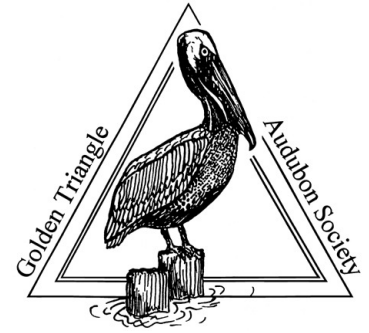


# The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 19 No. 11

November 2013

**Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner  
Thursday November 21, 2013 7:00 p.m.  
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont**

**Raptors -- Identification and Aging**

**Levie Horton**

In Southeast Texas on any day throughout the year you could see a raptor. The closest Swallow tailed Kite I have seen was in the WalMart Parking lot in Orange. In Early September, I saw a Mississippi Kite circling above the treetops in a Beaumont neighborhood on Dowlen Rd. At the annual Hawk Watch sites you could see thousands of migrating Hawks in one day. Most young raptors have an immature plumage usually worn for their first year, and a completely different adult or final breeding plumage. Only a few have a different male and female plumage. We will present a slideshow of photographs showing different plumages and point out field marks helpful in identifying and aging raptors.

We invite you, if you are able, to bring a dish or a dessert to share. We will also be conducting our annual elections at this meeting. We will plan on having the doors open by 6:00 p.m. and the meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

## **Birds as Indicator Species**

In this issue, you will find a short article about an intriguing and very unusual pattern in Broad-winged Hawk migration this year. This brings to our attention that birds have great potential as indicator species. Being more mobile than most species, and being relatively visible, we can expect to see effects of changes in the environment in birds before we see them in other parts of the natural world. Studies of bird populations and particularly of bird movements are therefore of great importance.

## *The Brown Pelican*

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Issue number 201

Golden Triangle  
Audubon Society

Web Site for more information  
[www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://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](http://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](mailto:sgmayes@hotmail.com)*

**Thursday November 21. Annual Meeting.** We will have our annual pot luck dinner, and conduct our elections. The program will be on raptor identification by Levie Horton. Full details on page 1.

### Refreshments

Each month except November, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. In November, we have our annual pot-luck dinner when all who are able are asked to bring a covered dish or items to complement such items. We thank all those who brought or contributed for refreshments in October. Darragh Castillo and the Port Arthur Convention and Visitors Bureau, Sherry Gibson, Ann Harder, Harrison Jordan, Denise and Gary Kelley, Sherrie Roden, Phil Rogers, Gail Slocum and anyone we have accidentally omitted. **We need volunteers to bring refreshments for all the Spring 2014 meetings.** Please call so we can coordinate! Please call Jana Whittle (409-722-4193 or email [janafw@aol.com](mailto:janafw@aol.com)) **as far in advance as possible.**

**Saturday November 23. Field Trip to West Jefferson County.** Each successive year, the birding in west Jefferson County seems to get better and better. The area is well known for its birds of prey, its Sandhill Cranes

and its sparrows. In wet years, there can be lots of waterfowl also.

Meet at 8 a.m. at the intersection of FM365 and Johnson Road (on the "north/west" side of Johnson Road at that intersection). From the intersection of Interstate 10 and FM365 in Fannett, proceed along FM365 (towards Nome) for about six miles. Shortly after you emerge out of the woodlands, South China Road goes to the right (east then north) and immediately afterwards, on the left, is Johnson Road. There is a green sign for the G and A Turf Farm on Johnson Road at the intersection. Contact Steve Mayes, [sgmayes@hotmail.com](mailto:sgmayes@hotmail.com), or call 409-722-5807 for further information.

This field trip involves travel by car for relatively short distances from one place to the next, parking along the sides of the roads. Carpooling is therefore strongly encouraged. There is room off the road at the meeting place to leave a few cars. While there is almost always some walking on any field trip, we do not anticipate traveling on foot any long distances.

The arrival of the winter resident birds varies from year to year, so if you are out in the area in the days before the field trip, please let us know what you find. We are always especially interested in knowing where the Sandhill Cranes and other wintering birds are being seen!

### Christmas Break.

We do not meet during December, and the various area Christmas Bird Counts take the place of our regular field trip during the month. Tentative details of local Christmas counts are on the next page.



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](http://www.earthshare-texas.org).

## 2013-14 Christmas Bird Count Dates

As we go to press, relatively few Christmas Bird Count dates have been finally set. The following are **tentative** dates for the local counts, and we expect most of them will be firmed up in the next week or two. We will post a list of confirmed dates on the website at [www.goldentriangleaudubon.org](http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org) as soon as possible. Also, Houston Audubon Society maintains a list of all Texas CBCs on its website at [www.houstonaudubon.org](http://www.houstonaudubon.org).

