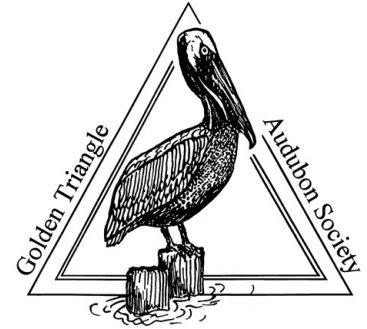


The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 21 No. 9

September 2015

Membership Meeting
Thursday September 17, 2015 7:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont

Sea Rim State Park
Speaker: Nathan Londenberg, Superintendent

Nathan writes: "I have a very unique background since my dad was a missionary overseas. I was born in the Philippines and then later I lived in West Africa for eight years. My dad was a missionary in Sierra Leone, a small West African country. Due to my experiences in Sierra Leone and in Nigeria I became interested in conservation and educating people the importance of protecting our natural resources. I saw firsthand how man was capable of destroying the ecological balance of nature when unchecked.

"Upon graduating from Georgetown High School, I attended Sul Ross State University in Alpine where I studied Natural Resource Management with an emphasis in Wildlife. Upon graduation, I worked for the City of Big Spring as a Police Officer for 9 ½ years until I accepted a position with Texas Parks and Wildlife.

"I have been with Texas State Parks for a little over seven years now. I was the Assistant Park Superintendent at Palo Duro Canyon for seven years and during that time I was the Interim Superintendent twice for a total of 14 months. Palo Duro Canyon is one of the mega parks in the Texas State Park system. At a little over 28,000 acres it has an annual visitation of more than 300,000 people.

"I came to Sea Rim in March and I have really enjoyed the diversity of life that is in this ecological region. I have busied myself with spreading the news about Sea Rim and trying to get people to come out and experience the park themselves. Sea Rim State Park is a very unique park."

We will plan on having the doors open by 6:00 p.m. and the program will start at 7:00 p.m. sharp. A light supper will be available from 6:15 p.m.

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Issue number 220

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. 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.

Saturday September 5, 2015 Sabine Woods Work Day. We are planning a Work Day subject to conditions (weather, insect population) being acceptable. The large amount of rain in early summer resulted in luxuriant growth of both ground cover and shrubs. We have been able to have the "outside" areas brush hogged, but the trails need a lot of attention. In addition, at least three trees, all hackberries I think, have come down over trails, and will need to be removed, so we will need at least one medium sized chain saw. Other particular needs this time will be riding mowers that will pass through the wider trails, but we will also need loppers to cut back the vegetation on the sides of the trails. If you have hip or chest waders and a willingness to do some relatively light pruning on trees in the large pond, we will be able to use you. Please put this date on your calendar and help us if you can. Sabine Woods is 4.1 miles west of Sabine Pass on Highway 87. We will start around 7:30 a.m. and work till about noon.

Membership Meeting. Thursday September 17, 2015. Speaker: Nathan Londenberg, Superintendent, Sea Rim State Park. Details on page 1.

Jefferson County Fall Migration Count. Saturday September 19, 2015. We have been doing county-wide bird counts in spring and fall since 1995, and this data set is increasingly valuable in monitoring local bird populations. Although these are "migration" counts, we call all birds, not just migrants. Since fall migration is a much more spread out affair than spring migration, we can only hope to catch a small portion of the fall

migrants. The timing is such that some of our winter residents have begun to arrive, although many other don't arrive until later.

This is a county-wide count, and we can use your help even if you can only spend part of the day. It is especially helpful if you can count in the early morning hours, when birds are at their most active. If you know the landowner(s) of any of the larger non-public areas in the county, and can negotiate permission to access private land on September 19, this could help increase our coverage of the county.

Contact John Whittle (409-722-4193 or johnawhittle@aol.com) to volunteer to help.

Refreshments

Each month, we rely on volunteers to provide the refreshments at our membership meeting. We thank the following for bringing refreshments in August: Jean Beavins, Linda and Howard Davis, Elka Finn, Cindy Harland, Sheila Hebert, Harrison Jordan, Steve Mayes, Dana Nelson, Gail Slocum, Joedna Smyth and Harlan Stewart., **We need volunteers to bring items for the September meeting.** 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 can just bring drinks and cookies or something similar, please call Jana Whittle at (409) 722-4193 (or email her at janafw@aol.com) **as far in advance as possible.** Please help if you can.

