

The Brown Pelican



The Newsletter of the Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Vol. 30 No 6

June 2024

Summer Break!

As usual, there are no membership meetings in June or July. Our next meeting will be on THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Garden Center, Tyrrell Park, Beaumont, Texas. Details of the program will be published in the next issue of the Brown Pelican and on our web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

We are always looking for programs that will be of interest to our members, so please let us know if you have a program to present, or know of someone who can.

The next issue of the *Brown Pelican* will be a combined July/August issue, to be published in early August.

Golden Triangle Audubon Facebook

We have a very active Golden Triangle Audubon group on Facebook, moderated by Jana Whittle and John Mariani. Our aim is to provide a space for people around the Golden Triangle to share pictures, sightings, and other information about birds, other nature, and local birding sites and habitats. This is a unique opportunity to share your pictures of birds with other members and followers of Golden Triangle Audubon. While we make a special effort to feature unusual birds seen in the Golden Triangle area or nearby, there are no hard and fast rules about what can be contributed. All levels of pictures are welcome, especially of less common birds, and there is a large number of followers from outside the immediate area! If you are looking for help with identification, please include the location and date of the picture, as both are important in narrowing the possibilities. You can send your contribution through a Facebook message or in an email directly to the moderators or to gtaudubon@aol.com.

The Brown Pelican

Vol. 29, No.6 June 2024
Issue number 306

Golden Triangle Audubon Society

Web Site for more information
www.goldentriangleaudubon.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2024)

President

Steve Mayes

Vice President

Dania Sanchez

Treasurer

Harlan Stewart

Secretary

John Whittle

Directors-at-Large

Girish Doshi

Sherry Gibson

John Haynes

Sheila Hebert

Thomas Hellweg

Gary Kelley

Christine Sliva

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Program

Jana Whittle

Field Trips

Steve Mayes

Conservation

Gary Kelley

Membership, Publicity

Denise Kelley

Education

Volunteer needed

Webmaster

Jeff Pittman (geojeff@geojeff.org)

Facebook Administrators

John Mariani

Jana Whittle

Newsletter Distribution

Mary Stafford

Newsletter Editor

John Whittle

(gtaudubon@aol.com)

The Brown Pelicans

published monthly except July by
the Golden Triangle Audubon
Society, P. O. Box 1292, Nederland,
Texas 77627-1292
email: gtaudubon@aol.com

Calendar of Events

Important Note: Field Trip notices published here are subject to last minute changes. Changes will always be posted on the web site at www.goldentriangleaudubon.org.

Future Programs and Field Trips.

Thursday August 15, 2024. Membership Meeting. Further details in next issue.)

Saturday August 24, 2024. Tentative Date. One week later than usual. Field Trip to Bolivar Flats. Meet the leaders at the vehicle barrier at Bolivar Flats at 8:30 a.m. Take Highway 124 south from Winnie about 20 miles through High Island. At the shoreline, turn right along Highway 87 and proceed approximately 25 miles through Gilchrist and Crystal Beach until you come to the intersection with Loop 108. At that intersection, turn left (south – the opposite direction from Loop 108) on Rettilon Road to the beach. If conditions permit, drive onto the sand and turn right to the vehicle barrier (about 1/2 mile). It is about a 90-minute drive from Beaumont or mid-County to the Flats (if you don't stop to bird on the way!)

Depending on the tide -- high tide is forecast for 7:29 a.m.-- it may not be far to walk to the water's edge.

Often, after birding the flats, the group proceeds to the Big Store or to Fort Travis to use the facilities and eat lunch. Many participants will bring their lunch, as options to purchase are limited.

The group may stop at Rollover Pass and may possibly visit High Island on the way home, checking there for very early southbound migrants

To park on the beach, you will need a Galveston County Beach Parking Permit, obtainable for \$10 from most merchants on the Peninsula. (The Big Store opens at 7:00 a.m.)

Thursday September 19, 2024. Membership Meeting. Details in the next issue of the *Brown Pelican* and on the web site nearer the time

Golden Triangle Audubon Facebook

Join us on Facebook! There is a Golden Triangle Audubon group on Facebook, moderated by Jana Whittle and John Mariani. Our aim is to provide a space for people around the Golden Triangle to share pictures, sightings, and other information about birds, other nature, and local birding sites and habitats. All levels of pictures are welcome, especially of less common birds. If you are looking for help with identification, please include the location and date of the picture, as both are important in narrowing the possibilities. Send your contribution through a Facebook message or an email to gtaudubon@aol.com.