**Saturday December 14: Turkey Creek.** Centered in the Turkey Creek unit of the Big Thicket NP north of Kountze. Contact John Whittle ([johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com) or 409-722-4193)

**Thursday December 19: Bolivar Peninsula.** High Island and Anahuac NWR areas. This count was compiled by Bill Graber for fifty years, and has always been among the top counts in the nation. The count circle includes High Island, Rollover Pass and all of Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. Contact Steve Mayes ([sgmayes@hotmail.com](mailto:sgmayes@hotmail.com) or 409-722-5807)

**Saturday December 21: Johnson Bayou, LA.** Centered on Johnson Bayou in Cameron Parish. This area of Cameroon Parish is recovering from two devastating hurricanes. This count has access to oilfield and Gray estate properties that are not accessible any other time. Contact Ken Sztraky ([berrysheepfarm@att.net](mailto:berrysheepfarm@att.net) or 409-385-2835)

**Saturday December 28: Beech Creek.** Centered in the Steinhagen Lake area of Tyler and Jasper counties. In addition to Steinhagen Lake, this count includes all of Martin Dies State park, and the Corps of Engineers picnic areas and campgrounds around the lake. Contact John Whittle ([johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com) or 409-722-4193)

**Wednesday January 1, 2014: Orange County.** This count includes much of Orange County between Orange and the Neches River, including Bessie Heights and the Old River Unit. Contact Ken Sztraky ([berrysheepfarm@att.net](mailto:berrysheepfarm@att.net) or 409-385-2835)

**Friday January 3, 2014: Sea Rim SP.** Sabine Pass/Texas Point/Sea Rim area. This count is sponsored by the Golden Triangle Audubon Society. The count circle includes the southern part of Murphree WMA, all of Texas Point NWR and Sea Rim State Park, the eastern part of McFaddin NWR as well as Sabine Woods, the Sabine Pass area and a small section of extreme western Cameron Parish. Contact John Whittle ([johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com) or 409-722-4193)

Christmas Bird Counts are all day events in which participants identify and count all the birds they can find in a 15-mile diameter circle, most groups birding from dawn to dusk. Christmas Bird Counts are free and most are open to anyone. However, in the case of some of the counts with many participants (Bolivar Peninsula and Sea Rim SP are in this category), it is often difficult to accommodate participants who show up without advance notice in a way that is

satisfactory to all and provides the best possible experience for the participant. Such counts are organized into groups in advance and many of the groups go straight to their assigned areas. In most cases in such counts, it is easier to adjust if someone (area leaders excepted!) who has indicated their probable participation in advance is forced to withdraw than to add someone to a group on the morning of the count.

While all are welcome, we would suggest to new birders that they participate in a local field trip to learn the common local birds before participating in a Christmas Count. Our November field trip to west Jefferson County would be one good opportunity to do that!

## Membership Dues

All memberships run from January through December. Membership dues will remain at \$15 per year. You may pay at the any GTAS meeting (checks preferred) or use the subscription/membership blank on the back page. 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](http://www.goldentriangleaudubon.org). The typical issue will be less than 500 KB and so it is not a large file. Please send an email to [johnawhittle@aol.com](mailto:johnawhittle@aol.com) with your request, including the name we currently send the printed copy to, and the email address you want us to use.

## Nominating Committee Report

At the November meeting, Golden Triangle Audubon will elect its officers and directors for 2014. The Nominating Committee slate is as follows:

President: Gary M. Kelley; Vice-President: Sherrie Roden; Treasurer: Christine Sliva; Secretary: John Whittle; Directors-at-Large: Edra Bogucki, Howard Davis, Gerald Duhon, Sherry Gibson, John Haynes, John Mariani, Steve Mayes, Harlan Stewart and Jana Whittle.

Additional nominations may be made at the meeting, but require the in-person or written agreement by the prospective nominee to serve if elected.

*John A. Whittle, Secretary*

## Field Trip to Sabine Woods – 21 October 2013

The fall of 2013 will long be remembered as one of the best in recent memory for migrant landbirds in Jefferson county. This has not seemed to be the case everywhere in southeast Texas and other types of birds (namely raptors) have been a bit lacking. What is it about Sabine Woods that has concentrated the birds this year as opposed to other years and other locations? It is doubtful that anyone can give any real answers on that so the best thing to do? Just take advantage of it while it lasts! With that in mind, the Golden Triangle Audubon Society took its October field trip to Sabine Woods to look for some of those migrants.

The trip did not disappoint as there were good numbers of migrants around to be enjoyed by the group. Warblers are the cornerstone of the songbird migration for birders in southeast Texas and they made a good showing for the field trip. American Redstarts were everywhere! There were even a number of adult males showing off their Halloween colors for the October trip. Black-throated Green Warblers were also numerous and confiding as usual. Black and White Warblers put in a good show with one particularly cooperative male allowing close approach (and photographs) near the drip. Northern Parulas were common and easy to see while a single Canada Warbler was playing coy. A couple of Northern Waterthrushes haunted the edges of the pond while Hooded Warblers were still easy to find bouncing around the lantana thickets flashing their white outer tail feathers. Magnolia Warblers were found in a variety of fall plumages from fairly bright males (still not as bright as in spring) to very dull first fall females. Nashville Warblers are not quite as variable but were still well represented on the day. A Yellow-throated Warbler edged along branches of the oaks while Tennessee Warblers were most easily seen at the drip. Perhaps the most unusual warbler seen was a male Prothonotary Warbler that was a running a bit behind on his migration trip to Latin America. Maybe he likes Sabine Woods better!

