR 2/3(1) JJW; JEF-NEDR 2/10(1) JAW; JEF-SW 2/13(2) JHH; JEF-NEDR 2/28(1) JJW
NUTHATCH, Brown-headed	(4-4)	JEF 2/4(1) KSA
CREEPER, Brown	(13-16)	HAI-VCSP 2/16(1) SG; JEF-SW 2/13(1) JHH
WREN, Carolina	(1-27)	HAI 21 reps(35); JEF 4 reps(6)
WREN, House	(1-13)	JEF 3 reps(3)
WREN, Marsh	(14-14)	JEF-TP 2/14(2) JHH
GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray	(1-22)	JEF 7 reps(27)
KINGLET, Golden-crowned	(4-4)	JEF-SW 2/4(2) JAW
KINGLET, Ruby-crowned	(1-28)	HAI 3 reps(10); JEF 10 reps(39)
BLUEBIRD, Eastern	(1-27)	HAI 20 reps(67); JEF 9 reps(35)
THRUSH, Hermit	(1-22)	JEF-SW 2/1(2) JHH; JEF 2/4(1) KSA; JEF-SW 2/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 2/13(1) JHH; JEF-SW 2/22(1) JHH
ROBIN, American	(1-28)	HAI 12 reps(10094); JEF 12 reps(136)
CATBIRD, Gray	(1-22)	JEF-SW 2/1(2) JHH; JEF-SW 2/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 2/9(1) JAW; JEF-SW 2/13(2) JHH; JEF-SW 2/16(2) JAW; JEF-SW 2/22(2) JHH
MOCKINGBIRD, Northern	(1-28)	HAI 19 reps(90); JEF 19 reps(73)
THRASHER, Brown	(1-23)	HAI 4 reps(4); JEF 7 reps(49)
STARLING, European	(1-28)	HAI 19 reps(1169); JEF 11 reps(317)
PIPIT, American	(1-22)	JEF 5 reps(175)
WAXWING, Cedar	(4-28)	HAI 16 reps(749); JEF 2 reps(18)
WARBLER, Orange-crowned	(1-28)	HAI 14 reps(14); JEF 11 reps(22)
YELLOWTHROAT, Common	(4-14)	JEF 2 reps(4)
WARBLER, Pine	(1-28)	HAI 16 reps(37); JEF 18 reps(42)
WARBLER, Yellow-rumped	(1-28)	HAI 17 reps(155); JEF 11 reps(88)
WARBLER, Wilson's	(1-22)	JEF-SW 2/1(1) JHH; JEF-SW 2/9(2) JAW; JEF-SW 2/13(2) JHH; JEF-SW 2/22(1) JHH
TOWHEE, Spotted	(1-1)	JEF-SW 2/1(1) JHH
TOWHEE, Eastern	(1-13)	JEF-SW 2/1(1) JHH; JEF-SW 2/4(1) JAW; JEF-SW 2/13(1) JHH
SPARROW, Chipping	(1-28)	HAI 29 reps(1413); JEF 5 reps(33)
SPARROW, Field	(13-13)	JEF-SW 2/13(1) JHH
SPARROW, Savannah	(1-27)	JEF 11 reps(220)
SPARROW, Song	(1-22)	JEF 5 reps(11)
SPARROW, Lincoln's	(1-16)	JEF-SW 2/1(2) JHH; JEF-SW 2/16(1) JAW
SPARROW, Swamp	(1-22)	JEF 8 reps(28)
SPARROW, White-throated	(1-28)	HAI 18 reps(30); JEF 13 reps(88)
SPARROW, Harris's	(4-4)	JEF-SW 2/4(1) JAW
SPARROW, White-crowned	(1-22)	HAI 1 rep(2); JEF 7 reps(88)
CARDINAL, Northern	(1-28)	HAI 31 reps(1211); JEF 14 reps(47)
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	(1-27)	HAI 2 reps(13); JEF 17 reps(1007)
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	(3-22)	JEF 4 reps(41)
MEADOWLARK species	(1-17)	JEF 3 reps(18)
BLACKBIRD, Rusty	(1-1)	JEF-SW 2/1(1) JHH
BLACKBIRD, Brewer's	(17-17)	JEF 2/17(2) JAW
GRACKLE, Common	(1-28)	JEF 11 reps(922)
GRACKLE, Boat-tailed	(8-27)	JEF 6 reps(109)
GRACKLE, Great-tailed	(1-27)	JEF 13 reps(640)
GRACKLE, Gt./Boat tailed	(4-9)	JEF 3 reps(6)
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	(13-26)	HAI 2 reps(10); JEF 4 reps(209)
BLACKBIRD species	(8-9)	JEF 2 reps(200)
FINCH, House	(1-28)	HAI 9 reps(37); JEF 20 reps(58)
SISKIN, Pine	(4-28)	HAI-SILS 2/4(30) SG; HAI-SILS 2/12(2) MG; HAI-SILS 2/12(40) SG; HAI-SILS 2/13(2) MG; HAI-SILS 2/13(25) SG; HAI-SILS 2/15(2) MG; HAI-SILS 2/15(30) SG; HAI-SILS 2/16(2) MG; HAI-SILS 2/17(40) SG; HAI-SILS 2/21(1) MG; HAI-SILS 2/21(40) SG; HAI-SILS 2/27(9) SG; HAI-SILS 2/28(35) SG; JEF-BMT 2/25(2) RHJ
GOLDFINCH, American	(1-28)	HAI 34 reps(745); JEF 48 reps(943)

