

## President's Message



Shelia Hargis TOS President.

Hello TOS friends. We have another successful meeting behind us. As of the Sunday or Monday before the Alpine meeting everything seemed to be going very well, and we were all feeling good and excited. Then things caught fire around the Davis Mountains, and our comfortable situation changed quickly. Thanks to Lee Hoy, Rich Kostecke and probably others that I don't know about, we were able to determine how the fires were going to impact

our field trips. Unfortunately, we had to cancel all of our trips to the Nature Conservancy's Davis Mountain Preserve, but all the other trips were okay. With a little shuffling on our part and patience on the part of field trip leaders and participants, everything worked out well. Thanks to all of our field trip leaders and presenters and to all of you who attended. And a special thanks to Region 4 Director Lee Hoy and Vice President Jimma Byrd. They were the driving forces behind this meeting. If you attended and had a good time, feel free to let Lee and Jimma know you appreciate their hard work. Their contact information is on our website on the About TOS page.

On the administrative side of things, we welcomed new members to the TOS Board—Daniel Hodges as Region 6 Director and Raul Delgado for a full term as Region 7 Director. We also said goodbye to Betty Vermeire as a Board member. We elected the officers for another year. I continue as President. Jimma Byrd continues as Vice President. Catherine Winans continues as Treasurer, and Susan Foster continues as Secretary. I'm looking forward to another productive year!



Hooks Woods baby armadillos. Photo credit: Shelia Hargis

I made a quick trip to High Island on May 19 to collect the entry fee money from Hooks Woods. While I was there, I walked around checking on things. I was on the boardwalk when I heard rustling in the leaf litter. I turned around to see a small armadillo rooting

around. I was excited to see it, but then over the next minute or so, three more appeared. I was really excited to get to watch these young armadillos going about their business. They could not have cared less that I was there. I watched them as long



TOS sign about our donation prominently displayed in a critical location. Photo: Colleen Simpson



(L) Volunteer planting one of the new trees. (R) One of the surviving Black Willow trees. Photos: Colleen Simpson

as I wanted and then we parted company. It's wonderful to know that Hooks Woods provides a safe haven for all sorts of wildlife.

Colleen Simpson and the City of Port Aransas have put our restoration donation to good use at Paradise

Pond. The site definitely looks different now, but there are many new plants in the ground to replace the plants that were destroyed by Hurricane Harvey. This report from Colleen,

"Happy to report that we have done several new plantings, the latest being 75 native black willow trees from Native Dave. He sourced them from East Texas. They were shipped to his nursery with bare roots and then spent 8 weeks growing in order to "root out" and have a better chance at successful transplant. We worked with AEP to try and save some of the surviving black willows that had to be moved in order to erect a new power pole to restore the line that formerly ran over the back of the site. We also have your sign up near the chalkboard. We are watering the plantings regularly and so far we have had a great success rate."

Unfortunately, restoration efforts in Rockport at the Aransas Pathways sites such as Tule Marsh East aren't progressing as well. According to Debra Corpora, FEMA has not settled so no work has started on the Pathways sites. The site damage...birding and kayaking...adds up to about \$40,000 with most of that being fencing and signage. Debra is pressing City and County leaders for more information and a time table for when the restoration efforts can begin. If you

Continued on page 2

haven't figured it out yet, Debra is a force to be reckoned with! I have confidence she will get the restoration work going as soon as humanly possible!

As you know if you've been reading my columns, I am frequently asking for members to step up and volunteer for various committees, and I'm starting to get some volunteers! Susan Foster volunteered to chair the Publications Committee. She'll be looking for committee members, so if you're interested, let her know. Several others have volunteered to help out however we need them, and we're working on their assignments. If you've been meaning to volunteer, don't worry, there are still plenty of volunteer opportunities available, so call me!

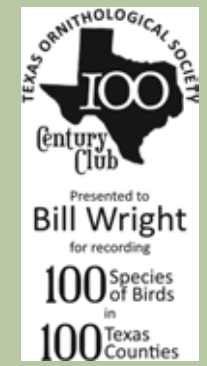
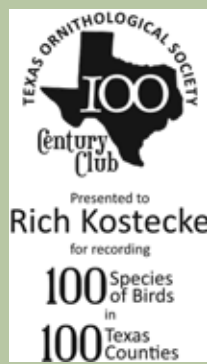
Thank you to all who contributed to this newsletter. Enjoy reading it and have a great summer. I encourage you to get out and watch our breeding birds going about their daily lives. Bird behavior is really fascinating!