Field Trip to Smith Point Hawk Watch. Saturday September 26, 2015. Our leaders will be there from about 8:30 a.m. This trip will be one week later than our normal field trip schedule.

Broad-winged Hawk migration historically has peaked around the 25th-26th-27th of September in southeast Texas, but the exact timing is dependent on weather conditions along the routes the hawks take. The last two years, there have been large flights well into October. The Hawk Watch is manned every day, and if the 26th is not convenient, you could consider going a day or two earlier or later. The Broad-winged Hawk migration is tracked quite extensively in New England and

especially over the famous mountain ridges in Pennsylvania. But there are no organized Hawk Watches that we know of between the mid-Atlantic states and the Texas watches at Smith Point and Hazel Bazemore near Corpus Christi. So it becomes somewhat of an interesting exercise to "guesstimate" the progress of the large concentrations of hawks as they work their way between the mid-Atlantic and Texas. (They usually takes about a week.) There is also another population of Broad-winged Hawks that funnels between Lakes Erie and Huron over the Detroit area, and presumably joins the other stream somewhere in Texas. There is some evidence that some of the flights go west of Hazel Bazemore, but all the Hawks certainly funnel through the east coast of Mexico at Veracruz where the coastal plain between the Gulf of Mexico and the Sierra Madre Oriental mountains is very narrow.

To reach the Smith Point Hawk Watch site from Winnie, take Highway 124 south towards High Island. After 12 miles, turn right on FM1985 and follow it about 14 1/2 miles (four miles past the access road for Anahuac NWR) until it meets FM562. Follow FM562 (south) another 14 miles to Smith Point. At the end of FM562, there are usually signs to the Hawk Watch. Continue straight until almost reaching the bay, and turn left, bearing left again to the parking area next to the Hawk Watch Tower on the Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area. It takes at least 90 minutes from the Golden Triangle to reach the site. This Field Trip is much more a come and go as you wish trip, and help on hawk identification is always available on the tower!

Our leaders may lead a group into the nearby woods looking for migrants, but you may stay on the tower if you wish. Mosquitoes are not normally a problem on the tower, although they almost always are in the woods. Availability of food and fuel is limited or non-existent in Smith Point, so bring your lunch!

The Smith Point Hawk Watch is conducted every day from August 1 through the end of October by the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.

Thursday October 15 Membership Meeting. Levie Horton on hawks of Southeast Texas.

Saturday October 17. Field Trip to Sabine Woods. This trip will be looking for some of the later migrating species, and may include other places in the Sabine Pass area. Sabine Woods is 4.1 miles west of Sabine Pass on Highway 87. Meet there at 8 a.m. There is a small parking area.

Saturday November 22. Field Trip to West Jefferson County. 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, or call 409-722-5807 for further information.

November Meeting Your Favorite Bird Photos

Our November meeting (November 19th), is our Annual Meeting and Pot-luck Dinner, at which we will conduct our elections. (Nominations for all offices and board positions are now in order.) We also plan to reinstitute our previous practice of a program by you, the members. We will invite you to provide up to a dozen of your favorite bird photos, the maximum number being somewhat dependent on how many submissions we get! The easiest formats for us to project at the Garden Center are jpg files or a short Powerpoint presentation. Please let us know that you plan to contribute.

Membership Dues

To simplify our record keeping, all memberships now run from January through December. Membership dues remain at \$15 per year. You may pay at any membership meeting (checks

preferred), use the membership blank on the back page of the hard copy version or simply mail to us at PO Box 1292, Nederland, Texas 77627.

Dues for all members will be for the period ending on December 31. 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 is currently less than 500 KB so it is not a large file, although we are now including added additional materials to the electronic version and plan to include pictures in the future, both of which may increase the fill size slightly. 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.