Warblers were not the only migrants seen however. A Summer Tanager captured a noisy cicada as the group looked on. Indigo Buntings were fairly common though not as colorful as in the spring. An adult male Painted Bunting could hardly be more colorful but did not show itself to everyone in the group though pretty green female/immature birds did. A single Blue Grosbeak was seen early on while Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were much easier to find. White-eyed Vireos fussed from the thickets while a lone Red-eyed Vireo fed silently in the canopy. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo flashed across a clearing while Eastern Wood-Pewees hunted from high snags. Good movements of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers and Anhingas passed over the woods. An Eastern Whip-poor-will was a nice surprise as it perched up in a tree briefly before flushing away from the birders as was the Western Kingbird seen by one birder.

Some wintering and resident birds were also around to enjoy. Eastern Phoebes were easily seen but not as easily as the Ruby-crowned Kinglets that seemed to be in every tree. A few Ruby-throated Hummingbirds still zipped around the woods while Gray Catbirds mewed from the underbrush. There is probably no better place and time to see Brown Thrashers than Sabine Woods in the fall as this species often

gathers in improbably numbers at the sanctuary. This day was no exception as Brown Thrashers called from most corners of the woods. A few wintering sparrows arrived in town in the form of Swamp and Lincoln's Sparrows. The resident Golden-fronted Woodpeckers put in a couple of appearances for the birders as this species continues its residence at Sabine Woods well away from its usual range.

Raptors seemed late in arriving in southeast Texas this fall though there have been some good days for them. Northern Harriers put on a nice show as a couple of the marsh-loving hawks chased each other around in front of the birders. A few Broad-winged Hawks soared overhead as did a Red-tailed Hawk. A Merlin perched for the group while an American Kestrel zipped by overhead. One hawk defied easy identification but may have been a very light plumaged immature White-tailed Hawk. Nocturnal raptors were also noted as Barn Owl was seen and Great Horned Owl was heard.

A great fall continued with a fine day of birding at Sabine Woods on this field trip. The migrants are starting to peter out as of the writing of this report but the arriving wintering birds will make up for it. So as fall winds down be on the lookout for those waterfowl, raptors and sparrows that are even now making their way into the area. It may be a changing of the guard but there will still be lots of birds around to be seen and the Golden Triangle will be on the lookout for them on the November field trip to western Jefferson county!

Species recorded by the field trip leaders:

Greater White-fronted Goose (25); Snow Goose (3); Anhinga (45); American White Pelican (75); Great Blue Heron (1); Great Egret (1); Cattle Egret (1); White Ibis (6); Roseate Spoonbill (2); Black Vulture (9); Turkey Vulture (2); Northern Harrier (2); Cooper's Hawk (1); Broad-winged Hawk (10); White-tailed Hawk(?) (1); Red-tailed Hawk (1); American Kestrel (2); Merlin (1); Lesser Yellowlegs (3); White-winged Dove (3); Mourning Dove (8); Yellow-billed Cuckoo (1); Barn Owl (2); Great Horned Owl (1); Eastern Whip-poor-will (1); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (10); Belted Kingfisher (1); Golden-fronted Woodpecker (2); Downy Woodpecker (2); Northern Flicker (1); Eastern Wood-Pewee (3); Least Flycatcher (1); Empidonax sp. (2); Eastern Phoebe (5); Western Kingbird (1); Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (15); Loggerhead Shrike (2); White-eyed Vireo (4); Blue-headed Vireo (1); Red-eyed Vireo (1); Blue Jay (15); Tree Swallow (5); Northern Rough-winged Swallow (8); Barn Swallow (2); Carolina Chickadee (1); House Wren (1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (5); Ruby-crowned Kinglet (40); Gray Catbird (15); Northern Mockingbird (1); Brown Thrasher (20); European Starling (4); Northern Waterthrush (2); Black-and-white Warbler (12); Prothonotary Warbler (1); Tennessee Warbler (5); Orange-crowned Warbler (1); Nashville Warbler (10); Common Yellowthroat (2); Hooded Warbler (5); American Redstart (35); Northern Parula (15); Magnolia Warbler (6); Yellow-throated Warbler (2); Black-throated Green Warbler (15); Canada Warbler (1); Wilson's Warbler (2); Lincoln's Sparrow (1); Swamp Sparrow (5); Summer Tanager (1); Northern Cardinal (2); Rose-breasted Grosbeak (4); Blue Grosbeak (1); Indigo Bunting (12); Painted Bunting (3); Red-winged Blackbird (10); 75 species.

*Steve Mayes*

## Bird Sightings – August 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:** Most of our observers have described this year's fall migration as significantly above average. Most concentrated their attention on Passerine migrants as accessible shorebird habitat continued to be scarce. The overall numbers of warblers, vireos, etc. more or less speak for themselves. We would, however, mention the multiple reports of Swainson's Warbler – rarely seen in fall migration. Yellow Warbler numbers, although appreciable, seemed to some to be low. Yellow-throated Warblers and Wilson's Warblers on the other hand, were again plentiful fall migrants.