—Shelia Hargis, TOS President

## New Century Club Inductees & Milestone Pins

Photo credit for all of these photos: Byron Stone

Four TOS members were recently inducted into the TOS Century Club. The newest Century Clubbers are Greg Cook, Rich Kostecke, Chuck Sexton, and Bill Wright. Three of them were present at the Alpine meeting and received plaques recognizing their accomplishment. Greg was not present, so he will get his plaque at a later date. Congratulations, Greg, Rich, Chuck and Bill! Great work!



Some of us are working toward becoming Century Clubbers, but we're not there yet. As an encouragement and a fun way of documenting progress toward that goal, we are developing pins to highlight milestones along the way to 100 birds in 100 counties and beyond. The designs are preliminary, but we think they are pretty slick looking!



Anyone can play the game, but to be recognized and get pins and a plaque, you have to be a TOS member. So, are you playing this game? If so, how far along are you? How many pins are you due?

Not only is the Century Club a fun game, it is also a great way to document the bird life in Texas. Many counties in Texas are birded regularly by many birders, but there are quite a few counties that are rarely birded. Did you know that Reagan County has only 134 species listed in eBird? (I had to google Reagan County! It is basically between Odessa and San Angelo.) Lipscomb County is only slightly better with 138 species. (Yep, had to google this one too. It's one of the northern most counties in the Panhandle, on the far eastern side.) These are just two examples of under-birded counties in Texas. If you're curious where your birding will make the biggest difference, check out the chart on the "Total eBird Species Recorded by County" page at Texascenturyclub.org. You can see all sorts of other interesting information on this website including who is playing the Century Club game and their rankings in various categories. If you're playing the game, be sure and get your information on the page or update it if it's out of date. Then go birding with a purpose and have fun!

A big thank you to David Sarkozi and Dell Little for keeping the website updated and interesting and to Cheryl Johnson for the designs of the plaques and pins.

Shelia Hargis (currently at 30 counties with 100 or more species)

## Birding Results from the Spring 2018 TOS Meeting, Alpine, Texas

This is, as promised, the checkerboard report from our spring meeting in Alpine. The field trip organizers did a fantastic job, especially in dealing with last-minute closures due to fires at some of the more mountainous destination, and, so far as I could tell, all the field trippers had a great time. As some of the trips went to rarely birded areas or counties, we made a solid contribution to eBird despite our proximity to the well-birded hotspots in Big Bend and the Davis Mountains.

Before I get into our results I want to explain how the checkerboard was built this time around. I used eBird to generate a list of every species that had been seen during the last ten Mays in every county we were to explore (Brewster, Jeff Davis, Pecos, Presidio, Reeves, Terrell). This yielded a list of 338 species. From this list I removed species that the TBRC does not consider countable (such as Egyptian Goose). I then removed those that had been reported to eBird only three times or less from the period surveyed. This left me with a list of 279 species and field trip participants with the task of competing with every eBirder who had spent time, during May, in those counties from 2008 through 2017.

### How did we do?

We saw, as a group, 234 species of the 279 that seemed reasonable. That works out to about 84% and, given that we lost access to an entire suite of species due to the fires, I think that is really good. We also had seven write-ins—all species that had not been reported to eBird, from the counties surveyed, more than three times during the last ten Mays: Northern Bobwhite, Least Grebe, Common Gallinule, American Golden Plover, Short-billed Dowitcher, Laughing Gull, and Western Bluebird. If you add those in, as bonus species, we could call it 86%!

Birders are a competitive bunch so a few highlights are in order and, as would be expected—given the protocol followed—the TCC trips excelled. The Pecos County TCC group prevailed on Friday with 89 species, the Presidio County TCC group prevailed on Saturday with 105 species, and the Lake Balmorhea (aka Reeves County TCC) group prevailed on Sunday with 89 species.