Membership Dues

To simplify our record keeping, all memberships now run from January through December. Membership dues remain at \$20 per year. You may pay at any membership 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 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 on line and selecting our Chapter code (W25), we receive a rebate of the entire first year's national dues, and no Chapter dues are expected for that first year.



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

Audubon's Migratory Bird Initiative

From the Audubon web site, April 2024

Using the best available migration science to protect birds and the places they need across their full annual life cycles.

The mission of the Migratory Bird Initiative is to secure the future of migratory birds in the Western Hemisphere by reducing direct threats and protecting key places across the Americas in coordination with science, conservation and policy partners.

The Initiative brings together the latest spatial information on species distributions and movements across their annual cycles to identify priority areas for 458 species of migratory birds that regularly occur in the United States and Canada. We will use this information to define where and how to focus Audubon's conservation investments in order to protect, restore and manage key habitat and also mitigate threats along full migratory pathways for these species.

Audubon expects to achieve these goals by 1) consolidating and elevating the best-available migration science, filling research gaps and identifying real-time threats throughout annual cycle; 2) strengthening connections and cooperation among key stakeholders such as government agencies, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions and the Audubon network, and 3) informing policy advocacy at the local, state and federal level to drive science-based conservation.

Migratory birds face threats during all stages of the annual cycle, and these threats are accelerating. Fortunately, scientific data, particularly during migration, are accumulating; however, we need to act swiftly and collectively to protect birds and the places they need before the opportunities to do so disappear. Partnerships will be central to the success of the Migratory Bird Initiative, and Audubon looks forward to building and strengthening relationships with other key research and conservation organizations.

Comment and Opinion

Because of our location on the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico on the western side of the Central Flyway, we are in a particularly good position to monitor migration of many if not most species of North American neotropical songbirds in spring and fall. We ourselves sponsor organized counts, and nowadays we enter the data in eBird to make them readily available to all interested, as well as publishing compiled data. In pre-eBird days, we collected and compiled migration data and published it in our GTAS Newsletter. Issues of our Newsletter going back to 2000 are immediately available to anyone interested on our web-site.

In addition to songbird migration, our area sees shorebird migration, involving both winter resident species and a few passage migrants, and waterfowl migration, almost but not quite exclusively involving species that are winter residents in our area. There are organized shorebird monitoring programs, notably those associated with the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), a partnership coordinated by the Manomet Bird Observatory, Plymouth,

MA. Included is the 2000 US Shorebird Conservation Plan, with extensive support from the US Geological Survey (part of the Interior Department). Some shorebird monitoring is carried out by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (also part of the Interior Department), and Houston Audubon has an extensive program covering shorebirds on the Upper Texas Coast. Unfortunately, there appears not to be any overarching program to coordinate and publish all shorebird survey data.

May-June waterfowl (ducks and geese) surveys are conducted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Canadian Wildlife Service mostly using aerial surveys by fixed wing aircraft, and are focused on determining the breeding success of ducks and geese to inform the setting of limits on hunting of these species in the following fall and winter. Aerial surveys, while the only practical method to cover the areas where waterfowl breed and winter, lack the precision and detailed locality information that can be achieved by surveys conducted on the surface. However, detailed locality information would not be of value for species breeding in wide areas. Mid-winter waterfowl surveys are no longer conducted along the Texas coastal areas by FWS, and the surveys that are conducted are carried out by state wildlife agencies using their own survey designs and techniques.

Bird surveys are uniquely suitable to be carried out by volunteers, but unfortunately, those in overall charge of local federal and state refuges and management areas seem to have little interest in increasing the number of surveys conducted. Survey protocols do not need to be, and indeed should not be so detailed that potential volunteer participants decline to participate. Minimal wind and weather information and perhaps very general habitat information are acceptable. One important issue often is access which is usually not difficult to arrange. In our experience, the temptation of survey organizers, especially those working for governmental entities, is to require too many "extraneous" data elements, not directly related to the birds themselves. Christmas Count data, as a result of the number of years many have been conducted, are among the most valuable surveys. The area covered by each count, consciously selected by most compilers to cover as many habitat types as possible, is perhaps one serious drawback. Our migration counts cover an entire county and suffer from a similar drawback. Surveys conducted by multiple parties usually involve a trade-off between a larger area and greater consistency. Surveys conducted on approximately the same date over several years help average out wind and weather effects. The more years a survey has been conducted, the more valuable it is!

Looking at the brief description of the Audubon Initiative given, there is a concern that its managers will spend too much time "coordinating" with managers in other organizations, and too little time organizing counts and promoting habitat work suggested by surveys.