Among other groups, we would note perhaps fewer Common Nighthawks, an average number of Chuck-will's-widows, and a good showing of Whip-poor-wills, the latter being a species not often detected on migration in our experience at least. Purple Martin numbers were disappointing as we did not find any large roosts in the area for the first time in several years.

**WHISTLING-DUCK, Blk-bell.** (12-30) JEF 12 reps(260)  
**DUCK, Wood** (21-21) JEF 9/21(4) MC5  
**GADWALL** (21-21) JEF 9/21(2) MC6  
**DUCK, Mottled** (21-21) JEF 7 reps(57)  
**TEAL, Blue-winged** (21-23) JEF 9 reps(458)  
**TEAL species** (14-14) JEF 9/14(3) JAW  
**SHOVELER, Northern** (21-21) JEF 9/21(4) MC5; JEF 9/21(1) MC9; JEF 9/21(4) MC7/8  
**TEAL, Green-winged** (21-21) JEF 9/21(3) MC5  
**DUCK species** (21-21) JEF 2 reps(19)  
**GREBE, Pied-billed** (21-21) JEF 9/21(23) MC5  
**STORK, Wood** (21-23) JEF 9/21(125) MC4; JEF-BMT 9/22(3500) GD; JEF-BMT 9/23(1000) GD; JEF-BMT 9/23(4000) HJ  
**CORMORANT, Neotropic** (12-30) JEF 17 reps(265)  
**CORMORANT, Double-cr.** (15-15) JEF-TX87 9/15(2) JAW  
**ANHINGA** (21-21) JEF 9/21(11) MC1; JEF 9/21(6) MC5  
**PELICAN, Amer. White** (21-21) JEF 9/21(7) MC6  
**PELICAN, Brown** (14-30) JEF 14 reps(270)  
**BITTERN, American** (21-21) JEF 9/21(1) MC5  
**BITTERN, Least** (21-21) JEF 9/21(3) MC5; JEF 9/21(1) MC12  
**HERON, Great Blue** (13-28) JEF 19 reps(51)  
**EGRET, Great** (7-30) JEF 28 reps(246)  
**EGRET, Snowy** (12-30) JEF 26 reps(448)  
**HERON, Little Blue** (7-28) JEF 21 reps(44)  
**HERON, Tricolored** (14-29) JEF 16 reps(68)  
**EGRET, Cattle** (7-30) JEF 24 reps(3397)  
**HERON, Green** (7-30) JEF 35 reps(79)  
**NIGHT-HERON, Black-cr.** (21-21) JEF 9/21(16) MC5; JEF 9/21(1) MC6  
**NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-cr.** (17-29) JEF 8 reps(18)  
**IBIS, White** (14-30) JEF 25 reps(1442)  
**IBIS, White-faced** (21-21) JEF 9/21(21) MC5; JEF 9/21(3) MC6  
**IBIS, Plegadis** (21-24) JEF 5 reps(295)  
**SPOONBILL, Roseate** (14-30) JEF 15 reps(153)  
**VULTURE, Black** (11-30) JEF 21 reps(153)  
**VULTURE, Turkey** (7-30) JEF 41 reps(217)  
**OSPREY** (15-30) JEF 5 reps(5)  
**KITE, White-tailed** (21-21) JEF 9/21(1) MC10  
**KITE, Mississippi** (28-28) JEF-SW 9/28(3) BT; JEF-SW 9/28(1) RWBL  
**HAWK, Cooper's** (16-29) JEF 9/16(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/29(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM  
**HAWK, Red-shouldered** (14-21) JEF 7 reps(13)  
**HAWK, Broad-winged** (7-28) JEF 22 reps(442)  
**HAWK, Swainson's** (21-26) JEF 9/21(1) MC1; JEF 9/21(5) MC6; JEF-TX87 9/26(1) JAW