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

Cattail Marsh Heats Up in the Summer

As May transitions into June, the pest-free environs of Cattail Marsh provides an attractive alternate birding venue when Deer Flies replace Warblers in Sabine Woods. Cattail Marsh is a big locale, inviting much exploration. In early June, adventurously braving the red-bug infested grassy lane between Cattail Marsh's cells 6 and 7 quickly seemed a mistake in the making. Few good ponds were to be found and even fewer birds. Sometimes though, mistakes become providential opportunities. Finally rounding the south end of Cell 6, persistence and a much better road conspired to allay concerns, for countless swallows, including Barn, Cave/Cliff, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows perched on utility wires paralleling the road and Willow Marsh Bayou. Photos later proved Tree Swallows to be in the mix – a rare summer species for Jefferson County, and an observation consistently repeated over the next week or so. Northern Rough-winged Swallows as well as Tree Swallows rate as e-Bird rarities for June in Jefferson County. The findings naturally prompted the question: “Just how many of which swallows are actually there?” Beginning June 23rd, surveys using non-overlapping telephoto photographs allowed counts with a fair validity heretofore lacking in previous half-hearted estimates. Much photo processing of many photos entailed, efforts soon rewarded. The results were surprising: 412 swallows (2 Tree, 29 Cave, 10 Cliff, 32 Cave/Cliff, 274 Northern Rough-winged, 65 Barn) with Northern Rough-winged Swallow numbers an order of magnitude above earlier underestimates. Numbers remained similar for the rest of June. Dodging thunderstorms in early July reduced totals, but Purple Martins entered the mix in single digits. Total numbers began to climb dramatically with the advent of dry weather, reaching a zenith of 1,133 swallows on July 29th. Through August 17th, the sum of surveyed swallows has totaled 16,575, including 8,523 Cave/Cliff Swallows and 5,693 Northern Rough-winged Swallows.

Cattail Marsh has proven to be a swallow nirvana. Utility lines paralleling a bayou at the edge of a marsh provide a happy convergence of features that allow easy tracking of the swallows. Inarguably, large numbers of swallows can be seen in flight anywhere in Cattail Marsh, with discernable variation in the species mix across the marsh. Along the roads between Cell 1 and Cell 2, Barn Swallows seem to predominate, whereas Northern Rough-winged Swallows and Cave/Cliff Swallows prevail on the utility lines. Summertime Barn and Cliff Swallows, as well as Purple Martins, have heretofore been well reported in Jefferson County. But e-Bird reports of summertime Cave Swallow rarely if at all approach the 100+ often present on the utility lines. Northern Rough-winged Swallows, previously unreported in e-Bird for Jefferson County in mid-summer, consistently ranged in number from 233 to 326 during mid-July to early August, despite dipping to as low as 80 to 90 during the lean wet days of early July. Tree Swallows, heretofore almost absent in e-Bird for mid-June to Mid-July, consistently occurred in low numbers, ranging from one to five, and increased as the season progressed to as many as 60 by the end of the month. Finally, on July 20th, Bank Swallows began to appear (on July 6th a single bird presented

in 7 photos with a rear view obscuring the diagnostic breast band - a significant rarity mandating much study and review by others before reporting). On August 1st, due to a serendipitous north wind, nearly all swallows faced the road (and the cameraperson on said road). Subsequently, 20 Bank Swallows posed in a most satisfying manner, with nearly all in fine fashion showing the diagnostic dark breast band. It is now possible to slyly comment that for three weeks in a single location in Cattail Marsh only a single hour would consistently suffice to view all seven of the four summertime swallow species expected for Jefferson County.

The swallow population along the Bayou is richly varied, with a good mix of juveniles and adults. Dark Cave Swallows with reddish cheeks mix with lighter individuals with pale orange cheeks. Pale juvenile Cave Swallows occur that when viewed from the front in photos could be mistaken for Bank Swallow were it not for the large pale frontal patch above the beak and the less contrasting, much lighter breast band. Some south-facing dark juvenile Cliff Swallows might masquerade as Barn Swallows in adversely lit photos were it not for their orange rump patches and short tails. Occasional juvenile and dull female Tree Swallows can be seen, as well as frequent juvenile Purple Martins.

Necessarily, photo surveys of the swallows become an intense learning experience in identification. Because the swallows almost exclusively face into the prevailing southerly wind and away from the road, learning a range of field marks, particularly those seen from behind, is immensely helpful. One quickly becomes acquainted with features such as striped backs and orange to pale rumps for Cave/Cliff Swallows, long strongly forked tails and all dark backs for Barn Swallows (though most have a “handkerchief” on the side aspects of the back) and a paucity of features for Northern Rough-winged Swallows other than a pale brownish plumage and dull gray-brown cheeks. Undoubtedly a fair number of dull female or juvenile Tree Swallows (lacking any blue-green plumage) might be misidentified as Northern Rough-winged Swallows if their cheeks are not visible. Also of interest, apparent size of the swallows varies remarkably with posture. Consequently, some Bank Swallows viewed from behind might escape observation if mixed with larger swallows whose apparent sizes are diminished by posture. The list of field marks goes on, but the appeal of the swallows remain unabated.