John A. Whittle

Spring 2024 Migration Count

In a rainy period in early May, count day provided a break following the passage of a weak cold front the evening before. This did result in a day with a good selection of migrants on the coast at Sabine Woods. The weather behind the front was good.

The total of eighteen observers was one or two more than in most recent years. (This number includes only those actively participating in the count.) We reviewed all other checklists submitted to eBird for Jefferson County for the day, picking up only those species that passed an initial scrutiny) and that were not seen by any other observer. We also adjusted the numbers of individual birds when the total reported by a "non-participating" observer was higher than that reported by any other observer.

Finding Black-bellied Whistling Ducks is expected, but we think we detect a more scattered distribution. The birds were in pairs and small groups instead of what has been the norm of flock of at least half a dozen. Blue-winged Teal were seen in normal numbers being one of the few ducks that are "true" migrants through our area, spring and fall. Mottled Ducks, our essentially non-migratory "regular" ducks were found in normal numbers. A few more lingering Lesser Scaup than usual were detected.

White-winged Doves were up some after three years of lower-than-normal numbers. A Black-billed Cuckoo was seen, something that happens only occasionally. Previous count sightings were 2013 and 2007.

Both King and Clapper Rails were somewhat low. Inexplicably, no Soras were reported, somewhat surprising in view of the frequency of the characteristic calls across the highway from Sabine Woods this year. Certainly worthy of note were the 104 Purple Gallinules reported from Cattail Marsh this year. Unfortunately, this is probably largely due to the species liking of Water Hyacinth which tends to become invasive, and has done so at Cattail Marsh.

American Avocets are winter residents in Southeast Texas, but often some can be found on count day and on into the summer. Sometimes, a large flock is still present. But this year, a more modest two were found. Snowy Plovers used to be easy to find on Sea Rim SP but the lack of much beach after a long spell of winds with a strong southerly component may have caused them to be less conspicuous, and it was disappointing not to find any. In our opinion, Semi-palmated Plovers tend to be visible later in the spring as they seem to depart from their wintering grounds later than Piping Plovers. Nevertheless, both species were found, as were Wilson's Plovers, summer residents in the area. The relatively narrow beaches presumably do not provide a much habitat as areas further west along the coast. Piping Plovers are present during the winter, but on most counts we have found one of the last remaining, as we did this year.

One Whimbrel was a low number for this count, and the absence of passage migrant Hudsonian Godwits was unusual. Sanderlings and Dunlin were both low. White-rumped Sandpipers are well known as very late migrants, but they generally prefer wet areas away from the immediate coast, often in large numbers, as this year

One Wilson's Phalarope was found. We do not find this

species on the count every year. An unusually large number of Spotted Sandpipers was recorded.

Ring-billed Gulls are very common in winter, but only a small number is still present by the time May comes around and finding only one is normal. Least Tern numbers were low. A very late (for Jefferson County) Common Loon was seen from Pilot Station Road (South 1st Ave). One flock of 25 American White Pelicans, still having not departed on migration north, was the first seen in recent counts.

More comprehensive coverage of Tyrrell Park and Cattail Marsh produced 13 Least Bitterns and there were 11 more in other areas give a record total of 24. All the usual egret species and herons were found in good numbers except Cattle Egrets (now officially Western Cattle Egrets), which were low, confirming our anecdotal opinion that numbers are down significantly this year. The exceptional number of Purple Gallinules is noted above.

We missed White-tailed Kite this year, but made up for that with four Swallow-tailed Kites and nine Mississippi Kites. Both of the latter species are doing well in Southeast Texas. One Bald Eagle was normal, although it being in West Jefferson County and not Cattail Marsh was not. One White-tailed Hawk in the western part of the county shows that any (further) eastern expansion, if any, of its range is happening very slowly.

Ten Pileated Woodpeckers was much higher than on recent counts, all in the mid-north and northeast parts of the county.

The count takes place during the peak of small/medium-sized flycatcher migration. Two Olive-sided Flycatchers -- or possibly the same one that relocated -- were recorded, the first since 2015 on the count. (This species is seen much more commonly and easily in the fall!). Thirty-two Eastern Wood-Pewees was a very high number. Five Acadian Flycatchers marked a return of the species to the count after an absence of two years. Two other *Empidonax* flycatchers were reported as Yellow-bellied, and two as Traill's Flycatcher (Willow/Alder) were reported without adequate details for either, and are shown as *Empidonax* species in the table. After a series of years with relatively low Eastern Kingbird numbers, to find 81 was encouraging.