Numerous teams contributed species unique to the list: the Presidio County TCC team found Lesser Scaup on Saturday, the Lake Balmorhea team found Bufflehead on Sunday, the Sanderson/Papster's Place team found Northern Bobwhite on Sunday, the Davis Mountain State Park team found Montezuma Quail on Friday, the Presidio County TCC team found Least Grebe on Saturday, The Lake Balmorhea team found Eared Grebe on Sunday, the Lake Balmorhea teams found Western and Clark's Grebes on all three days, the Big Bend National Park—East teams found Common Ground Dove on Saturday and Sunday, the Big Bend National Park—Mountains teams found Blue-throated Hummingbird on Friday and Saturday, the Presidio County TCC team found Virginia Rail on Saturday, the Presidio County TCC team found Common Gallinule on Saturday, the Independence

Creek Reserve team found American Golden Plover on Friday, the Pecos County TCC team found Snowy Plover on Friday, the Presidio County TCC team found Semipalmated Plover on Saturday, the Presidio County TCC team found Baird's Sandpiper on Saturday, the Independence Creek Preserve team found White-rumped Sandpiper on Saturday, the Lake Balmorhea team found Short-billed Dowitcher on Sunday, the Independence Creek Preserve team found Solitary Sandpiper on Saturday, the Pecos County TCC team found Greater Yellowlegs on Friday, the Lake Balmorhea team found Willet on Saturday, the Presidio County TCC team found Red-necked Phalarope on Saturday, the Lake Balmorhea teams found Franklin's Gull on Saturday and Sunday, the Lake Balmorhea teams found Laughing Gull on Saturday and Sunday, the Pecos County TCC team found Black Tern on Friday, the Miller Ranch team found Northern Harrier on Saturday, the Miller Ranch teams found Sharp-shinned Hawk on Friday and Saturday, the Big Bend National Park—West teams found Gray Hawk on all three days, the Miller Ranch teams found Golden Eagle on Friday and Saturday, the Big Bend National Park—West teams found Elf Owl on Friday and Saturday, the Independence Creek Preserve teams found Eastern Wood Pewee on Friday and Saturday, the Jeff Davis County TCC team found Least Flycatcher on Friday, the Christmas Mountains Oasis team found Eastern Phoebe on Friday, the Independence Creek Preserve team found Yellow-throated Vireo on Friday, the Marathon/Post Park team found Red-eyed Vireo on Friday, the Sanderson/Papster's Place team found Purple Martin on Sunday, the Independence Creek Preserve team found Marsh Wren on Saturday, the Independence Creek Preserve team found Carolina Wren on Saturday, the Marathon/Post Park team found Brown Thrasher on Saturday, the Miller Park team found Brewer's Sparrow on Saturday, the Independence Creek Preserve team found Grasshopper Sparrow on Friday, the Presidio County TCC team found Western Meadowlark on Saturday, the Miller Ranch team found Baltimore Oriole on Saturday, the Marathon/Post Park team found Northern Waterthrush on Sunday, the Big Bend National Park—Mountains teams found Colima Warbler on Friday and Saturday, the Big Bend National Park—West teams found Lucy's Warbler on all three days, the Christmas Mountains Oasis team found Palm Warbler on Saturday, the Jeff Davis County TCC team found Grace's Warbler on Friday, the Big Bend National Park—West team found Black-throated Green Warbler on Friday, and the Big Bend National Park—Mountains teams found Painted Redstart on Friday and Saturday.