Late afternoon, two to three hours before sunset, has seemed to be a good time for viewing the swallows. Awakened breezes add to the breaking of the heat of the day to ensure the mile long walk to the utility lines is tolerable. Be warned that Thursday visits by a cross-country runners club potentially degrade swallow numbers. The swallows can congregate on the lines along the whole length of the road, with many foraging in the marsh across the road and in the meadow right-of-way around the lines. Often, dozens of swallows, predominantly Barn Swallows, will perch easily viewable in the marsh grasses near the road. Finally the lengthening shade of the trees to the west provides a measure of comfort for the return trek following a satisfying swallow review.

Harlan Stewart

Field Trip to Bolivar Flats – 22 August 2015

The last time the Golden Triangle Audubon Society made a trip to Bolivar Flats, the trip was greeted with cold, wind and drenching rain. So what would the August field trip to this world class birding destination bring? How about heat and humidity and lots of birds!

Upon arriving at the flats, it was not immediately apparent if the weather would cooperate this trip any better than the last one. Dark clouds loomed in the distance threatening to cut short another outing to one of the premier shorebird sanctuaries in North America. Luckily, the rain held off and there was only the oppressive heat and humidity to deal with. And there were those birds! It started with a Long-billed Curlew, out largest shorebird strutting down the beach. Not long later, the curlew's close relative, a Whimbrel flew in and gave the group a look. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons must have had a good nesting season on the Bolivar peninsula as they seemed to be everywhere on the day including several on the beach. And all of this before even moving from the parking area!

Moving down the flats, Sanderlings were numerous and obvious. Most were approaching the pale plumage they will spend the winter in but a few still had traces of their rusty breeding plumage. Colorful Ruddy Turnstones were seen by all as were noisy Willets. A number of Western Sandpipers were located with their slightly drooping bills and a nearby Semipalmated Sandpiper allowed for easy comparison of these hard to separate species. Luckily, a few of the dowitchers on the beach called for the group revealing them to be Short-billed rather than the hard to separate Long-billed (though Short-billed is the more expected species on the flats). Marbled Godwits showed off their long, slightly upturned bills as they probed in the mud while huge Brown Pelicans floated by and Reddish Egrets danced in the surf (both dark and light morphs). A single stocky shorebird with a drooping bill caught the attention of the group and, after closer examination, it proved to be a Dunlin. Dunlins are a common sight on beaches in southeast Texas in the fall and winter but this bird was about a month early!

Plovers are always a target of any trip to Bolivar Flats as it is one of the best locations anywhere to observe the small plovers of North America. Piping Plovers were the first of the group located and proved easy to see despite their endangered status. A couple of the Piping Plovers were even color banded, part of a study (or studies) to track the migration and wintering sites for several breeding populations. Slightly larger Wilson's Plovers were also a common sight on the day. Wilson's Plovers nest on the Texas coast and are just as rare (if not more rare) than Piping Plovers but have, so far, been denied endangered species status. Darker Semipalmated Plovers were common but pale Snowy Plovers were quite elusive, though they were eventually found. Large Black-bellied Plovers were seen in all of their plumage variations from dull gray winter plumage to dapper black, white and gray breeding plumage and several stages in between. Another bird that caught the eye of the group appeared at first to be another Black-bellied Plover in transitional plumage but something about it looked a little off. The dainty bill, some of the plumage characteristics,

it all pointed toward an American Golden-Plover. The beach is not exactly typical habitat for this species and they are scarce anywhere in the area in the fall but this was certainly an interesting looking bird!

Gulls and terns were found on the flats in some numbers as expected. Large Herring Gulls loafed on the beach with many smaller Laughing Gulls and a few Ring-billed Gulls. Caspian Terns with their large red bills were easily found on the day which is not always the case while the similar Royal Terns with their more orange bills were numerous as always. Forster's Terns were scarce on the flats but Least Terns were more easily seen. A few Black Terns and Sandwich Terns were also seen by the group. More exciting was a flyby of a cooperative Black Skimmer, showing off its beautiful black and white plumage and its odd orange bill to the assembled birders.