**HAWK, Red-tailed** (7-29) JEF 9/7(1) JAW; JEF 9/16(1) JAW; JEF 9/21(2) MC4; JEF 9/21(1) MC5; JEF-TX87 9/23(1) JAW; JEF 9/24(1) JJW; JEF 9/25(1) WWF; JEF-SW 9/28(1) GP; JEF-TX87 9/29(1) JAW  
**CARACARA, Crested** (21-29) JEF 9/21(4) MC1; JEF 9/21(4) MC4; JEF 9/21(2) MC5; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM  
**KESTREL, American** (21-23) JEF 9/21(1) MC2; JEF-SW 9/22(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH  
**MERLIN** (21-27) JEF 9/21(1) MC4; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/27(1) JHH  
**RAIL, Clapper** (21-21) JEF 3 reps(18)  
**RAIL, King** (21-30) JEF 5 reps(5)  
**SORA** (21-21) JEF 9/21(1) MC5  
**GALLINULE, Common** (21-21) JEF 3 reps(84)  
**COOT, American** (21-21) JEF 2 reps(38)  
**PLOVER, Black-bellied** (15-28) JEF 6 reps(20)  
**PLOVER, Snowy** (15-28) JEF-SRSP 9/15(2) JAW; JEF-SRSP 9/21(20) MC11; JEF-SRSP 9/28(3) RWBL  
**PLOVER, Wilson's** (21-21) JEF-SRSP 9/21(5) MC11  
**PLOVER, Semipalmated** (21-28) JEF 5 reps(34)  
**PLOVER, Piping** (21-28) JEF-SRSP 9/21(9) MC11; JEF-SRSP 9/28(1) RWBL  
**KILLDEER** (14-23) JEF 18 reps(182)  
**STILT, Black-necked** (21-24) JEF 8 reps(138)  
**AVOCET, American** (21-21) JEF 9/21(50) MC4; JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11  
**SANDPIPER, Spotted** (21-21) JEF 9/21(12) MC6; JEF 9/21(1) MC12; JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11  
**SANDPIPER, Solitary** (21-21) JEF 9/21(1) MC1  
**YELLOWLEGS, Greater** (21-21) JEF 6 reps(26)  
**WILLET** (15-28) JEF 8 reps(30)  
**YELLOWLEGS, Lesser** (21-21) JEF 5 reps(29)  
**YELLOWLEGS species** (21-21) JEF 4 reps(23)  
**SANDPIPER, Upland** (21-21) JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11  
**GODWIT, Marbled** (21-21) JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11  
**TURNSTONE, Ruddy** (15-28) JEF 3 reps(11)  
**SANDERLING** (15-28) JEF 3 reps(81)  
**SANDPIPER, Semipalmated** (21-21) JEF 9/21(3) MC9; JEF-SRSP 9/21(2) MC11  
**SANDPIPER, Western** (21-21) JEF 7 reps(73)  
**SANDPIPER, Least** (21-28) JEF 8 reps(66)  
**SANDPIPER, Peep** (21-28) JEF 5 reps(280)  
**SANDPIPER, Pectoral** (21-21) JEF 9/21(1) MC1; JEF 9/21(1) MC9; JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11  
**SANDPIPER, Buff-breasted** (21-21) JEF 9/21(4) MC1; JEF 9/21(1) MC7/8  
**DOWITCHER, Short-billed** (21-21) JEF 9/21(1) MC9; JEF-TXPT 9/21(5) ZH  
**DOWITCHER, Long-billed** (21-21) JEF 9/21(50) MC4  
**DOWITCHER species** (21-21) JEF 4 reps(44)