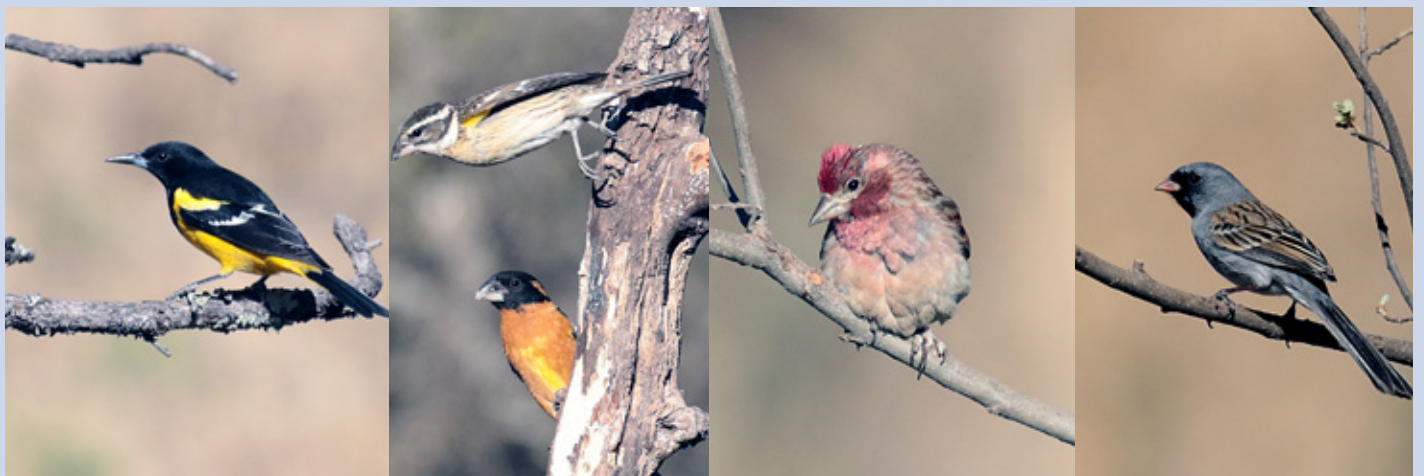
For what it's worth we, as a birding machine, racked up 193 species on Friday, 199 species on Saturday, and 165 species on Sunday proving, in my opinion, that this is a fantastic region to bird during spring migration.

Most of you have seen more than a few lists from me over the years ... so here comes another one. Without further ado, the list from the Spring TOS meeting in Alpine, Texas: Blue-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler,

Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Northern Bobwhite, Scaled Quail, Gambel's Quail, Montezuma Quail, Wild Turkey, Pied-billed Grebe, Least Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Inca Dove, Common Ground Dove, White-winged Dove, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Greater Roadrunner, Lesser Nighthawk, Common Nighthawk, Common Poorwill, Chimney Swift, White-throated Swift, Blue-throated Hummingbird, Lucifer Hummingbird, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Gallinule, American Coot, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, American Golden Plover, Snowy Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Stilt Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Long-billed Dowitcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Phalarope, Red-necked Phalarope, Franklin's Gull, Laughing Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Black Tern, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret, Green Heron, White-faced Ibis, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Common Black Hawk, Gray Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, Zone-tailed Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, Barn Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Elf Owl, Burrowing Owl, Acorn Woodpecker, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Black Phoebe, Eastern Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Vermilion Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Couch's Kingbird, Cassin's Kingbird, Western Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Loggerhead Shrike, Black-capped Vireo, White-eyed Vireo, Bell's Vireo, Hutton's Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Cassin's Vireo, Plumbeous Vireo, Warbling

Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Mexican Jay, Chihuahuan Raven, Common Raven, Horned Lark, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Violet-green Swallow, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Cave Swallow, Barn Swallow, Black-crested Titmouse, Verdin, Bushtit, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Rock Wren, Canyon Wren, House Wren, Marsh Wren, Carolina Wren, Bewick's Wren, Cactus Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Western Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Curve-billed Thrasher, Brown Thrasher, Crissal Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Phainopepla, House Sparrow, American Pipit, House Finch, Cassin's Finch, Pine Siskin, Lesser Goldfinch, American Goldfinch, Green-tailed Towhee, Spotted Towhee, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Canyon Towhee, Cassin's Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Black-throated Sparrow, Lark Bunting, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Yellow-breasted Chat, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark, Orchard Oriole, Hooded Oriole, Bullock's Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Scott's Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird, Bronzed Cowbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Common Grackle, Great-tailed Grackle, Northern Waterthrush, Orange-crowned Warbler, Colima Warbler, Lucy's Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Virginia's Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Yellow Warbler, Palm Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Grace's Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Painted Redstart, Hepatic Tanager, Summer Tanager, Western Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Pyrrhuloxia, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Black-headed Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Indigo Bunting, Varied Bunting, Painted Bunting, and Dickcissel.

