



The Roadrunner

Central Texas Audubon Society Issue 255 September 2010

President's Message

As we have just finished one of our hottest summers on record, it is time to look forward to Fall and a new season of Audubon activities.

I am looking forward to seeing what this season brings in the way of migrants to our area. Some of you have already noted that some species seem to be more abundant in our area this year, i.e. yellow warbler. It will be interesting to see what species decide to visit in our area.

Please record any sightings that you have and send them to Eric, so that he can keep a record. You can also post your sightings on our new Central Texas Audubon page on Facebook. This page offers opportunities for us to recruit and retain members by letting them have up to date information on sightings, field trips and meeting information. I'll try to keep it updated weekly, but your information is vital for keeping it current.

Thanks to Bill Ravenscroft, Frank Bumgardner, Roy Smallwood, Tom Conry, Nora Schell and an Eagle Scout for getting a Wetlands Bird Blind built. The Wetlands has been dry during the month of August and had a prescribed burn to get rid of some of the cattails and willows. The pumps should be back on and the cells should be filled by the time you receive this. We can look forward to a good season of birding at the Wetlands.

We have some changes on our Board for this new year as you will see from the list of officers. I'm excited to be a part of this team and look forward to a great year.

Our first meeting is on September 21, at 7:00 at the Carleen Bright Auditorium in Woodway. I look forward to seeing you then.

Looking forward,
Janet Wallace



Young Mississippi Kite

by Bryan Stone

Loggerhead Shrike Sightings

Loggerhead Shrikes are declining across much of their range. In Canada, the *migrans* subspecies is considered critically endangered, with less than 25 pairs found in 2010. The vast majority of pairs now

breed in Ontario. An extremely active and multi-faceted recovery program is underway for this species in Ontario, including a captive breeding and release program. This program has been releasing approximately 100 juvenile shrikes annually since 2006. While much is known and has been learned about this species, a critical piece of the puzzle is still missing: where exactly do these birds spend the winter? To maximize our chances of locating wintering areas and better define migration routes we will be coloring the breast of released young produced from the captive breeding program, to make them more detectable by birders. Birds have been released in July and August. Birds will have an extensive area of their breast colored in green, blue or purple. All released birds, and a large proportion of the wild population, are also color banded. If you see a shrike with a colored breast and/or wearing bands, please report it to Wildlife Preservation Canada at (EM: jessica@wildlifepreservation.ca, PH: 519-836-9314, FX: 519-836-8840). We will need details about specific location (GPS coordinates are ideal, but not essential) and color(s) (breast and/or bands) seen.

Sep 21 mtg: Birds of Japan

Eric's presentation at the meeting on **Tuesday at 7:30pm**, at Carleen Bright Arboretum on Bosque Blvd in Woodway. Come at **6:30pm for Eric's guided walk on the nature trails and gardens** before the meeting. Refreshments will be served starting at 7pm. **Carleen Bright Arboretum is located in Woodway north of HWY84 at the intersection of Bosque and Estates Drive.**

Wetlands - Waco Wetlands pumps were restarted Sep 2 after a prescribed burn Aug 27 targeting cattails and willows. A fish fence was installed in Aug. to block adult carp from migrating to Cells 3-4, and much excavation and berm reinforcement has been done over the summer. Cell 1 is filling quickly at this time.

The first CTAS designed bird blind has been erected in the wetlands. The City retained a local Eagle Scout and some helpers to do the work. It is on the east side of the 'tree berm'. It is well made but requires more boards and landscaping yet to fill the gap at the bottom. It is hoped sometime to have a second one built nearer to the Education Center on the west side.

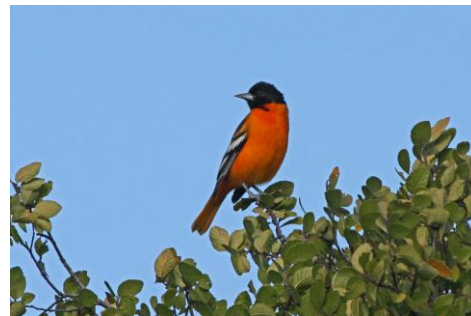
EVENTS:

Sep 11- Showcase Waco/Sat in the Swamp/(Wetlands)

Sat Sep 25 - National Public Lands Day - Join volunteers across America for this annual event, based at Twin Bridges Park group shelter on Waco Lake from 9am-12pm.

Bring gloves and help clean up, paint, and clear trails. Snacks provided.

Oct 17, Sunday - Staff Booth for Children's Garden Fair, 2-5pm.



Baltimore Oriole male Sep 4
by Bill Ravenscroft

Education

Congratulations to Jane Derrick who brought information and activities about birds to the children of her church this summer. Job well done Jane, our new Education Chair!

