

# The Roadrunner

Central Texas Audubon Society Issue 248 September 2009

## MEMBERSHIP MEETING DATE CHANGED FOR SEPTEMBER

**ONLY!** Due to a schedule conflict at Carleen Bright we will meet on the fourth Tuesday instead of the usual third Tuesday. So mark your calendars for September 22 instead of September 15.

### President's Message

In late August I began another trip around the sun—my 58<sup>th</sup> in fact. Now this seems to be quite an undertaking mileage wise. Yet, only 1/365 has to be accomplished every day. So, I find myself contemplating when small is big and big is small. Point in fact 1/365 of a year (small) is a whole day, 24 hours (big). Traveling half way around the world to Africa, something my youngest daughter did this summer, is no big deal to her but substantial to me.

Hummingbirds are so very small and their nests are almost unrecognizable. However, their presence is a big deal to birders and non-birders alike. One degree rise in the average temperature of our climate is the harbinger of the extremes of global warming. A one percent increase in the population of the world is 62 million people. In contrast, the attention you give a child bears tremendous fruit of a loving, caring, and engaged adult.

Well, I beg the question. What small thing can we do that will make a big difference for ourselves, this Society, for the community? It is something we should contemplate every day of this trip around the sun.

Roy C. Smallwood 3rd.

## Monthly Program: September 22, 2009: 7:30 pm Carleen Bright Arboretum: Gil Eckrich Is Digiscoping for bird photos right for you?

During one of the spring field trips, that Gil led, several of the birders from CTAS expressed an interest in a presentation on Digiscoping. Gil has been using Digiscoping for several years and will address advantages and disadvantages of various camera mounts, and compare digiscope images to some shot with DSLR and telephoto prime lenses. Gil will be bringing two digiscope setups and will present photos shot using those rigs.

Gil Eckrich was born in Germany and came to America in 1964. Upon graduation from college in 1970, he entered the U.S. Army as a commissioned officer in the Infantry.

20 years later, and assignments around the world, he retired in Central Texas. Since then he taught undergraduate state and federal government courses for Central Texas College until retiring from that position in August 2009. Gil has been a biologist in Fort Hood's Natural Resources Management Branch since 1991, initially doing cowbird control. Because of his military background, Gil has been responsible for coordination with Army units to resolve issues between training and natural resources requirements. In his current position as outreach coordinator he makes presentations at forums ranging from Cub Scouts, to universities, to international conferences on the natural resources found at Fort Hood, especially the endangered species. He and his Nature Conservancy colleague, Rich Kostেকে, also guide tours of Fort Hood's natural resources throughout the year. Gil resides in Bell County on Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir with his wife Wanda. When not working one of his jobs, Gil can be found bass fishing, birding, photographing wildlife, or propagating native plants. **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.**

### Board Members CTAS

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### Immature Black-chinned By Karen Arquette NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Send this application and check to: National Audubon Society  
Chapter Membership Data Center  
P.O. Box 52520 Boulder, CO 80322-  
1001 Include chapter code of  
W06 7XCH

**Renewal is \$35.00 Senior 62  
and older and students \$15.00**

### Education Report: Natalie Kutach

2009-2010 Audubon Adventures kits, "Action for Planet Earth" have been ordered for classrooms across Waco sponsored by CTAS. Thank you to everyone who has saved magazines for me. I have used them for posters, bookmarks, makeshift field guides, shared them with classroom teachers and more! Now I have another request for a classroom project: **styrofoam meat trays and pictures of butterflies.** The pictures can be from magazines, just tear them out and bring to a meeting or mail them to me. 2065 Oak Glen Drive McGregor TX 7665  
Also, I am proud to announce that we applied for and received a collaborative grant from Audubon Texas and Audubon Foundation of Texas. The grant, titled "Connections" funded 20 pair of great quality binoculars and beginner TX field guides. These can be used to "connect" classroom work with the outdoors and allow children and adults alike a closer view of nature. Anyone wishing to use these while leading a group, please contact Natalie at [bkutach@hotmail.com](mailto:bkutach@hotmail.com) or 848.2999.

## **Audubon Exhibit Lufkin Texas**

The Museum of East Texas in Lufkin, Texas, will host *JOHN JAMES AUDUBON: American Artist and Naturalist* from September 27, 2009 through January 19, 2010. This expansive, nationally traveling exhibition has its Texas premiere at the Museum of East Texas. Phone 936-639-4434 (website under construction)

## **McLennan County Master**

**Gardeners** and the Carleen Bright Arboretum are hosting a **Children's Garden Fair** this October 18, 3-5 pm. It is free and all children must be accompanied by an adult. There will be many activities such as propagation, insect identification, making seed cards, wildflower "pom poms", grow babies, and much more.