— Anthony Hewetson



Photos by Letha Slagle

## Regional Reports

### Region 2—North Central Texas

**Bird migration notes** – Spring shorebird migration was strong in March and April this year in areas with good habitat. Even though some lakes and ponds had high water levels and limited shorebird sightings, Hagerman NWR had nearly ideal water levels and shoreline vegetation for several weeks. Accordingly, some interesting birds were reported. In all 32 species of shorebirds were seen this year. Most notable was the continued sighting of Hudsonian Godwits over a period of 7 weeks. Some years this species is seen only occasionally. The high count reported for this species in 2018 was 218 on April 16.



However, for songbird migrants, sightings in north central Texas were low and scattered. Strong south winds in most of the area during the second half of April and the first few days of May seems to have reduced stopovers for many of the through migrants.

**Rare bird summary** – With thanks to Ross Rasmussen, I can share that 29 species of notable rare or unexpected birds were reported in North Central Texas during Winter 2017/8 (December-February). These birds were either unexpected or were observed in unusually high numbers or at out-of-season times. Of these, the **Best Sightings** were:

- Trumpeter Swan (*Tarrant County*)
- Tundra Swan (*Tarrant, Wichita Counties*)
- American Black Duck (*Dallas County*)
- Snowy Owl (*Denton, Tarrant Counties*)
- Red Knot (*Denton County*)
- Ruddy Turnstone (*Tarrant County*)
- Mew Gull (*Tarrant County*)
- California Gull (*Dallas County*)
- Iceland Gull (*Dallas County*)
- Glaucous Gull (*Dallas, Grayson Counties*)
- White-tailed Hawk (*Ellis, Dallas Counties*)
- Green-tailed Towhee (*Dallas County*)

Of further note was that the fall invasion of multiple southern raptors (White-tailed Kites, Harris's Hawks, and White-tailed Hawks) continued into the winter season. Harris's Hawks continued to be seen in several locations. Ross's full report can be read by subscribers to *North American Birds* (a publication of the American Birding Association).

— Gailon Brehm

### Region 5—Edwards Plateau Report

San Antonio is a great place to go birding and many of us travel there. San Antonio Audubon Society (SAAS) and Bexar Audubon Society (BAS) serve members in the area. There are monthly meetings and field trips throughout the year. Put either in your search engine to check out their respective websites or connect through Facebook.

If you go to the SAAS website you'll find a helpful list with the heading *Where to Bird in San Antonio*. On the BAS website you can catch up on the latest environmental and conservation issues facing Texas and the San Antonio region.

If you have a chance, sign up for the Flying Wild workshop that the clubs regularly offer. The workshop is a field-work based teaching program connecting bird ecology and conservation. The Flying Wild workshop has so many activities geared for youth that I will never run out of things to do with young birders at our yearly nature camp.

On the south side of town is Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. This is another great resource with a focus on conservation and education. From their website: "Our wetland habitat is one of the last critical stopover grounds before the Texas Coast, where 98.5% of long-distance migratory bird species in the US pass through, many which are about to fly for hours or days over open ocean. Not only are we one of the best spots for birding in San Antonio, we also open our doors to more than 4,000 students annually for outdoor science and conservation education, which most students do not get in traditional schooling. So, come explore our habitat, walk our native gardens, take a class or a tour, volunteer, or give your support to our education and conservation programs."

Thank you to the many TOS members who are also members of SAAS and BAS and the teaching opportunities you provide.

—Jimma Byrd

### Region 6 Report

As spring migration winds down, we find ourselves facing the "summer doldrums", birding's vacation time, if you please. But does it have to be? Now is the time to watch new fledglings being raised. It's time for continuous admiration of the maturing colors of the Summer Tanager. Can you ever see (or hear) enough Painted Buntings? Post breeding dispersal might bring some unusual birds to our area, such as Roseate Spoonbill or Reddish Egret. Keep your eyes open. And it won't be long before those fall migrants start heading southward. Be watching for shorebirds.

Summer is a good time to visit (better yet, volunteer or contribute to) your local parks. It is no secret that Georgetown has a remarkable park system, That is being furthered by the addition of Garey Park, in which the Good Water Master Naturalists are erecting a pretty snazzy wildlife viewing structure. Please consider supporting this.