Thirty-eight Loggerhead Shrikes was a little above the six-year average, but still very significantly below the numbers of 20 years ago. Bank Swallow numbers were very high, as were Cliff Swallows, but Barn Swallow numbers were best described as normal. It appears count day coincided with heavy Bank and Cliff Swallow migration. Tree Swallows, which are mostly winter residents were on the high side of normal.

Thrushes (in the widest sense) were on the high side. Gray-cheeked were high, Swainson's very high. Wood Thrushes were recorded for the first time in six years on the count. Many years in the past, a significant Cedar Waxwing flock could be relied on to be around the mulberry trees, but the flock has decreased and only three were found on the count. Yellow-headed Blackbirds seem to have been especially numerous this year in Southeast Texas, and 14 in McFaddin NWR was indicative of that. Most have migrated west out of

the area by count day. Seventeen Bobolinks in McFaddin was also noteworthy.

On all migration counts, special interest is focused on warbler species. Spring 2024 was a count where conditions were right for a good diversity of warblers. The list below shows 19 warbler species. This is a very high number for a count well into May. Two species stand out. Two Blackpoll Warblers would most years be extremely unexpected. However, Spring 2024 will be remembered as the Spring of the Blackpoll. (Usually a rare find, Blackpolls were seen in numbers almost every day through the migration season.) Blackpolls are "late" migrants, and are believed to mostly migrate in spring from northern South America across the Caribbean and through Florida, and thus are less common the further west one goes. The prevalence of a strong easterly component in the winds across the Gulf this year may partly explain the abnormal numbers. Six Canada Warblers was also abnormally high for spring migration (and this continued for the rest of May). This species migrates very late in the spring season (and is much more readily seen quite early in the fall). Wintering in Central America and Colombia, this species likely migrates mostly circum-Gulf.

Northern Waterthrushes were especially numerous, probably significantly facilitated as a result of the large amount of favorable habitat following significant rains in the week or so before count day. Thirty-eight Bay-breasted Warblers was a record for the count. The species has usually migrated over a very short period, typically in the last couple of days of April or first day or two of May, meaning that when May 11 rolls around, it is not unusual that only one or two, or even none are detected on this count. It was a good day for many other warbler migrants and this was evident for other species such as the American Redstart (23), always quite numerous, and Chestnut-sided Warblers (11), not seen as often on the count, and often not seen at all. Count day is often too early to find Canada Warbler, never numerous in the spring, so five was not only a record in modern times, and the first since 2015.

While a total of 177 species was not a record, it was a high number. The numbers of hours and miles were higher than in most recent years, and the number of individuals tallied was high. The weather was good, and that helped also.

Species recorded on the Count

WHISTLING-DUCK, Black-bellied (123), WHISTLING-DUCK, Fulvous (57), DUCK, Wood (2), TEAL, Blue-winged (57), DUCK, Mottled (34), SCAUP, Lesser (7), GREBE, Pied-billed (5), PIGEON, Rock (57), DOVE, Eurasian Collared- (18), DOVE, Inca (7), DOVE, White-winged (78), DOVE, Mourning (163), CUCKOO, Yellow-billed (20), CUCKOO, Black-billed (1), NIGHTHAWK, Common (34), SWIFT, Chimney (23), HUMMINGBIRD, Ruby-throated (7), RAIL, King (3), RAIL, Clapper (10), GALLINULE, Common (102), COOT, American (64), GALLINULE, Purple (107), STILT, Black-necked (160), AVOCET, American (2), PLOVER, Black-bellied (13), PLOVER, Wilson's (2), PLOVER, Semipalmated (6), PLOVER, Piping (1), KILLDEER (98), WHIMBREL (1), TURNSTONE, Ruddy (18), SANDPIPER, Stilt (4), SANDERLING (64), DUNLIN (22), SANDPIPER, Least (21), SANDPIPER, White-rumped (147), SANDPIPER, Semipalmated (9), SANDPIPER, Western (1), SANDPIPER, Peep (200), DOWITCHER, Long-billed (25), DOWITCHER species (8), PHALAROPE, Wilson's (1),