Moving on from the flats, the birders explored more good bird habitat on the peninsula. Common Nighthawk and Western Kingbird perched along Rettillon Road. Fort Travis Park was the lunch stop for the group but it also produced Magnificent Frigatebirds soaring overhead, Yellow Warblers in a thicket and a few Pectoral Sandpipers feeding in the wet fields, as well as a good number of Marbled Godwits. Port Bolivar offered up several Clapper Rails and both Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers to the day list. Bob's Road had Roseate Spoonbills and a Little Blue Heron but Yacht Basin Road and Rollover Pass produced disappointing results.

The last stop of the day was to the Boy Scout Woods Sanctuary in High Island. This is a legendary migration hotspot in the spring but it can offer up some nice birds during fall migration as well. During the heat of this particular August afternoon, the birds were pretty hard to come by but there were a few highlights. A sharp, metallic chip note alerted the birders to the presence of a waterthrush at Prothonotary Pond. A little diligent searching soon produced the Northern Waterthrush the group was hearing. Perhaps a little less expected than the Louisiana Waterthrush this early in the fall but not that unusual. So what else should birders expect at a place called Prothonotary Pond? How about two Prothonotary Warblers? These two bright golden birds seemed the perfect end to another great birding day on the Bolivar Peninsula. It just shows that, with a little cooperation from the weather, all manner of great birds are possible in one of the best birding areas in the country!

The following species were recorded by the trip leaders:

Mottled Duck (14); Blue-winged Teal(1); Magnificent Frigatebird (5); Neotropic Cormorant (5); Brown Pelican (100); Great Blue Heron (2); Great Egret (4); Snowy Egret (14); Little Blue Heron(1); Tricolored Heron (3); Reddish Egret (8); Cattle Egret (1); Green Heron (2); Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (22); White Ibis (3); Roseate Spoonbill (6); Turkey Vulture(5); Osprey (1); Clapper Rail (9); Black-bellied Plover (6); American Golden-Plover (1?); Snowy Plover (2); Wilson's Plover (20); Semipalmated Plover (50); Piping Plover(10); Killdeer (2); Black-necked Stilt (1); Spotted Sandpiper (3); Solitary Sandpiper(1); Greater Yellowlegs(1); Willet (13); Whimbrel (1); Long-billed Curlew (5); Marbled

Godwit (45); Ruddy Turnstone (8); Sanderling (75); Semipalmated Sandpiper (1); Western Sandpiper (2); Pectoral Sandpiper (5); Dunlin (1); Short-billed Dowitcher (45); Laughing Gull (80); Ring-billed Gull (5); Herring Gull (2); Least Tern (6); Caspian Tern (9); Black Tern (7); Common Tern (1); Forster's Tern (7); Royal Tern (35); Sandwich Tern (2); Black Skimmer (2); Common Nighthawk (4); Western Kingbird (1); Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (2); Barn Swallow (2); Carolina Wren (1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (1); European Starling (40); Northern Waterthrush (1); Prothonotary Warbler (2); Yellow Warbler (2); Northern Cardinal (1); Red-winged Blackbird (5); Eastern Meadowlark (3); Great-tailed Grackle (10); 95 species.

Steve Mayes

[Ed. Note: We sent details and photos of the color banded Piping Plovers to the central clearing house for color banded Piping Plover. Here is what they have told us:

One was banded as a one-day-old chick on 5 July 2012 in

Beaver Creek Bay, Lake Sakakawea, ND.

Another was banded as an adult on 4 June 2014 on the Missouri River near Bismarck, ND.

A third bird (with only a numbered "flag" on its leg) was also banded on the Missouri River in North Dakota.

If you encounter a color banded Piping Plover – and somewhere between 10 and 20 percent of the Piping Plovers that we see along the Upper Texas Coast are banded – take photographs if at all possible, because it is a lot easier to be sure of the color combination and positions of the bands in a photograph – and send details (location and date) and photos by email to piping.plover@usace.army.mil. They will very promptly send you as much information as possible on the bird(s) in question. The email address is established as a permanent address for reporting color banded plovers. The current coordinator is Jared A. Stirling, Biologist, US Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, Threatened and Endangered Species Section, NE Hwy 121, PO Box 710, Yankton, SD 57078.]