Cooper Spring Nature Park in Lampasas is another park worth visiting. Its development continues, as does the number of birders (and normal people) who benefit from its presence.

## Regional Reports (continued)

I am sure there are many other parks in Region 6 that warrant a visit during the summer doldrums.

— Daniel Hodges

### Region 7 Director Report

The Muscovy Management Project started on May 24<sup>th</sup> with a featured guest speaker Eduardo Carrera, Ducks Unlimited de Mexico (DUMAC) & Jack Eitniew, Center for the Study of Tropical Birds (CSTB). This presentation was well attended with university students and ranchers. Our Monte Mucho Audubon Society has commenced the

construction and installation of nesting boxes in Zapata County. Updates on this project can be found on facebook.

Currently, Monte Mucho Audubon Society assists one local HS with their birding club. It is our intention to meet with school administrators and offer our Audubon assistance to create bird watching clubs in every high school in Laredo. The idea of starting a local High School Birding Festival with every school participating would be the first phase.

The Laredo Bird Festival date for 2019 will be on February 6-9<sup>th</sup>. Featured guest speaker not yet selected.

—Raul Delgado

## TOS Membership and Sales at Birding Festivals

TOS members manned tables at several birding festivals this year. Our presence helps to make people aware of what TOS is and does. At these festivals we recruit new members, give out TOS and other birding information and sell TOS t-shirts and hats. This year we had a presence

at the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Harlingen in November and the Whooping Crane Festival in Port Aransas in February. Please let a board member know if you are interested in helping out at the TOS table during a birding festival. Your help would be appreciated.

—Susan Foster



David Sarkozi



Jane Tillman and Catherine Winans. Both of those pictures were taken by Jane Tillman.



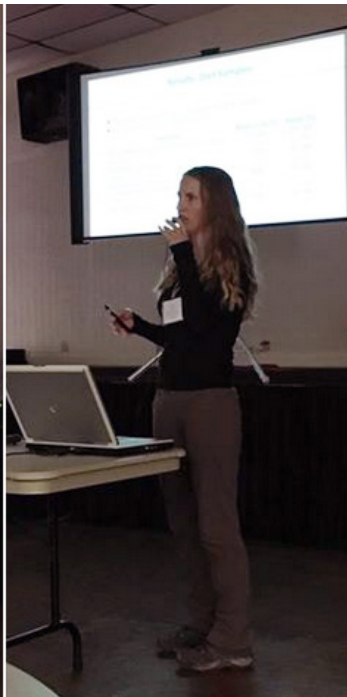
Catherine Winans and Susan Foster. Photo by Colleen Simpson.

## Thank You to Betty Vermeire

In 2008 at the Alpine meeting, Betty Vermeire joined the TOS Board as the Region 6 Director. In 2018, she left the Board after ten years of service. Her last Board meeting was at the Alpine meeting. Pretty interesting coincidence! Thank you Betty! Betty continues on the Meeting Planning Committee.



Photo credit: Byron Stone



BRI researchers Denis Perez, Joss Pez O, and Mieke Titulaer presented their work on wintering grassland sparrows at the meeting of the Texas Ornithological Society that was held in Alpine last weekend. Many TOS members helped us to capture birds for our study and we were glad for the opportunity to share some of our preliminary results with these volunteers and the birding community of Texas. Special thanks to Bill Sain who has been our main contact with TOS and brought our project to the attention of the society. Photo courtesy of Shelia Hargis.

## Book Review

### ONE MORE WARBLER A LIFE WITH BIRDS

Emmanuel, Victor with Walsh, S. Kirk  
Review by Lonnie Childs



Victor Emmanuel's memoir is not surprisingly an account of his life viewed through his experiences as a preeminent birder in a style and language meant to appeal to the birder. In fact, much of the account and almost all of the stories focus on birding experiences that influenced his life and informed his development as a naturalist and person. In his words, "Many times, I have experienced the healing power of nature through birds."