SPARROW, House (1-28) HAI 3 reps(92); JEF 22
reps(173)

Number of Species 174
Number of Individuals 74232
County Abbreviations:
HAI — Hardin; JEF — Jefferson

Location Codes
BMT — Beaumont; GROV — Groves; MCFW — McFaddin NWR;
NEDR — Nederland; PI — Pleasure Island, Port Arthur; SILS —

Silsbee; SRSP — Sea Rim State Park; SW — Sabine Woods; TP — Tyrrell Park incl. Cattail Marsh; TX87 — Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP; VCSP — Village Creek State Park

Observer Abbreviations

CSL — Christine Sliva; FTLA — Field trip to Southwest Louisiana; GD — Gerald Duhon; JAW — John Whittle; JHH — John H. Haynes; JJW — John and Jana Whittle; KSA — Kelley Sampeck; MG — Melanie Goetsell; RHJ — Rose Ann and Harrison Jordan; SG — Sherry Gibson; SR — Sherrie Roden.

Update: TPWD Marsh Restoration in Bridge City

From Highway 73, near Bridge City, looking toward the Entergy power plant, the scene is 2 million cubic yards of mud dredged out of the Intracoastal Waterway to improve access to the Port of Orange after Hurricane Ike. The dredging and pumping finished at the end of 2011. Since then, the dredged material has been compacting and de-watering from the consistency of chocolate milk to a surface you can walk on. As the mud continues to settle and marsh plants colonize it, an emergent, relatively fresh-water marsh will develop where the old marsh had eroded into shallow open water.

Today there are only scattered clumps of oyster grass on the mudflat, and some open water along the low levees that contained the dredged material in its more liquid phase. Our guide, Dr. Mike Rezsutek of TPWD, explains that the site just in front of us along Hwy 73 received an extra deposit of the dredged material so that it is slightly higher than the north and northwest parts of the site, which held enough water for lots of ducks over the winter. Once vegetation is established, the drier marsh can be nesting habitat for Mottled Ducks. Normal tide action flows through cuts in the levees, and the highest tides will overtop the levees and wet even the higher marsh.

Southeast of Hwy 73 and on either side of Bailey Road in Bridge City, the Lower Neches Wildlife Management Area has areas of mature marsh restoration and also contains the

hydrologic path by which water flows in a northeasterly direction under culverts in Bailey Road and Hwy 73 toward the new restoration. Saltwater barriers or “plugs” in the canals along Hwy 73 and Bailey Road control the flow under normal rainfall conditions and help to establish a gradient of salinity in the project area. The marsh goes from relatively salty near Sabine Lake to fresh on the north end of the new restoration area.

One mature restored area just southeast of Hwy 73 is now 7 years old. This area features terraces constructed for emergent marsh vegetation, unlike the new restoration NW of the highway where the dredged material was allowed to flow into larger and somewhat more natural features. Howard Davis and I observed several species of wading birds, ducks and pelicans among the terraces, and a lush vegetation of cordgrass, Phragmites, and Baccharis (and other less common species.) The possibilities for birding and all the gamut of consumptive-use activities were very inviting. Some patience will be required for a few years until the mudflats on the northwest side of the highway achieve their marshy potential, but it is a habitat worth waiting for.