Friday, Sept. 17th, CTAS will join the Education Committee of Miss Nellie's Pretty Place in Cameron Park in leading children through the park on a series of bird walks. We need volunteers to lead two Bird Walks at the Children's Gardening Fair at the Carleen Bright Arboretum, Sunday, October 17. Binoculars will be provided by CTAS. Please contact Natalie Kutach if you are willing to lead these walks, one at 3 pm and one at 4 pm. bkutach@hot.rr.com or 848.2999

Sightings and Reports

Frank Bumgardner; We had two pairs of Black-necked Stilts nest at the sewage ponds and fledged a total of six young this summer.

Also Jeanette and I had a male Yellow-throated Warbler along with a pair of Yellow Warblers on the 16th of August.

Roy C. Smallwood 3rd; The family vacation was to Comfort, TX this year. Off RM 473, we spied a flock of six Wild Turkeys while in route. On one of our early morning walks, we were treated to a flock of perhaps 30 Lesser Goldfinches near the old ball fields. These were the best birds of the trip. Best wishes to all members of CTAS.

Jim Edwards; Observed a female Yellow Warbler on my walk this morning (August 30) at Woodway Park. Also saw a juvenile Great Crested Flycatcher. I also noted 12 different species of Odonates on that walk.

A male Yellow Warbler visited my backyard (it was 107 degrees). It came to the sprinkler that I had going.

I have lots of hummingbird activity in my back yard, but all I have seen have been ruby throats.

Billie Ann Boeche; Brown Thrashers hung around this summer.

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Jim Wright; Ran into about 50-75 Wood Storks in early September at Richland Chambers WMA.

Ann Gordon; This was a very busy month both August and now into September. The most numerous bird was the Yellow Warbler which I saw on 16 days. Some time a single bird sometime 2 at a time for a total of 27 Yellow Warblers tallied. I did not count multiple visits since I could not always know if it was a new bird or a return. I know I had a lot of Yellow Warblers and are still having them as of 9/6/10.

Saw Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on 2 dates, Wilson's Warbler on 4 dates, Mourning Warbler 9/10/10, White-eyed Vireo no less than 4 days and probably more, Rufous Hummingbird male 8/23 and 8/24/10, Summer Tanager 2 days, Downy Woodpecker male 3 days, Orchard Oriole 1 day, Northern Oriole male 9/6/10 and Belter Kingfisher down at the creek. Most of these birds have been posted in the Back Yard Bird Sanctuary.

Bill Ravenscroft; From April through July we had several Broad-winged Hawks in my neighborhood which is near the lake off Lakeshore Drive. Most days they were in our yard in a Live Oak tree. A mature bird (parent?) would often call to them from a little distance away. There were at least two juveniles so I am guessing they bred nearby.

In late May Caspian Terns were seen at Airport Beach Park on Lake Waco.

A trip to Richland Creek WMA in early June was made to see and photograph the reported colonies of Wood Storks. Also seen were many White Ibis, Great, Cattle and Snowy Egrets in large numbers plus Great Blue and Little Blue Herons, an Anhinga and some Painted and Indigo Buntings.

Sightings of spring migrants were sparse here in my home area, just Chestnut-sided & Nashville Warblers and White-eyed Vireos were seen but the early return of some Yellow Warblers in mid-August was a pleasant surprise. One entertained us by taking a 'shower' in the spray from a garden hose!

Saw several Roseate Spoonbills and some juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Herons in July at the wetlands.

Eric Haskell; Waco Lake shorebird migration sightings have been unusual, with a **Curlew** 8/30 and a (LIFE BIRD!) **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** 9/1 at Airport Park. Due to medical condition and schedule change, I didn't get out as much as other years, but noticed 9/3 FOS Osprey and Forster's Tern near Speegleville Park. Several people saw **Yellow** (and other) **Warblers** at the end of Aug. ahead of normal, when storm fronts sent away Martins & Scissortails while bringing in **E. Kingbirds** and **Loggerhead Shrikes**.

Our neighborhood had its first female/juv. **Rufous Hummingbird** from 8/28 to 9/1, with **Upland Sandpipers** still stopping in nearby open fields.



Rufous Hummingbird spreads tail at home 8-21 to 9-1, By Eric Haskell

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YES I'd like to join Please enroll me as a member of National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below. My check for **\$20: the introductory fee** is enclosed

Name _____
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Send this application and check to:
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www.earthshare.org/index.html

And don't forget, the CTAS Yahoo Group site is in Karen's capable hands in Michigan. You may post any sightings or relevant Audubon information there.

Check out the new CTAS website
www.centexaudubon.org