<b>GULL, Laughing</b>	(7-30)	JEF 19 reps(756)
<b>GULL, Ring-billed</b>	(15-28)	JEF-SRSP 9/15(1) JAW; JEF 9/21(2) MC5; JEF 9/21(1) MC6; JEF-SRSP 9/28(1) RWBL
<b>TERN, Least</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(2) MC6
<b>TERN, Gull-billed</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(1) MC12; JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11
<b>TERN, Caspian</b>	(15-28)	JEF 9 reps(82)
<b>TERN, Black</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(350) MC5; JEF 9/21(6) MC10; JEF 9/21(6) MC12
<b>TERN, Forster's</b>	(14-28)	JEF 6 reps(30)
<b>TERN, Royal</b>	(15-21)	JEF 5 reps(63)
<b>TERN, Sandwich</b>	(21-21)	JEF-SRSP 9/21(2) MC11
<b>SKIMMER, Black</b>	(21-21)	JEF-SRSP 9/21(1) MC11
<b>PIGEON, Rock</b>	(14-30)	JEF 14 reps(559)
<b>COLLARED-DOVE, Euras.</b>	(12-28)	JEF 12 reps(93)
<b>DOVE, White-winged</b>	(5-30)	HAI 5 reps(86); JEF 33 reps(396)
<b>DOVE, Mourning</b>	(5-30)	HAI 6 reps(90); JEF 35 reps(979)
<b>DOVE, Inca</b>	(1-30)	JEF 6 reps(10)
<b>CUCKOO, Yellow-billed</b>	(7-29)	JEF 14 reps(20)
<b>OWL, Barn</b>	(7-21)	JEF-SW 9/7(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/7(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/11(1) JHH; JEF 9/21(2) MC1
<b>OWL, Great Horned</b>	(6-30)	JEF 6 reps(7)
<b>OWL, Barred</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(1) MC2; JEF 9/21(1) MC5
<b>NIGHTHAWK, Common</b>	(20-22)	JEF-TX87 9/20(1) JAW; JEF 9/21(53) MC9; JEF-TXPT 9/21(1) ZH; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM
<b>WILL'S-WIDOW, Chuck-</b>	(7-26)	JEF 18 reps(32)
<b>WHIP-POOR-WILL, Eastern</b>	(14-27)	JEF-SW 9/14(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/27(1) JHH
<b>SWIFT, Chimney</b>	(12-30)	JEF 17 reps(162)
<b>HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-thr.</b>	(1-30)	HAI 13 reps(451); JEF 66 reps(2456)
<b>HUMMINGBIRD, Rufous</b>	(1-30)	JEF-BMT 9/1 thru 9/30(1) HJ;
<b>HUMMINGBIRD, Selasph.</b>	(4-4)	JEF-NEDR 9/4(1) JAW
<b>HUMMINGBIRD species</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(2) MC2
<b>KINGFISHER, Belted</b>	(15-26)	JEF 6 reps(8)
<b>WOODPECKER, Red-head.</b>	(12-21)	JEF 4 reps(7)
<b>WOODPECKER, Golden-fr.</b>	(7-29)	JEF 9 reps(10)
<b>WOODPECKER, Red-bellied</b>	(4-30)	HAI 4 reps(4); JEF 25 reps(34)
<b>WOODPECKER, Downy</b>	(4-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 29 reps(62)
<b>WOODPECKER, Pileated</b>	(7-25)	HAI 7 reps(7); JEF 2 reps(3)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Olive-sided</b>	(7-30)	JEF 16 reps(28)
<b>WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern</b>	(7-30)	JEF 32 reps(177)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Yellow-bell.</b>	(11-28)	JEF 11 reps(17)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Acadian</b>	(21-30)	JEF 10 reps(14)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Traill's</b>	(7-29)	JEF 14 reps(22)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Least</b>	(7-30)	JEF 21 reps(41)
<b>EMPIDONAX species</b>	(7-30)	JEF 21 reps(83)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Gt. Crested</b>	(7-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 22 reps(65)
<b>KINGBIRD, Eastern</b>	(12-28)	JEF 13 reps(49)
<b>FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tail.</b>	(12-28)	JEF 11 reps(45)
<b>SHRIKE, Loggerhead</b>	(4-30)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 38 reps(171)
<b>VIREO, White-eyed</b>	(7-30)	HAI 3 reps(8); JEF 21 reps(134)
<b>VIREO, Yellow-throated</b>	(14-26)	JEF 8 reps(8)
<b>VIREO, Blue-headed</b>	(22-22)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE
<b>VIREO, Warbling</b>	(7-22)	JEF-SW 9/7(12) JHH; JEF-SW 9/7(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/14(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/22(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM
<b>VIREO, Red-eyed</b>	(7-24)	JEF 13 reps(105)
<b>JAY, Blue</b>	(7-30)	JEF 39 reps(262)
<b>CROW, American</b>	(5-21)	HAI 2 reps(5); JEF 4 reps(24)
<b>CROW, Fish</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(4) MC6
<b>CROW, species</b>	(21-21)	JEF-BMT 9/21(3) MC3
<b>MARTIN, Purple</b>	(15-21)	JEF-NEDR 9/15(1) JAW; JEF 9/21(3) MC2; JEF 9/21(4) MC4; JEF 9/21(4) MC5; JEF 9/21(1) MC9; JEF 9/21(6) MC12
<b>SWALLOW, Tree</b>	(14-30)	JEF 8 reps(102)
<b>SWALLOW, N. Rough-wing.</b>	(21-22)	JEF 9/21(6) MC5; JEF 9/21(10) MC7/8; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE
<b>SWALLOW, Bank</b>	(21-28)	JEF 9/21(11) MC5; JEF 9/21(14) MC12; JEF-SRSP 9/28(5) GP; JEF-SW 9/28(2) RWBL
<b>SWALLOW, Cliff</b>	(18-21)	JEF 8 reps(131)
<b>SWALLOW, Cave</b>	(13-21)	JEF 9/13(67) JAW; JEF 9/14(300) JAW; JEF 9/21(30) MC1; JEF 9/21(15) MC2; JEF 9/21(4) MC12
<b>SWALLOW, Barn</b>	(14-29)	JEF 18 reps(436)
<b>SWALLOW species</b>	(13-21)	JEF 4 reps(16)
<b>CHICKADEE, Carolina</b>	(4-28)	HAI 8 reps(18); JEF 12 reps(20)
<b>TITMOUSE, Tufted</b>	(4-27)	HAI 8 reps(25); JEF 3 reps(6)
<b>NUTHATCH, Brown-headed</b>	(16-21)	HAI-SILS 9/16(1) MG; HAI-SILS 9/18(1) MG; JEF 9/21(1) MC2
<b>WREN, Carolina</b>	(21-22)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 5 reps(9)
<b>WREN, Marsh</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(1) MC12
<b>KINGLET, Ruby-crowned</b>	(22-29)	JEF 13 reps(42)
<b>BLUEBIRD, Eastern</b>	(7-27)	HAI 3 reps(9); JEF 6 reps(21)
<b>THRUSH, Swainson's</b>	(19-27)	JEF-SW 9/19(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/22(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(2) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/27(1) JHH
<b>ROBIN, American</b>	(2-28)	JEF 14 reps(44)
<b>CATBIRD, Gray</b>	(7-29)	JEF 20 reps(43)
<b>MOCKINGBIRD, Northern</b>	(4-30)	HAI 1 rep(4); JEF 48 reps(351)
<b>THRASHER, Brown</b>	(1-30)	HAI 1 rep(3); JEF 26 reps(83)
<b>STARLING, European</b>	(12-30)	JEF 27 reps(1752)
<b>OVENBIRD</b>	(7-30)	JEF 17 reps(66)
<b>WARBLER, Worm-eating</b>	(22-27)	JEF-SW 9/22(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(2) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/27(1) JHH
<b>WATERTHRUSH, Northern</b>	(7-30)	JEF 30 reps(81)
<b>WATERTHRUSH, La./N.</b>	(7-7)	JEF-SW 9/7(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/7(1) SM
<b>WARBLER, Golden-winged</b>	(22-24)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(2) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Blue-winged</b>	(22-24)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(2) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(2) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Black-and-wh.</b>	(7-30)	JEF 27 reps(200)
<b>WARBLER, Prothonotary</b>	(7-30)	JEF-SW 9/7(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/7(2) SM; JEF-SW 9/11(3) JHH; JEF-SW 9/14(1) GB; JEF-SW 9/14(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/15(3) JAW; JEF-SW 9/19(2) JHH; JEF 9/21(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/22(4) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(4) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(4) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(4) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Swainson's</b>	(17-23)	JEF-SW 9/17(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/17(1) JHH; JEF 9/21(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Tennessee</b>	(21-29)	JEF 9/21(2) MC10; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(2) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(4) JHH; JEF-SW 9/26(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/29(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM
<b>WARBLER, Orange-crown.</b>	(29-29)	JEF-SW 9/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/29(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM
<b>WARBLER, Nashville</b>	(14-29)	JEF 19 reps(29)
<b>WARBLER, Mourning</b>	(7-27)	JEF-SW 9/7(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/14(6) JAW; JEF-SW 9/14(5) JHH; JEF-SW 9/15(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/17(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/17(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/19(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/26(2) JAW; JEF-SW 9/27(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Kentucky</b>	(22-29)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(2) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM
<b>YELLOWTHROAT, Common</b>	(7-30)	JEF 25 reps(61)
<b>WARBLER, Hooded</b>	(7-30)	JEF 23 reps(175)
<b>REDSTART, American</b>	(11-30)	JEF 23 reps(248)
<b>PARULA, Northern</b>	(7-30)	JEF 21 reps(56)
<b>WARBLER, Magnolia</b>	(15-30)	JEF-SW 9/15(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/18(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/19(4) JHH; JEF-SW 9/22(5) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(8) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(8) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(7) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(6) JHH; JEF-SW 9/27(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/28(1) RWBL; JEF-SW 9/29(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/30(4) JAW; JEF-SW 9/30(3) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Blackburnian</b>	(14-23)	JEF-SW 9/14(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/14(2) JHH; JEF 9/21(1) MC10; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(2) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Yellow</b>	(7-30)	JEF 29 reps(96)