SANDPIPER, Spotted (15), YELLOWLEGS, Greater (8), WILLET (20), YELLOWLEGS, Lesser (22), GULL, Laughing (94), GULL, Ring-billed (1), TERN, Least (16), TERN, Black (128), TERN, Common (1), TERN, Forster's (12), TERN, Royal (9), LOON, Common (1), ANHINGA (4), CORMORANT, Neotropic (148), PELICAN, American White (25), PELICAN, Brown (78), BITTERN, Least (24), HERON, Great Blue (8), EGRET, Great (147), EGRET, Snowy (166), HERON, Little Blue (66), HERON, Tricolored (39), EGRET, Cattle (541), HERON, Green (49), NIGHT-HERON, Black-crowned (20), NIGHT-HERON, Yellow-crowned (35), IBIS, White (314), IBIS, White-faced (74), IBIS, Plegadis species (9), SPOONBILL, Roseate (48), VULTURE, Black (157), VULTURE, Turkey (87), OSPREY (5), KITE, Swallow-tailed (4), KITE, Mississippi (9), HARRIER, Northern (1), EAGLE, Bald (1), HAWK, Red-shouldered (9), HAWK, Swainson's (4), HAWK, Red-tailed (6), OWL, Barn (2), OWL, Great Horned (2), KINGFISHER, Belted (2), WOODPECKER, Red-headed (1), WOODPECKER, Red-bellied (31), WOODPECKER, Downy (30), WOODPECKER, Pileated (10), CARACARA, Crested (16), FLYCATCHER, Olive-sided (2), WOOD-PEWEE, Eastern (32), FLYCATCHER, Acadian (5), *Empidonax* Flycatcher (4), FLYCATCHER, Great Crested (19), KINGBIRD, Eastern (81), FLYCATCHER, Scissor-tailed (26), SHRIKE, Loggerhead (38), VIREO, White-eyed (31), VIREO, Philadelphia (4), VIREO, Red-eyed (24), JAY, Blue (69), CROW, American (43), CROW, Fish (25), CROW, Species (18), SWALLOW, N. Rough-winged (16), MARTIN, Purple (120), SWALLOW, Tree (198), SWALLOW, Bank (434), SWALLOW, Barn (187), SWALLOW, Cliff (883), SWALLOW, Cave (371), SWALLOW species (6), CHICKADEE, Carolina (51), TITMOUSE, Tufted (16), WREN, Marsh (35), WREN, Carolina (57), GNATCATCHER, Blue-gray (4), BLUEBIRD, Eastern (62), VEERY (7), THRUSH, Gray-cheeked (3), THRUSH, Swainson's (20), THRUSH, Wood (4), ROBIN, American (7), CATBIRD, Gray (12), THRASHER, Brown (13), MOCKINGBIRD, Northern (347), STARLING, European (312), WAXWING, Cedar (3), FINCH, House (43), SPARROW, Chipping (1), SPARROW, Lark (2), SPARROW, Seaside (26), SPARROW, Nelson's (3), SPARROW, Savannah (1), CHAT, Yellow-breasted (2), BLACKBIRD, Yellow-headed (14), BOBOLINK (17), MEADOWLARK, Eastern (109), MEADOWLARK species (1), ORIOLE, Orchard (42), ORIOLE, Baltimore (1), BLACKBIRD, Red-winged (717), COWBIRD, Bronzed (1), COWBIRD, Brown-headed (99), GRACKLE, Common (86), GRACKLE, Boat-tailed (133), GRACKLE, Great-tailed (235), GRACKLE, Gt./Boat-tailed (182), OVENBIRD (6), WARBLER, Worm-eating (1), WATERTHRUSH, Northern (12), WARBLER, Black-and-white (8), WARBLER, Prothonotary (5), WARBLER, Tennessee (5), YELLOWTHROAT, Common (60), WARBLER, Hooded (6), REDSTART, American (23), PARULA, Northern (7), WARBLER, Magnolia (25), WARBLER, Bay-breasted (38), WARBLER, Blackburnian (3), WARBLER, Yellow (13), WARBLER, Chestnut-sided (11), WARBLER, Blackpoll (2), WARBLER, Pine (7), WARBLER, Yellow-throated (1), WARBLER, Black-throated Green (2), WARBLER, Canada (6), TANAGER, Summer (3), TANAGER, Scarlet (2), CARDINAL, Northern (172), GROSBEAK, Rose-breasted (2), GROSBEAK, Blue (1), BUNTING, Indigo (8), BUNTING, Painted (9), DICKCISSEL (98), SPARROW, House (61), IBIS, White-faced/Glossy hybrid (1), TOTAL INDIVIDUALS (10595), TOTAL SPECIES (177), Number of Observers (18), Number of Parties (13), Number of Party-Hours - Foot (39.9), Number of Party-Hours - Car (51.8), Number of Party-Hours - Stationary (2), Total Party-hours (93.7), Number of Party-Miles - Foot (20.7), Number of Party-Miles - Car (418.5), Total Party-Miles (439.1).