Bird Sightings – August 2015

In this section of the Newsletter, we now generally limit the report to birds justifiably shown as rare or very rare on the published Upper Texas Coast checklist for the week of the sighting, but we also try to mention any particularly high numbers as well as any sightings that may be of special interest for reasons other than those mentioned.

We have reviewed all credible eBird and other submitted records for the Texas counties we have always covered – Angelina, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Sabine, San Augustine and Tyler. We also reviewed, looking for very rare or vagrant species only, records for nearby counties or parts of counties that are easily accessible to and often birded by birders in our core Golden Triangle Audubon area. These are Chambers, Galveston (High Island and Bolivar only) and Liberty counties in Texas, and Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes (west of the Calcasieu River only) in Louisiana.

The format of the listing is Species – Date – County-more precise location if available – (number) – Observer(s) with sometimes a comment on reason it is noteworthy.

This month's report presented many unusual issues. August historically, apart from the last few days, has possibly been the least birded month of the year in our area. But things are slowly changing, especially in respect of Sabine Woods. A low insect population this August, probably associated with the relatively dry early part of the month may well have helped this year, but the reports are showing the interesting selection of birds that passes through in August. This increased birding activity has not extended to other local areas, and we have no reports at all from several of our core counties. Even coastal hotspots east (Peweto Woods in Louisiana) and west of us (High Island) seem not to attract many birders in August.

Seen in our core Counties (listed above)

Wood Duck	Aug 1 - 23	JEF-TP (up to 4) HS (rare in JEF in summer)
Blue-winged Teal	Aug 7-26	JEF-TP (numbers increased from 2 to 134) HS;
Magnif. Frigatebird	Aug 17	JEF-SW (2) JHH (rare in Jefferson Co.)
Glossy Ibis	Aug 4, 26	JEF-TP (1) HS
Upland Sandpiper	Aug 1-22	JEF-Doguet Turf Farm, Hwy90@TX326 (peak of 14 on Aug 22)
Buff-breast. S'piper	Aug 01-28	JEF-Doguet Turf Farm, Hwy90@TX326 (peak of 175 on Aug 22)
Semi-palm. S'piper	Aug 21	JEF-SRSP (1) L. & L. Bryan
	Aug 22	JEF-SRSP (3) Ron Weeks, Brad Lirette

Black-billed Cuckoo	Aug 27-28	JEF-SW (1) David Sarkozi, JHH
Whip-poor-Will	Aug 22	JEF-SW (1) Ron Weeks, Brad Lirette (rare in Jefferson Co)
	Aug 27	JEF-SW (1) Dennis Shepler, David Sarkozi
	Aug 28	JEF-SW (1) JHH
	Aug 29	JEF-SW (1) Bret Newton
Broad-tailed Humm.	Aug 23 on	JEF-Nederland (1) JJW
Rufous/Allen's Hum	Aug 22	JEF-Nederland (1) SM
E.Wood-Pewee	Aug 13	JEF-SW (2) JHH (early)
	Aug 14	TYL-BTNP Pitcher Plant Trl (1) Bob Dellinger
	Aug 18	JEF-SW (2) JHH (early migrants)
	Aug 21	JEF-SW (5) JHH (early migrants)

Nearby Counties (very rare species only)

Blue-winged Teal	Aug 21	CHA-ANWR (2)	Laurii Sines, Tobi Troxell
Amer. White Pelican	Aug 21	CHA-SPHW (230)	Winnie Burkett
Osprey	Aug 4	GAL-Bolivar Peninsula (1)	Andrew Orgill
Glossy Ibis	Aug 3	CHA ANWR (1)	Dwayne Litteer
Red-tailed Hawk	Aug 21	CHA-Fig Ridge Rd (1)	JAW
	Aug 25	CHA-ANWR (1)	Muhammad Farzan
	Aug 25	GAL-High Is (1)	Joel Throckmorton
Amer. Oystercatcher	Aug 15	CAM-Sabine Pass (1)	Lynn Hathaway, Marybeth Lima
Upland Sandpiper	Aug 14	CHA-SPHW (11)	Winnie Burkett
Whimbrel	Aug 1-22	GAL-Bolivar Flats (up to 5))	Multiple Obs.
Common Tern	Aug 15	CAM-Holly Beach (3)	Lynn Hathaway, Marybeth Lima
Belted Kingfisher	Aug 18	GAL-High Is, Smith Oaks (1)	Joel Throckmorton
E. Wood-Pewee	Aug 16	CHA-FM1406 (1)	Dan and Varick Cowell
Bell's Vireo	Aug 29	CAM-Johnson Bayou Hackberry Ridge (1)	Anonymous eBirder
Louisiana Waterthr.	Aug 14	CHA-SPHW (1)	Winnie Burkett
Prairie Warbler	Aug 12	CAM-Sabine NWR (3)	Lisa Miller and Jordan Satlet