## **Smith Point Hawk Watch**

is holding a "Hawk Happening" on Saturday, October 10, at the peak of raptor migration at Smith Point. The Hawk Watch tower is located at the Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area. The migration of hawks and other raptors is one of the marvels of the natural world. The event is free of charge and activities will include raptor and songbird banding demonstrations by GCBO and Texas Parks & Wildlife banders. For more info check the Hawk Happening icon on the GCBO website [www.gcbo.org](http://www.gcbo.org).

## **Bird Sightings and Reports:**

**Eric Haskell: 8/29/09/** Generally the Yellow Warbler migration is prominent and early around Waco Lake. Blue Grosbeaks were an interesting visitor to 3 areas of Waco Lake this summer. Upland Sandpipers continue to migrate over, a few Mississippi Kites have gone by, Least Sandpipers are around Airport Beach with a few Ring-billed Gulls, and I've seen Tri-colored Herons at Reynolds Creek & S2 WMA as well as the Wetlands, though perhaps they return to the Wetlands nightly. This week Queen Butterflies finally showed up in force at my backyard (25, including mating pair) after a quiet summer, while Fritillaries have been dominant but not completely denuded my Passion vines as previously.

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**Central Texas Audubon Society**  
**1308 Circlewood**  
**Waco, Texas 76710**

One Bald Eagle adult continues to be seen around the Lacy Pt/Reynolds Creek area, but the juvenile has not been documented since July.

**Natalie Kutach: 8/29/09** You know its going to be a good day birding when a family of American Woodcocks bobs across the road while you are still getting the bins out of your backpack in the parking lot at the trailhead! This was how I began my first day at the Acadia Birding Festival - Bar Harbor, Maine in June. Several members of our group stood in the park road stopping traffic so the little family could have safe crossing. Didn't even need binoculars, but of course, the camera would have been nice..... The pelagic portion, aboard the comfortable Friendship V, went into the Atlantic and we enjoyed great looks at many birds as well as 2 species of whales, porpoises and seals. If you want to enjoy some cool summer birding in breathtaking surroundings, eat fabulous food and enjoy the company of really nice people - give the Acadia Birding Festival a try!

**Jane Derrick: 9/5/09** In August, I spent three days in New Mexico visiting my daughter near the Carson National Forest and Taos on Camino Del Abajo. The elevation is around 8,200 ft. The property is a meadow with a few trees in it, the Santa Barbara River running through it and a hill at one end full of aspens. A hummingbird feeder attracted a lot of Rufous hummingbirds. The best bird of the trip was the American Dipper which was seen in the river. This is only the second time I have seen this bird, the other time being in Alaska. There was also a Belted Kingfisher that flew up and down the river several times a day. The next best bird was an Eastern Kingbird, which was at the very edge of its range. I saw a lot of Black-billed magpies and just one Stellers Jay. In the aspens, I saw a Williamson Sapsucker. I saw these birds in the area: Western Bluebirds, Robins, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Yellow Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, American

Kestrel, Pine Siskin, Lesser Goldfinch, Cassins Finch, Gray Catbird, Black-capped Chickadee, Lark Sparrow, Field and Chipping Sparrow, Mourning Dove and Common Raven. In the Carson National Forest, I saw a Gray-faced Junco and a Hairy Woodpecker.

**Karen Arquette Elm Mott: 9/0709** My hummingbirds are not showing in the usual numbers this migration season. I would estimate the numbers to half of the amount of the last 4 years. In the past, I could at times, count them in the triple digits but this year I believe my maximum, so far, to be 75. Also I have not seen a single Rufous. Today, September 7, I had mostly mature Ruby-throats male and female, with immatures of both sexes and a few immature Black-chinned. (total of 75) For the first time I have had Baltimore Orioles using the hummingbird feeders. I have seen them daily for the last week. Also for the first time I have had Orchard Orioles on the Passion Vine eating the fruit.

## **Field Trips :**

**September 19<sup>th</sup>:** Carleen Bright and Woodway Park. **Leader:** Karen Arquette 8am meet in Arboretum parking lot.

**September 27<sup>th</sup>:** Richland Creek WMA meet at Luby's parking lot I35 and Lakeshore 1:00pm. This is later in the day so we can see the Wood Storks coming in to roost. **Leader:** Eric Haskell

**September 19&20:** Hazel Bazemore Hawk Watch. Interested people must make own lodging and transportation arrangements.

**Call Eric Haskell** for details. 379- 3642  
**October 17<sup>th</sup>** Carleen Bright Bird Walk meet 8am in parking lot. **Leader:** Eric Haskell

**October 24<sup>th</sup>:** Arlington Village Creek Drying Beds. Meet 8am Luby's I35 and Lakeshore **Leader:** Eric Haskell

**From The Editor:** Part of our agreement with the Arboretum, to have our member meetings there, is to lead bird walks once a month on a Saturday. We are looking for volunteers to lead these walks. Contact Karen Arquette or Janet Wallace. Eric Haskell is looking for volunteers for Public Lands Day September 26. Meet at Twin Bridge Park at 9am. Send any information for this newsletter, to me, on or before the first of each month. **Karen Arquette**

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