<b>WARBLER, Chestnut-sided</b>	(22-23)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Palm</b>	(22-28)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JGE; JEF-SW 9/28(1) RWBL
<b>WARBLER, Pine</b>	(21-27)	HAI-SILS 9/26(1) MG; HAI-SILS 9/27(1) MG; JEF 9/21(1) MC2; JEF 9/21(2) MC3D
<b>WARBLER, Yellow-rumped</b>	(29-30)	JEF-SW 9/29(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/29(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Yellow-throated</b>	(22-24)	JEF-SW 9/22(2) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/23(5) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(5) JHH; JEF-SW 9/24(3) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Prairie</b>	(7-14)	JEF-SW 9/7(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/7(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/14(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/14(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Black-thr. Green</b>	(11-30)	JEF-SW 9/11(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/14(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/14(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(3) JGE; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/30(1) JHH
<b>WARBLER, Canada</b>	(7-30)	JEF 20 reps(60)
<b>WARBLER, Wilson's</b>	(7-30)	JEF 22 reps(64)
<b>CHAT, Yellow-breasted</b>	(7-30)	JEF 17 reps(26)
<b>SPARROW, Lark</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(1) MC1
<b>SPARROW, Seaside</b>	(21-21)	JEF 9/21(7) MC9; JEF 9/21(3) MC12
<b>TANAGER, Summer</b>	(14-30)	JEF 16 reps(37)
<b>TANAGER, Scarlet</b>	(22-29)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/22(1) SM; JEF-SW 9/24(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) JHH; JEF-SW 9/29(1) SM
<b>TANAGER, Western</b>	(22-23)	JEF-SW 9/22(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JAW; JEF-SW 9/23(1) JHH
<b>CARDINAL, Northern</b>	(4-30)	HAI 11 reps(660); JEF 35 reps(250)
<b>GROSBEAK, Blue</b>	(11-30)	JEF 25 reps(226)
<b>BUNTING, Indigo</b>	(14-30)	JEF 22 reps(109)
<b>BUNTING, Painted</b>	(7-30)	JEF 23 reps(49)
<b>DICKCISSEL</b>	(14-28)	JEF 9/14(3) JAW; JEF-SW 9/14(3) GB; JEF 9/16(55) JAW; JEF 9/21(42) MC1; JEF 9/21(14) MC4; JEF-SW 9/27(2) JHH; JEF-SW 9/28(4) RWBL
<b>BLACKBIRD, Red-winged</b>	(12-30)	JEF 17 reps(568)
<b>GRACKLE, Common</b>	(7-30)	JEF 26 reps(358)
<b>GRACKLE, Boat-tailed</b>	(15-30)	JEF 14 reps(142)
<b>GRACKLE, Great-tailed</b>	(7-30)	JEF 29 reps(1009)
<b>GRACKLE, Gt./Boat-tailed</b>	(14-30)	JEF 8 reps(67)
<b>COWBIRD, Brown-headed</b>	(12-21)	JEF 6 reps(390)
<b>BLACKBIRD species</b>	(14-24)	JEF 3 reps(350)
<b>OORIOLE, Orchard</b>	(7-29)	JEF 9 reps(9)
<b>ORIOLE, Baltimore</b>	(7-29)	HAI 1 rep(1); JEF 20 reps(65)
<b>FINCH, House</b>	(1-30)	HAI 10 reps(30); JEF 5 reps(20)
<b>SPARROW, House</b>	(7-22)	JEF 12 reps(249)
<b>Number of Species</b>		195
<b>Number of Individuals</b>		73412