Gary Kelley, with Howard Davis and Dr. Mike Rezsutek of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Field Trip to Bolivar Flats – 16 March 2013

Bolivar Flats is a familiar location to most of the birders in southeast Texas. It is well known for the large concentrations of shorebirds and wading birds that can accumulate there. Because of this, most local birders travel to this location at least once or twice per year to enjoy the birding bounty. On this spring outing, twelve of so members and friends made the trip. One might think that it would get old and that everything that could occur there had already been seen. But, as birders from the Golden Triangle Audubon Society would find out, Bolivar Flats still holds surprises!

Shorebirds are usually immediately obvious at Bolivar Flats and the day of the Golden Triangle Audubon’s spring trip was no exception. Sanderlings fed along the water line while Eastern Willets called from their newly established territories. A few Marbled Godwits prowled the shallows while Ruddy Turnstones worked the debris line. Western and Least Sandpipers were discovered and Dunlin and Long-billed Curlews eventually turned up. Thousands of American Avocets were seen when they flushed up from their feeding spot near

the jetty. The Flats is a well known wintering location for large numbers of these beautiful shorebirds. One nice find was a near breeding plumage Red Knot. This species was once more common but the population has suffered greatly in recent years and numbers on Texas beaches are much smaller now. This makes any Red Knot sightings good ones and was one of the highlights of the trip.

Bolivar Flats is always a good place to look for plovers as this Houston Audubon Society sanctuary is well known for having a good diversity of this group of shorebirds. On this trip, Black-bellied Plovers were seen (mostly in their duller winter plumage) and easily distinguished from their smaller cousins. American Golden-Plovers are not as easy to distinguish from Black-bellied Plovers but some were still picked out from the grassy areas behind the dune line. Semipalmated Plovers were seen in decent numbers while Snowy Plovers were a bit more difficult to find. Wilson’s Plovers were present in good numbers and will likely attempt to nest at this location. Endangered Piping Plovers also made

a good showing for the birders. Some of the Piping Plovers sported leg bands and flags that were noted by the birders. These markers were placed there by researchers attempting to learn more about the habits of this species and the colors used often reflect the location where the birds were banded. Close looks at some of these birds also revealed hair-thin antennae protruding from between their wings. In the last few years, tracking technology has progressed so rapidly that there are now devices small enough to be placed onto birds that allow researchers to track them without interfering with the normal activities of the birds. This has been a great boon to researchers and has provided many fascinating insights concerning migration routes and important stopover sites.

Gulls and terns are also important contributors to the fascinating bird life at Bolivar Flats. The ever-present Laughing Gulls were predictably common while Ring-billed and Herring Gulls were around in smaller numbers. Among terns, the newly arrived Least Terns were probably the most numerous. Multiple Forster's Terns were among the flocks along with a few Gull-billed Terns. A little searching turned up a few Sandwich Terns with their yellow bill tips along with larger Royal and Caspian Terns. Patient searching also managed to turn up Common Tern which, despite its name, is much less common on the upper Texas coast than the similar Forster's Tern.

Not all the birds at Bolivar Flats are water birds as some of the most interesting birds at this location might not be thought of as shore-loving species. Barn Swallows zipped overhead and perched on poles while Eastern Meadowlarks sang from behind the dunes. A few Horned Larks were seen but did not make it easy on the birders as they hid among the tussocks of grass and sedge. A Northern Harrier harassed birds in the nearby marsh while an Osprey struggled to hold onto a still wriggling fish. The best and most surprising bird of the day came about due to a tip from another birder who alerted the group to its presence. This bird was not on Bolivar Flats proper but along the entrance road that cuts through the marshy area to the beach. Squatting down behind a small culvert, hiding from the day's strong wind was a Burrowing Owl! These small owls are not typical in that they are often easily seen during the day and tend to stick on or close to the ground. As their name implies, they roost in holes in the ground or, often, the manmade equivalents (culverts, etc.). Although they do turn up occasionally in the winter, these little owls are never common on the upper Texas coast and it was a great treat to find one on the field trip.

Other areas of the Bolivar peninsula can also produce great birds. Fort Travis Park provided not only bathrooms and picnic tables but also a Whimbrel and Tricolored Heron. The roads around Port Bolivar produced the only Wilson's Snipe of the day. Bob's Road hosted a flock of Redheads, a Common Loon and Pied-billed Grebes. Yacht Basin Road gave the group looks at Crested Caracara, Cooper's Hawk and another Osprey. The fields around Gregory Park held numerous American Golden-Plovers but none of the hoped for Upland Sandpipers.

