

The Roadrunner

Central Texas Audubon Society Issue 250 November 2009

President's Message

Green—'tis a good color. The rains of late have turned our landscape into this wonderful lush color. It reminds us that we, too, should become more and more green in our thoughts and the daily conduct of our lives. One simple way to become more green is to become less dependent on paper. To that end, make demands that every organization to which you belong send their communication by email and not by mail. CTAS has begun this project. Last month a solicitation was sent to the membership about delivery of this newsletter. Please continue to respond so that we can build a database sufficient to implement this delivery. CTAS hopes that much of its membership will choose to have the newsletter delivered by email. We will help the environment, lower our postage costs, and facilitate a more timely delivery of the news and events of the Society. Your efforts in this endeavor are greatly appreciated.

As president, I want to extend a warm invitation to our general meetings. We hope to always provide an entertaining and informative program. Join us at the Arboretum in Woodway. This well lighted and comfortable setting is something everyone needs to experience. Please join us and bring a friend.

Roy C. Smallwood 3rd.

Monthly Program: November 17, 2009. 7:30pm Carleen Bright Arboretum

Mark Klym How to find Texas Hummingbirds.

Texas has 18 species of hummingbird, and yet many of us only ever see one or two species. Even when we travel to "hot spots", we often come away wondering "where was the" Knowing the right habitat is critical to finding that special bird. Where would you look for a Magnificent? Find out at the meeting November 17 Mark Klym is coordinator of the Texas Wildscapes and Texas Hummingbird Roundup programs at Texas Parks and Wildlife. He received baccalaureate degrees in Biological Science and in Fisheries & Wildlife Management from Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste Marie (pronounced Sue Sainte Marie) MI. Mark followed the hummingbirds to Texas in 1999 to work with Texas Parks and Wildlife. He is coauthor of the recently published book "Hummingbirds of Texas" by Texas A&M Press.

Come early and enjoy 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.

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Christmas Birds Counts

From Eric Haskell: Help is needed for the Crawford Christmas Bird Count Saturday, Dec 19, 2009! Volunteers join in groups which travel by car to different areas, recording all birds they see, for Cornell Laboratory's international database.

We will meet at 8am at Bosque Square parking lot on the corner of Hwy 6 & Bosque Blvd. No experience is necessary (more eyes is better, we need drivers, and note-takers) to participate, but be prepared for an all-day adventure. Participants are required to donate \$5 which goes to Cornell's processing & publishing the national report, which all participants receive.

EG White-Swift: The Waco CBC will be held on January 2, 2010. EG can be contacted at EG.White-Swift@eqdepot.com



It is time for the winter birds to start showing up. This photo of Harris Sparrow was taken by Bryan Stone.

Education Chairman Report

Natalie Kutach: Last month I enjoyed visits with the children of Little Lions Pre-K and Waco Montessori Early Childhood classes, 5 groups in all. I provided both schools with the Indoor Birdwatching and Butterfly Hunting games that I made using the magazines and old field guides donated by Audubon members. Please continue to save magazines for me so that I am able to create more of these activities for local classrooms. This month I look forward to helping another Girl Scout troop earn the Birdwatching Badge with Carleen Bright Arboretum as the setting for what I hope will be a memorable bird walk! Many thanks to Eric Haskell who also led a bird walk during the Children's Gardening Fair in October.

Field Trips and Reports:

No field trips to post at this time. Be sure to check the CTAS Yahoo site for updates.

Sightings

Eric Haskell 10/19/09 Lake Waco area FOS American Bittern, Northern Harrier (3), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. FOS Franklin's Gulls seen Sunday, **10/25** flying over China Spr Hwy. Peregrine on airport fence, flew to shack by Skeet Eason Rd.

Andy Petter 10/21/09 Reports these dates for FOS

10/2/09 N. Flicker (Yellow Shaft)

10/17/09 Song Sparrow

10/17/09 Ruby-crowned Kinglet **Fred Gehlbach 10/25/09** On Friday, October 23, I was coming in from a run about 2 PM and could hear Sandhill Cranes overhead--I never could find the flock but the call is unmistakable

Roy Smallwood 10/25/09 A little after noon yesterday we headed to the Hike and Bike Trail at Lake Waco. We thought a little picnic and walk would be nice on such a sunny day. The lake is up quite a bit. From the dam we can see that half the pavilions at Airport Park are under

water. All gates were open. The roar of the water released was evident from the parking area. The wind was up, too much for small songbirds to be out. However, the raptors were prevalent. Two Ospreys were hunting the area, one below the gates and one above the dam. Other birds spotted include three Turkey Vultures, 6 Am. Crows. Additionally, a N. Harrier was sighted near the tree line in the field below the dam. One hawk gave us a little trouble identifying it. However, I can confidently say that it was a Fuertes' Red Tail. It flew just over the dam where the gates are and headed toward the Airport end of the trail, proving us with a long very good look.