#### County Abbreviations

HAI — Hardin; JEF — Jefferson

#### Location Codes

BMT — Beaumont; NEDR — Nederland; PI — Pleasure Island, Port Arthur; SILS — Silsbee; SRSP — Sea Rim State Park; SW — Sabine Woods; TX87 — Texas 87 Pt. Arthur-Sabine Pass-Sea Rim SP; TXPT — Road to former Pilot Station at Texas Point

#### Observer Abbreviations

BT — Barbara Tomkins; GB — Gary Binderim; GD — Gerald Duhon; GP — Greg Page; HJ — Harrison Jordan; JAW — John Whittle; JGE — Jim Geisler; JHH — John H. Haynes; JJW — John and Jana Whittle; MC1 — Migration Count Area 1; MC2 — Migration Count Area 2; MC3 — Migration Count Area 3; MC3C — Migration Count Area 3C; MC3D — Migration Count Area 3D; MC3E — Migration Count Area 3E; MC4 — Migration Count Area 4; MC5 — Migration Count Area 5; MC6 — Migration Count Area 6; MC7/8 — Migration Count Area 7 & 8; MC9 — Migration Count Area 9; MC10 — Migration Count Area 10; MC11 — Migration Count Area 11; MC12 — Migration Count Area 12; MG — Melanie Goetsell; RWBL — Ron Weeks and Brad Lirette; SM — Steve Mayes; SSW — Eric and Ken Sztraky, John Whittle; WWF — Jana and John Whittle, Ross Foreman; ZH — Zach Hutchinson

## An Unusual Hawk Migration

As this fall migration season progressed, our local observers began to remark on the number of passerine migrants that were passing through later than usual. However, there are always some tardy individuals of all species. When it seems that the large migratory "pushes" are late, we generally ascribe this to either weather or food supply or both. Most ornithologists subscribe to the theory that the migratory urge in birds is triggered principally by the decreasing so called "photo period" — the length of daylight, and that other factors such as supplies of preferred foods are secondary. Weather can be a factor, but adverse weather conditions lasting more than a few days are rare.

Broad-winged Hawks mostly migrate in medium to very large "kettles". They breed across most of the eastern half of North America, extending west in Canada as far as Alberta, and winter in northern South America. There are long-running hawk watches in Texas at Smith Point in Chambers County, and at Hazel Bazemore Park at Calallen, just west of Corpus Christi. Averaged over many years, the peak passage through Texas has been September 25 or 26. But this year, there has been a markedly different migration. While there is considerable variability from year to year, significant numbers of Broad-winged Hawks normally start passing through the Texas watch sites between the 5th and 10th of September and numbers usually drop off sharply after the 5th to 10th of October. In 2012, 55 percent of the 39,452 Broad-wings passed through Smith Point in September even though early October numbers were quite high. With 2013 data available so far only through October 25, only 21 percent of the Broad-wings counted so far were in September. What happened was that, just as everyone was assuming a lot of the Broad-wings had bypassed Smith Point this year, the flood gates opened back up on October 19 (5,477), 20 (2,758), 21 (rained out), 22 (3,657) and 23 (2,120). A similar but less accentuated late upsurge can be seen in the Hazel Bazemore counts.

One other unusual aspect of this late surge was that it included an incredible number (over 100) of dark morph birds. The breeding population of dark morph birds, estimated by some at one in 50,000 of the overall population, is concentrated in Alberta, and they are extremely rare in the eastern populations. Normally only one or two are seen at Smith Point each year. So in searching for explanations of this year's pattern, one has to start off with the hypothesis that the late birds were from the Alberta breeding population. Heretofore, the working assumption has been that the birds passing over Smith Point were from the eastern portions of the Broad-wing's range, and those from the central and western portions passed well to the west. Hazel Bazemore is further west, and usually counts in the order of ten times as many as Smith Point, with the conventional wisdom being that most of the "central" breeding birds join the eastern birds before reaching that site. The western birds may normally go even further west as the numbers that pass over Veracruz, Mexico are yet another order of magnitude higher.

What happened this year? Did early snow in South Dakota force a good portion of the Alberta population way east? We may never know, but it is interesting to speculate.

*John A. Whittle*

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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 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](http://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..>