



THE CHIRP

NEWSLETTER OF THE TWIN LAKES AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL 9 ISSUE 3

twinlakesaudubon.org

November 2014



Photo by Elaine Horton



Photo by Sabrina Nicholson

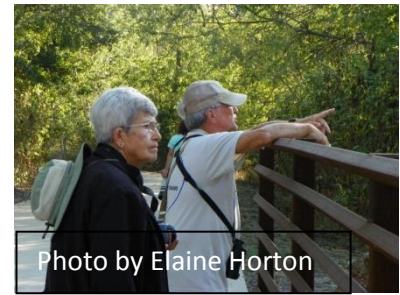


Photo by Elaine Horton

President's Notes

Greetings everyone! It's early Saturday morning and our outdoor thermometer registers 37 degrees. Fall is here! The bird migration continues.

I was wade fishing near Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) on Thursday and was on the lookout for Whooping Cranes. One of my fishing partners had seen two whoopers last week. To date four whoopers have arrived at ANWR.

In a press release earlier this month, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) reminded birders that whoopers will be passing through Texas until late November. TPWD has developed the Texas Whooper Watch program (<http://tpwd.texas.gov/whoopingcranes/>) to help track the movement of these endangered birds across the state, as well as monitor whooping cranes that might spend the winter in locations not associated with the national wildlife refuge. Bell County is situated in the whoopers' migration flyway. Whoopers usually follow a migratory path through North and Central Texas that includes cities such as Wichita Falls, Fort Worth, Waco, Temple, Austin, and Victoria. During migration they often pause overnight to use wetlands for roosting and agricultural fields for feeding, but seldom remain more than one night. The typical sighting (71 percent of all observations) is fewer than three birds, but last year Texas had multiple sightings of larger groups including one of 19 individuals. Whooping cranes can also be seen roosting and feeding with large flocks of smaller Sandhill Cranes. Citizens can help by reporting sightings of whooping cranes and by preventing disturbance of cranes when they remain overnight at roosting and feeding locations. Sightings can be reported to whoopingcranes@tpwd.texas.gov or call 512-389-TXWW (8999). Observers are asked especially to note whether the cranes have colored leg bands on their legs.

Randy Pinkston will present a program on birding in Guatemala at the meeting on November 11, at 7:00 pm in Room 117, York Science Bldg, UMHB. I look forward to seeing you there.

Bert Pope

TLAS T-shirts are still available and can be picked up at our next meeting. The cost is \$10 and sizes range from Medium to X-Large, all proceeds goes to the TLAS fund. The T-shirts will be available for sale until all are sold.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, the contact for programs and field trips is Gil Eckrich; Cell: 254-534-0061,
Email is: gil.eckrich@att.net



PRESENTATIONS

11 Nov – Randy Pinkston will give presentation on birding in Guatemala – LOTS images to enjoy!

09 Dec – Preparation for Christmas Bird Count (CBC), including identification tips for difficult species.

13 Jan – Melissa Brown will give presentation on the Baggett Country photo ranch, the destination for our January field trip.

10 Feb – John Macy, Natural Resource Specialist at Fort Hood, will talk about the status of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and conservation measures being used for the species. This presentation will mesh nicely with the proposed field trip to Sam Houston National Forest to see this species.

10 Mar – **NO Meeting**

07 Apr - TBD

12 May - Picture Show and Tell, Everyone bring pictures to share!



FIELD TRIPS

16 Nov – East Bell County, meet at 08:00 at Belton Park & Ride off I-35. We will look for specialty species of the agricultural areas in hopes of longspurs, Mountain Plovers, and water-related birds at Lake Rogers.

13 Dec – Chalk Ridge Falls Park, below Stillhouse Dam, at 08:00. Some of the unique target birds include Rock Wren and LeConte's Sparrow, and many more species.

20 Dec – Christmas Bird Count!!!! Details to be discussed at 9 Dec TLAS monthly meeting

17 Jan – Baggett Country, meet at 08:00 at intersection of FM 116 and FM 1783, SW of Gatesville. Check out the webpage for this interesting nature photography ranch <http://baggettcountry.com/> . Although this is a private photo ranch, the owners have graciously invited TLAS to see and enjoy their ranch.

28 Feb – Bald Eagle nest between Lake Buchanan and Llano, and Inks Lake Fish Hatchery.

21 Mar – Potential field trip to Sam Houston National Forest to see Red-cockaded Woodpecker, and potentially 5 other woodpecker species, along with local specialties such as Brown-headed Nuthatch.

25 Apr – Messer Ranch, always a popular and productive field trip!

16 May – Sandy and Sue Lawry have again invited us to their ranch at Osage. This promises to be a most enjoyable field trip with many locally breeding species.

Snack and Drink Sign-up

DATE	SNACK	SNACK	DRINKS & ICE	PAPER GOODS(CUPS, NAPKINS,PLATES)
11-Nov	Deirdre	Margaret	Marilyn	Carol Ann
9-Dec	EVERYONE BRING SOMETHING			
13-Jan	Kathy C	Golda	Need	Cathy S
10-Feb	Liz	Sabrina	Dan	
March	NO MEETING DUE TO SPRING BREAK			
14-Apr	Gaylene	NEED	Marilyn	



The October field trip to Pepper Creek Trail was successful and fun. TLAS birders tallied 28 species <http://ebird.org/ebird/tx/view/checklist?subID=S20332829>.

Recent cold fronts have brought new migrants into Central Texas, both as species passing through on their way south, and wintering species. One of the irruptive species that is not always seen in our area is the Red-breasted Nuthatch. This one was seen near Stillhouse Hollow on 29 October.



Sandhill Cranes continue to pass overhead during daylight hours, often only heard, but not seen due to high altitude. As the TLAS Prez pointed out in his notes, these cranes and the Whoopers could spend a night in our area, before lifting off in the morning to resume migration, usually arriving at the Port Aransas area later in the day.

Wintering birds that have arrived include Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler (affectionately known as Butter Butts), and Dark-eyed Junco.



A reasonably nearby found Dusky-capped Flycatcher is the first record for this part of the state. The bird is usually only found at high elevations of the Chisos and Davis Mountains. The bird has been seen at the new blind at Pedernales State Park <http://www.inaturalist.org/observations/1040872>.

If you see, hear, or are lucky enough to get a photograph of an interesting bird or avian behavior, please consider posting to the [TLAS page on Facebook](#) . Many of you are already on Facebook and it is a handy tool for disseminating sightings, photos, information.



Twin Lakes Audubon Society

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Belton, TX 76513

Return Service Requested

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

All members will receive THE CHIRP electronically instead of in printed form. If a member does not have access to a computer, please contact Cathy Cantu @254-541-3689 and we will gladly send you a printed copy.

As each issue goes to press, you will receive an email with a PDF of the new issue attached. The PDF is also available at our website: www.twinlakesaudubon.org

Meetings

7:00 p.m., second Tuesday of the month in Room 117, York Science Center, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton (No meetings March, June, July or August).