Summary of Noteworthy Early Migrants at Sabine Woods

Chuck-will's-widow	First noted at August 2 (early!) with ten on August 27 and eight on August 28 (high numbers).
Whip-poor-will	One noted on August 27, 28 and 29.
Olive-sided Flycat.	First noted August 12 with 2-3 most days subsequently.
Yellow-bell. Flycat.	First noted August 9; 14 on and continuing.
Acadian Flycatcher	One on August 5, and seen through August 26, and one report August 29.
Traill's Flycatcher	Seen from August 5, with many calling and thus able to be identified as Alder or Willow. Both species identified
Least Flycatcher	One seen most days from August 5.
Gt Crest. Flycatcher	Large numbers this year with 21 on August 13, a day when there were more than 60 other flycatchers in the woods. Twelve reported on both August 27 and 28.
Eastern Kingbird	This species did not participate in the large flight on August 13, and, indeed, numbers have been quite modest so far.
Red-eyed Vireo	May of this species bypass us in the fall. The peak is normally the first three weeks in September. First detected in Sabine Woods Aug 12.

Swallows	Swallows are noted at Sabine Woods passing over. Numbers have been modest, but see the article elsewhere in this issue. We understand swallow numbers at Cattail Marsh have increased dramatically in the last few days of August.
Louisiana Waterthr.	As usual, Louisiana Waterthrushes migrated very early, with none having been seen after August 22.
Northern Waterthr.	Numbers in August have been modest, although most come through over a five or six week period that begins in the last few days of August.
Blue-wing. Warbler	Birds from August 13 through 23 were a few days earlier than usual.
Mourning Warbler	Although the migration window for this species is just beginning as we write this at the end of August, it is shaping up as a good year with six seen on each of August 25 and 26. The underbrush, especially <i>Lantana</i> , is less dense than usual, so seeing this species may well be easier.
Hooded Warbler	Good numbers passed through Aug 5 through August 26, and presumably there are more to come.
Yellow Warbler	As usual, one of the most numerous fall warblers, with multiple birds seem almost every day since August 2.
Canada Warbler	Often described as the most common warbler in the Woods in the early fall (although Yellow Warblers may often be actually more numerous), good numbers are starting to come through. First birds were seen August 13, and the species has been present almost every day since.
Yellow-breast. Chat	Numbers have been high August 25 through 29, and it will be interesting to see if numbers are maintained through the normal migration period, which extends to beyond the end of September.

Wood Storks

The now traditional site for this species in Jefferson County, south of Hwy 90 just east of the Liberty County line was host to good numbers again this August, peaking at 225 on August 13. The highest number reported from Anahuac NWR (usually they are in Shoveler Pond) this August was 33 on August 14, and the highest number from Smith Oaks in High Island was 56, also on August 14. Migrating flocks are typically seen at the Smith Point Hawk Watch site through mid-October. The 114 on August 21 was the highest reported so far.

Abbreviations used: ANWR – Anahuac NWR; BTNP – Big Thicket National Preserve; CAM – Cameron Parish, LA; CHA – Chambers County; CS – Christine Sliva; GAL – Galveston County; HAI – Hardin County; HS – Harlan Stewart; JAW – John Whittle; JB – Jessica Barry; JEF – Jefferson County; JHH – John Haynes; JJW – Jana and John Whittle; JM – John Mariani; MC – Michael Cooper; MDSP – Martin Dies State Park; ORA – Orange County; PI – Pleasure Island; RL – Randy Lewis; SPHW – Smith Point Hawk Watch; SRSP – Sea Rim State Park; SW – Sabine Woods.

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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. 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..>