Matt York 10/25/09 Some migrants still moving through, and additional winter residents still filing in. I encountered a few new species that I had not at this location a week ago: -Franklin's Gull, 6 lifting off on property across the road from main gate. -Orange-crowned Warbler, Belted Kingfisher, 1 female & 1 male Tree Swallow 1, Greater Yellowlegs 1, Common Yellowthroat 3, Green Heron 1, Snow Geese 5 dark morph flew 50 feet above my head, vocalizing, Ring-necked Duck, Redhead, Bald Eagle 1 adult, Sora 1, Nashville Warbler continued, this time 1 adult male.*

10/29/09 Vesper Sparrows are back in full force on that strip of COE WMA land along the S. Bosque; off of 84 1 Merlin, Flickers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and the resident Red-bellied's, 5 Eastern Bluebirds.

Janet Wallace 10/25/09 Yesterday around noon, Bill was at the spillway and saw three osprey circling as well as turkey vultures and one lone duck. Also, about a dozen Canada geese flew over on Friday mid-morning.

Bill Ravenscroft 10/28/09

We were away from 7th until 19th so didn't see anything till last week. Saw a N. Flicker on 21st, pair of Y.B. Sapsuckers on 22nd and again on 27th, many Ruby-crowned Kinglets last week and this. Saw a Forster's Tern diving into the lake on Monday 26th. All these FOS for me.

Frank Bumgardner

10/28/09 Jeanette and I joined friends in Terrell County on the 1st to the 5th of October for the first survey in the county for birds, with a total of 88 species seen. We visited several ranches along the Rio Grande River, and were visited by several border patrol agents also.

Harriet Shearer 10/29/09 Things are very quiet at my house. Seeing the Orange-crowned Warbler and the E. Screech owl is in the box. That's about it.

Pam Moes 10/28/09 We have had tons of water in the pond. The kingfisher is busy, both cormorants, osprey, coots, pied-billed grebes, no ducks yet but have had Black-Bellied Whistling Ducks roosting on the boat dock roof. Persistent Euro Collared Doves sitting on top of the feeders which they can't use. A few lingering Ruby-Throats, E. Phoebe and C. Wren singing LOUDLY in the mornings. Great Egrets, Gr. Blue, Snowy Egrets, and tons of butterflies. We have had Swallowtail, Pipevine Swallowtail, Monarch, Queen, Sulphur, Gulf Fritillary, Gray Hairstreak, Skippers. There are others but I haven't had Time to just sit with a book. Now for an unusual sighting.... I was sitting outside Sunday and discovered a chrysalis hanging from the arm of a deck chair. No protection from weather or predators, just right out in the open. I took a picture and I got a fantastic picture showing a chalky blue color with these Gold dots. Well, I looked again yesterday and it is a monarch! **10/29/09** treated myself to a little birding today. Saw 60+ Lesser Scaups and 4 Red Heads on Lake Waco, near the twin bridges (out in the middle). Then, at 50 Franklin Terns were also feeding right off the twin bridges. I watched them opposite the park side where the people ride in the mud. I had my FOS Am Kestrel on our pond today.

The Texas Bluebird Society will have a Bluebird Kickoff event on Saturday, Jan 30, 2010, at the Brazos Center in Bryan, Texas. Presenters will emphasize ways individuals can help the Eastern Bluebird continue its long road to recovery. Additional information will be posted on the society's web site, texasbluebirdsociety.org, or can be obtained by calling Jim Anding at 979 776 8381.

Project FeederWatch Season Begins

Soon The 2009-10 season of Project FeederWatch begins November 14. FeederWatchers keep track of their birds through the winter and report their tallies each week. This helps scientists track changes in winter bird populations from year to year. To learn more, visit the website.

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/>

The CTAS will sponsor a photo

contest for members and youth (ages 18 and under) to be placed on exhibit at the Carleen Bright Arboretum from June 14-July 19, 2010. The contestants **must be** members of Audubon (youth do not have to be members) and all pictures submitted **must be of birds**-not limited to Texas species. Contestants must submit a maximum of three digital photos to Bill Ravenscroft that are megapixels in size by April 15, 2010. Photographers may send their entries at any time until the cut off date. The photos will be judged by a focus group of local photographers. Photographs chosen for exhibit must be a minimum of 8x10 inches and be mounted, matted or framed to be at least 11x14 inches. The first place contestant will have his/her photo placed on the postcard as the invitation for the reception on June 20th as well as photo placed on exhibit. Second place will have photo exhibited as well as receive an autographed copy of Hummingbirds of Texas. Youth winner will receive a membership in Audubon as well as a gift certificate and photo on exhibit.

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