No trip to the Bolivar peninsula would be complete without stopping by the sanctuaries of High Island on the

way out. Boy Scout Woods was not exactly teeming with migrants but a few nice birds were found anyway. Raptors were well represented with Crested Caracara, Sharp-shinned hawk and White-tailed Kite all seen here. American Goldfinches were in the tree tops while an Orange-crowned Warbler of two were a bit lower down. Purple Martins called from overhead while White-throated Sparrows whistled from the underbrush. Finishing off the day at the rookery of Smith Oaks is always nice and the multitude of Roseate Spoonbills and Great Egrets gathering to nest was a great close out to a great trip.

Burrowing Owl at Bolivar Flats was a nice find and just goes to show that, even at a spot as well known and well birded as Bolivar Flats, surprises still turn up. Good birds can turn up anywhere, especially during migration, so get out to your favorite local birding spot in the coming weeks. Birders in southeast Texas are blessed to live in one of the continent's richest birding areas so take advantage of it, you never know what might turn up!

The following species were recorded by the trip leaders:

Gadwall (6); Blue-winged Teal (43); Northern Shoveler (2); Redhead (35); Lesser Scaup (10); Red-breasted Merganser (25); Common Loon (1); Pied-billed Grebe (5); Neotropic Cormorant (212); Double-crested Cormorant (5); American White Pelican (150); Brown Pelican (92); Great Blue Heron (10); Great Egret (28); Snowy Egret (7); Little Blue Heron (7); Tricolored Heron (4); Reddish Egret (2); Cattle Egret (22); Black-crowned Night-Heron (15); White Ibis (70); Roseate Spoonbill (86); Black Vulture (8); Turkey Vulture (6); Osprey (2); White-tailed Kite (1); Northern Harrier (5); Sharp-shinned Hawk (1); Cooper's Hawk (1); Red-shouldered Hawk (1); Red-tailed Hawk (19); Crested Caracara (2); American Kestrel (4); Clapper Rail (1); Sora (1); Common Moorhen (8); American Coot (10); Black-bellied Plover (12); American Golden-Plover (58); Snowy Plover (4); Wilson's Plover (20); Semipalmated Plover (15); Piping Plover (15); Killdeer (2); Black-necked Stilt (4); American Avocet (2027); Greater Yellowlegs (4); Willet (98); Lesser Yellowlegs (15); Whimbrel (1); Long-billed Curlew (5); Marbled Godwit (10); Ruddy Turnstone (25); Red Knot (1); Sanderling (200); Western Sandpiper (25); Least Sandpiper (11); Dunlin (35); Short-billed Dowitcher (10); Long-billed Dowitcher (3); Dowitcher species (6); Wilson's Snipe (1); Laughing Gull (115); Ring-billed Gull (28); Herring Gull (1); Least Tern (40); Gull-billed Tern (2); Caspian Tern (1); Common Tern (1); Forster's Tern (122); Royal Tern (8); Sandwich Tern (5); Rock Pigeon (3); Eurasian Collared-Dove (2); Mourning Dove (5); Burrowing Owl (1); Belted Kingfisher (1); Eastern Phoebe (1); Loggerhead Shrike (1); White-eyed Vireo (1); Blue-headed Vireo (1); Blue Jay (4); Horned Lark (3); Purple Martin (4); Tree Swallow (7); Northern Rough-winged Swallow (1); Barn Swallow (9); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (2); Hermit Thrush (1); Gray Catbird (1); Brown Thrasher (1); European Starling (23); Orange-crowned Warbler (2); Yellow-rumped Warbler (9); Savannah Sparrow (1); White-throated Sparrow (1); White-crowned Sparrow (5); Eastern Meadowlark (3); Boat-tailed Grackle (2); Great-tailed Grackle (38); Brown-headed Cowbird (100); American Goldfinch (8); 102 species. *Steve Mayes*

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Unfortunately, almost all the local and regional telephone Rare Bird Alerts have been discontinued in favor of various Internet 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 fee. Most rare bird sightings in Texas are posted on the TEXBIRDS listserv. Archives of the listserv are at www.freelists.org/archive/texbirds. It is not necessary to subscribe to the listserv to view the archives, which include all recent postings. Postings for the last two weeks are also available at <http://birding.aba.org/maillist/TX>.

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..>