



The Roadrunner

Central Texas Audubon Society Issue 262 September 2011

President's Message

Welcome to a new year with Audubon. This year we look forward to programs and activities that will give us an opportunity to tell others about what we do and ask them to join us in our efforts. I'd like to express our thanks to Audubon Foundation of Texas for awarding us a \$1000 grant to purchase materials to help with education programs that we give as well as outreach activities-i.e. Earth Day, Gardener's Gathering, and Children's Garden Fair. We have received grants previously which provided for a projector, binoculars and field guides for programs, and bird seed for the Carleen Bright Arboretum. Audubon Foundation is a recipient of contributions from Earth Share Texas which received a check from HEB in the amount of \$62,000 for its tear pad campaign. I know that many of us give to Earth Share during that time. If you go to <http://www.earthshare-texas.org>, you can learn more about other ways to contribute to this worthwhile organization. Many companies allow their employees to contribute through payroll deduction. Reliant Energy contributes \$1 to \$2 when customers sign up to contribute on their monthly bill. Audubon Texas is only one of many organizations who benefit from Earth Share. Please find a way to participate in Earth Share Week from September 23-30. One of our local venues for participation will be Public Lands Day at Lake Waco for a cleanup.

I look forward to seeing you for our first meeting on September 20 at 7:00 PM at the Arboretum for our first meeting of the year. Please join us!! Janet

• September 20 first meeting:

The meeting is on Tuesday, **September 20 at 7:30pm**, come get reacquainted!

A bird walk begins at 6:30. Come early and enjoy the nature trails and gardens before the meeting. "Meet and greet" and refreshments (drinks only) start at 7pm. Carleen Bright Arboretum is located in Woodway north of HWY84 at the intersection of Bosque and Estates Drive. Ann Gordon will present a program on creating a backyard bird sanctuary.

Please come and hear Ann speak! Anyone who has been to

Ann's knows what a great experience it is for the birds and birders!



Yellow Warbler by Ann Gordon, 8/23/2011

Education: Children's Garden Fair will be October 16 from 1-5 PM at the Carleen Bright Arboretum. **We will need volunteers staffing the Audubon booth. We plan a birds and beaks activity.** Contact Janet W. or Jane D. to participate.

The Audubon Foundation of Texas and Audubon Texas are pleased to announce recipients of the 2011 Collaborative Chapter Grants. Funds made available by the Foundation are awarded in the categories of Conservation, Education, and Chapter Development and Communications. In the Education Category, Central Texas Audubon Society received a \$1,000 grant for supplies for community outreach activities.

Sightings and Reports

Bert Frenz: My subregional NAB report for this past summer season (June-July) has been uploaded to my website at <http://www.bafrenz.com/birds/Records.htm>

It includes the Central Brazos Valley, the Pineywoods, and northeast Texas. For the CBV and closest counties, the highlights are: **Swallow-tailed Kite** 9 July – first McLennan record since 1906.

Peregrine Falcon – unusual summer sightings in Smith, Bell and Waller. **Black-necked Stilt** – first nesting in Bell; second record for Robertson. **Eastern Screech-Owl** – bumper crop in College Hills, Collier Station. **Prothonotary Warbler** – vagrant to McLennan. **Swainson's Warbler** – probable failed nesting in CBV. **Golden-**

cheeked Warbler – McLennan vagrant. **Cassin's Sparrow** – eastward shift brings new county records for Anderson, Grimes, Milam, Robertson, Van Zandt. Continuing in Waller and Washington. **Lesser Goldfinch** – first summer record for McLennan.

From Annette Jones in late June: **"While walking at lunch, I crossed the Suspension Bridge and saw this family or families paddling in the River."**



Fun fact:

A great grey owl's hearing is so good that it can hear a mouse under a foot of snow. Once it does, it can dive down to snatch him. (the Wilderness Society, February 2010)

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interested parties as well.

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Ann Gordon: Orchard Orioles

M&F still seeing mostly females, but occasional male **Summer Tanager** F 7/24/11 and for several days, last seen 8//17/11 **Black-and-white Warbler** M&F starting 7/24/11 and continuing up to today 8/23/11 **Upland Sandpiper** (heard on 8/4/11 and continue to do so sporadically; **Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers** starting 8/8/11 to 8/20/11; **Black-chinned Hummingbird** M 8/10/11; **White-eyed Vireo** starting 8/11/11 up to 8/22/11; **Yellow Warbler** 8/13/11 see every day and increasing in number and frequency ; **Least Flycatcher** on 8/14/11 and for several days after; **American Redstart** F on 8/14/11; **Dickcissel** on 8/16/11 for several days and today 8/23/11; **Eastern Bluebird** M 8/22/11; **Red-shouldered Hawk** in the yard more days than not; **Painted Bunting** F, last on 8/21/11; **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** last on 8/21/11; **Northern Parula** 8/20/11; **Lesser Goldfinch** F 7/13/11 and 7/15/11.

I reported previously that I had seen a **Black-throated Green Warbler** on 6/26/11. I have had an e-mail conversation with Bert Frenz about that sighting. Apparently it would be out of the range of dates that bird has been seen here. The discussion then centered on whether or not it was a **Golden-cheeked Warbler**. It is very unfortunate that I was not able to get a photo

of the bird although I saw it 3 times during that day at the puddle: 7:25 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 5:22 p.m. I did not look at it critically because I was not even considering the **GCWA**. I did wonder about the **BTNW** being here: was it late leaving or was it early returning. After 3 experts were called into the discussion, it remains undetermined. During the discussions I learned that **GCWAs** are wandering out of their breeding areas. If I had know that I would have looked more closely. Due to extreme weather conditions across the country and fires in TX apparently unusual birds are being recorded out of their normal range and time. Either bird would have been an exciting event, but I wanted to correct my reported sighting of **the Black-throated Green Warbler** on 6/26/11.

Brian Littleton: reported a **Lawrence's warbler** at his property off Gholson Rd. in early August. His wife saw M&F.

Central Texas Audubon Project:

As many of you know, the bald eagles in the Reynolds Creek area have lost their nest to high winds on more than one occasion. It has been proposed that the CTAS take on sponsoring purchase of a nesting platform for them. Bald eagles have been documented and photographed using man-made structures such as cell towers as nesting platforms in several places. It is also documented that nesting pairs have used platforms. CTAS will begin working with the US Corps of Engineers to seek all necessary approvals. We may seek

Christmas Bird Count

(CBC):From December 14 through January 5 tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. Families and students, birders and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides and checklists go out on an annual mission - often before dawn. For over one hundred years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house during the Holiday season.

Each of the citizen scientists who annually braves snow, wind, or rain, to take part in the Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action. (from the National Audubon Society website)

Mark your calendars! The Western McLennan County CBC (Crawford) is scheduled for December 17!!

Earth Share's Mission
To engage individuals and organizations in creating a healthy and sustainable environment.
www.earthshare.org/index.html