John A. Whittle

Bird Sightings – May 2024

For this column, we review, looking for rare and very rare species, all credible eBird and other records reported to us from nearby Texas counties – Angelina, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Newton, Orange, Sabine, San Augustine and Tyler. We also review records for Chambers, Galveston, Harris and Liberty Counties in Texas, and Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes in Louisiana.

The format of the listing is Species – Date – County-and brief location information if available – (number) – Observer(s). If more precise location information is needed, it can often be obtained by using the bird species map feature to

find the sighting in eBird, opening the checklist, and using the map function to display the location as precisely as the observer provided.

Commentary: A rather typical May report including a good number of lingering migrants, especially several species of warbler. Black-whiskered Vireo, Great Kiskadee and Yellow-headed Blackbirds were also prominent. Yellow-headed Blackbirds are at the eastern edge of their range in the area and local sightings are likely mostly migrating birds straying a little east, especially along the coast. They were particularly numerous late this spring.

Local Counties (listed above)

Gadwall	May 23-25	JEF-TP (1) HS
Surf Scoter	May 1	JEF-McFaddin NWR (1 fem) JAW
Limpkin	May 9,	ORA-Boomtown RV Park (1) Justin Bosler
Black-whiskered Vireo	May 4-6	JEF-SW (1) Ashley Fuselier, mult obs
Yellow-rumped Warbler	May 18	SAB-Hemphill (1) David Bell
Cape May Warbler	May 1	HAI Sandylands (1) Art Mackinnon
Western Tanager	May 1-3	JEF-SW (1) mult obs

Nearby Counties

Snow Goose	thru May11	HAS-Bliss Measows Park Padanea (1) Dale Wolck
Red-breasted Merganser	May 31	HAS-Horsepen Creek PK (1) Margaret Farese
Common Ground Dove	May 29	GAL-Galveston Is SP (1) Clayton Leopold
Black-billed Cuckoo	May 25-26	CHA-ANWR Jackson Wood Lot (1) Winnie Burkett, Orlando Fornseca-
Eastern Whip-poor-will	May 2	CAM-Lacassine NWR Wildlife Loop (1) Marc Allaire
Black-chinned Humm'bird	May 17	CHA-ANWR Jackson Woodlot (1) WE
Virginia Rail	May 19	GAL-Frenchtown Rd (1) Winnie Burkett
Piping Plover	May 23	CAM-Rutherford Beach (1) (1) Charlotte Chehotsky-
Snowy Plover	May 18-30	HAS-El Jardin Park (1) mult obs
Purple Sandpiper	May 1-5	GAL-Texas City Dike (1) continuing bird
Wilson's Snipe	May 3	HAI-J P Landing Park (1) Kendra Kocab, mult obs
Solitary Sandpiper	May 30	GAL-Jamaica Beach (1) Donald Verser
Bonaparte's Gull	May 4-5	CAM-Holly Beach (2) mult obs
Iceland (Thayer;s) Gull	May 19	CAM-Rutherford Beach (1) Daniel Lane
	May 20	GAL-San Luis Pass (1) Grant Parajuli
Glaucous Gull	May 9	GAL- 6mile Beach (1) Jamie Schubret
Common Loon	May 21-31	HAS-Horsepen Creek Park (1) mult obs
Masked Booby	May 8	GAL-Galveston IS SP (1) Kyle O'Haver
Northern Harrier	May 21	HAS-IH10 nr Gessner (1) Paul Goodman
American Bittern	May 13	GAL-Galveston Is SP (1) Howard Laidlaw

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	May 4	HAS-Rock Creek (1) Bob and Sharon Edelen
	May 17-18	GAL-HI Hooks Woods (1) Daniel Wolf, Grace Yaron. WE
American Kestrel	May 4	CAM--Johnson Bayou Long Beach Rd (1) mult obs
Belted Kingfisher	May 2	CHA-Smith Pt (1) Carolyn Broussard, Janet Landry
Great Kiskadee	May 1-11	GAL--57-Acre Park (1) continuing bird
	May 3	GAL-Jamaica Beach (1) mult obs
	May 13	GAL-8-mile Rd (1) Howard Laidlaw
	May 17	GAL-HI TX124 (1) WE, Grace Yaros
Tropical Kingbird	May 25	GAL-HI Boy Scout Woods (1) WE, Winnie Burkett
Couch's Kingbird	May 4-28	HAS-Peckham Park (2) Margaret Farese, Michelle Plamondon, mult obs
Bell's Vireo	May 18	HAS-IH10/Kirkwood Rd (1) Karl Poetz
Blue-headed Vireo	May 11	CAM-Willow Is (1)Lawrence Datnoff, Michele Giroir
Black-whiskered Vireo	May 5	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Esme Rosen, James Smithers
	May 11	CHA-ANWR Jackson Woodlot (1) Brian Berry, Bob Friedrichs
	May 29-31	GAL-Galveston Is SP (1) Clayton Leopold, mult obs
Tree Swallow	May 17	GAL-HI Boy Scout Woods (1) WE
Red-breasted Nuthatch	May 1	GAL-HI Smith Oaks(1) Douglas and Isabel Fisher
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	May 11	CAM-Peveto Woods(1) mult obs
	May 31	GAL-HI (1) WE
Ruby-crowned Kinglet (1)	May 17	HAS-Rice Univ (1) Cin-Ty-lee
American Goldfinch	May 1	GAL-Lafitte's Cove ((1) Bradley Ober, Christine Boodley
Chestnut-collared Longspur	May 1-6	GAL-Yacht Basin Road (1) continuing bird
Yellow-headed Blackbird	May 4	CAM-Holly Beach (1) mult obs
	May 2-3	HAS-El Franco Lee Park (4) mult obs
	May 8	HAS-Freedom Park (4) Justin Bosler
	May 9	HAS;-Geo Bush Park (2) Dan Coleman
	May 9,	HAS-J P Landing Park (2) mult obs
	May 11	CAM-Willow Island (1) Esme Rosei
	May 11	HAS-Space Centerr Blvd (16) Karl Hoeffka-

	May 12	HAS-Houston Spaceport (15) Steve Rogow
	May 18	HAS-Baytown NC (1), Andrew Hamlett, Richard Rulander
	May 17-18	HAS-El Franco Lee Park (1) Marie Asscherick, Justin Bower, Dana Turner
Northern Waterthrush	May 24	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) WE
	May 30	GAL-HI (1) WE
Nashville Warbler	May 11	CAM-Willow Is (1) James Smithers, Katie Barnes
	May 11	GAL-Lafitte's Cove (1) Margaret Pierce
	May 17	GAL-HI Boy Scout Woods (1) WE
Prairie Warbler	May 5	CAM-Peveto Woods (1) Esme Rosen, James Smithers
Yellow Warbler	May 28	GAL-S of FM2004/FM646 (1) Kyle O'Haver, Ron Weeks, Brad Lirette

Black-thr. Gray Warbler	May 3	GAL-HI Smith Oaks (1) Tina Overstreet
Western Tanager	May 29	LIB-FM1008 area N of Kennefick (1) Colette Micallef
Lazuli Bunting	May 17	GAL-HI Boy Scout Woods (1) WE

Abbreviations used: ANG – Angelina County; ANWR – Anahuac NWR; CAL – Calcasieu Parish; CAM – Cameron Parish; CHA – Chambers County; GAL – Galveston County; HAI – Hardin County; HAS – Harris County; HI – High Island; HS – Harlan Stewart; JAS – Jasper County; JAW – John Whittle; JEF – Jefferson County; JHH – John Haynes; LIB – Liberty County; NEW – Newton County; ORA – Orange County; PI – Pleasure Is, Port Arthur; SAA – San Augustine Co.; SAB – Sabine County; SM – Steve Mayes, SRSP - Sea Rim State Park; SW – Sabine Woods; TP – Tyrrell Park including Cattail Marsh; TYL – Tyler County; WE – Wyatt Egelhoff; WJC – West Jefferson County.

No Organized Summer Field Trips this Year

Hardin County

We normally run a field trip in late May or early June to the area of Hardin County just north of Silsbee to look for the breeding songbirds of the area -- Swainson's Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Acadian Flycatcher with the lower possibility of Kentucky, Prothonotary and Yellow-throated Warblers, as well as White-eyed, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos. Both Indigo and Painted Buntings also nest in the area. We scheduled this trip for May 18, much earlier than usual to avoid the Memorial Day weekend. However, the roads in the area we cover are mostly dirt roads that traverse low-water areas and crossings and we reluctantly decided it was not prudent to attempt this trip in the immediate aftermath of heavy rains while there was still considerable flooding of the rivers and creeks of the area. Attempts to reschedule were not successful, perhaps just as well because both of the following weekends saw heavy rains and more flooding that would likely have necessitated cancellation anyway.

If you miss the breeding birds, the first two weeks of June are not usually too late, although as this is written on the first two or three days of June, there have been several outbreaks of heavy rain, and we do not advise attempting to bird the dirt roads right now. If it does ever dry up for long enough, you could explore the area on your own. Our trips normally focus on Gore Store Road (from FM92 to the Beech Creek crossing -- the first major creek one encounters), and Firetower Road south from Gore Store Road to FM1122. Driving these usually quiet roads may be productive in the early morning. By the middle of June, most of the nesting birds will be feeding young. However, the young will fledge and disperse shortly after.

Liberty County

Another trip that we usually scheduled is one to the area of Liberty County around the town of Liberty. This started many years ago as simply a trip to view Swallow-tailed Kites as they assembled in the Trinity River bottoms bisected by Highway 90 between Liberty and Dayton prior to migrating south for the winter. Having a leader as we have done in the

past does not add much to the trip, and, indeed, may be counter-productive from a traffic/parking perspective. You can more easily look for the kites from a single vehicle. If you are birding on Highway 90, be careful to pull as far off the right of way as you can if you stop. The highway suffered damage in the recent floods, so look out for repair work that may not yet be completed!

The kites nest in the United States some distance inland from the Gulf and Atlantic Coast as far north as the Carolinas, and (in the greatest numbers) in the whole of Florida, as well as in northern South America. They likely spread over most of northern Brazil (Amazonia), but the published eBird maps show them around the circumference of the Amazonia region, as well as in Colombia and Ecuador, and also the northeast coasts in Venezuela, Suriname, and French Guiana. eBird shows no reports in the center of Amazonia except around Manaus, but this is almost certainly an artifact of the lack of any birding in this vast area!

They congregate in the Trinity bottoms starting in late July and continue in the area through mid-August. Much of the bottoms does not have any good road access, although a good view to the north can be had from Liberty Municipal Park. The largest number of kites we know of was seen on 26 July 2007 when 47 were visible from US90. More recently, 12 were visible on 6 August 2022, but usually less than about five are seen on any given day. These are beautiful birds, and often are over the trees on either side of US90.

The Knobby Knees trail of the Trinity River NWR starts out in the northeast corner of the Park, and walking it has produced a few warblers in years past. However, we have concerns that the trail in August is too hot and humid, and have decided not to do it this year. If you feel you are able to safely walk it yourself, be careful and do not go alone.

Fall Trips -- Bolivar Flats

We do plan as usual to run a trip to Bolivar Flats in August to kick off our fall trip program. However, the Saturday following the membership meeting calendar this year would be August 17, which may be too early for the birds, so we are tentatively planning on August 24.

Golden Triangle Audubon Society
P. O. Box 1292
Nederland, Texas 77627-1292

FIRST CLASS MAIL

NATIONAL AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Form

To join the National Audubon Society, please complete this form and return with Introductory Membership fee of \$20 (payable to the National Audubon Society, or indicate you wish to be billed) to National Audubon Society, Memberships, PO Box 97194, Washington, DC 20090-7194. To use this form to give a membership as a gift, please complete the form and indicate your name in the appropriate space. Payment should accompany gift memberships.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Gift from: _____

Check enclosed Please bill me

Golden Triangle Audubon C4ZW250Z

Brown Pelican SUBSCRIPTION/ MEMBERSHIP FORM

Mail to Golden Triangle Audubon Society (GTAS), P. O. Box 1292, Nederland, Texas 77627-1292 or bring to any Membership Meeting. National Audubon Society (NAS) members with addresses within our official territory are automatically GTAS members without further payment, but are asked to contribute \$20 if they are able since we only receive a very small amount from NAS after the first year.

Subscriptions from NAS Members with mailing addresses outside our official territory, and others wishing to subscribe are \$20 per year (Jan-Dec).

Name: _____

Address: _____

eMail or Tel No: _____

RARE BIRD ALERTS

Unfortunately, almost all the local and regional telephone Rare Bird Alerts have been discontinued in favor of various forms of 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.

Many rare bird sightings in Texas are posted on Facebook Texbirds or on the TEXBIRDS listserv. Archives of the listserv are at www.freelists.org/archive/texbirds. It is not necessary to subscribe to view the archives, which include all recent postings.

Detailed information/maps on birding sites in Texas is available on the Web at <http://www.texasbirds.org/birdingLocations.php>. This leads you to the maps of the various eBird hotspots. You can also subscribe (free) on eBird for email alerts for all rare birds reported in a specific county.