Each chapter and story references a bird that was at the center of that story in some way. He begins with his early life in Houston and an account of how he first engaged with birds after seeing the iconic male cardinal and the mentors who helped to develop that interest and expertise. Demonstrating admirable initiative even in his youth, Emmanuel established the highly successful Freeport Christmas Bird Count at age 16 and went on to form his renowned Victor Emmanuel Nature Tours at age 35. Along the way, he befriends Roger Tory Peterson, Peter Matthiessen, and George Plimpton among others who become lifelong companions as he birdwatches and expands his tour business around the world. The real power of the book lies in the strength of these birding tales with eminent friends in places such as Attu, Antarctica, Bhutan, and his beloved Upper Gulf Coast. Indeed, reading his birding life story parallels and provides insights into the history of birding in the US over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The book ends with his coming home to the Bolivar Peninsula and describing a day in the life of birding on the peninsula. Even after 60 years of birding around the world, he is still excited to see that brilliant red male cardinal that first captured his imagination. He summarizes the nature of his ornithological obsession with a story about how every day is bolstered with the motivation to see just "one more warbler." This book is an enjoyable read for any birder that will no doubt inspire you to pick up those binoculars and head for the wild.

Product details

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- **ISBN-10:** 1477312382
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- **Product Dimensions:** 6 x 1 x 9 inches
- **Shipping Weight:** 1.5 pounds

## Johnson Space Center Decreases Window Strikes By About 85 Percent<sup>1</sup>



*Johnson Space Center's Building 45. Photo by Sandy Parker*

With its 1,600 acres of mostly undeveloped land near the Gulf of Mexico, NASA's Johnson Space Center is prime habitat for neotropical migrants. A handful of the center's buildings had problems with bird strikes. Some have been significant: In 2012, dozens of Indigo Buntings died in one night when an entire flock struck a window.

Matt Strausser, a wildlife biologist employed at the Space Center, says that event was a wake-up call for NASA. It wasn't only about the welfare of wildlife; the collisions also had an effect on worker morale, he says.

"People are walking into their offices where they're supposed to do good quality work, and if they have to step over five or six dead wild animals that they care about, it's not a great way to start the day," Strausser says.

The Space Center took a number of steps to mitigate collisions. In some buildings where transparency seems to be the main problem, workers are asked to close their blinds during migration season. (Although this doesn't reduce reflections, it does help prevent some collisions.) On other buildings with newer, more-reflective glass, the center has applied vinyl cutouts to break up the reflections.

The efforts have paid off. Strausser has conducted detailed monitoring of bird strikes, and since 2012, they've decreased by about 85 percent.

Closing blinds and applying bird-deterrent patterns to windows was inexpensive and "really doesn't impact our operations," Strausser says. "It was a clear win for us." And also for the birds.

<sup>1</sup>*From California to Florida, A Push to Make Windows Safer for Birds.* By Meredith Swett Walker June 06, 2018  
From the Field...Birdcalls <https://abcbirds.org/from-california-to-florida-a-push-to-make-windows-safer-for-birds/>



## Members of the TOS Board of Directors



*Shelia Hargis, President*



*Jimma Byrd, Vice President & Region 5*



*Catherine Winans, Treasurer*



*Susan Foster, Secretary*



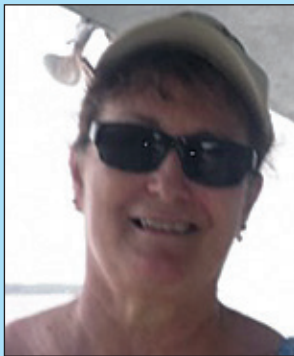
*Byron Stone, Past President*



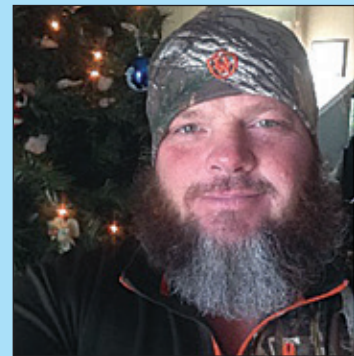
*Anthony Hewetson, Region 1*



*Gailon Brehm, Region 2*



*Linda Belssner, Region 3*



*Lee Hoy, Region 4*



*Daniel Hodges, Region 6*



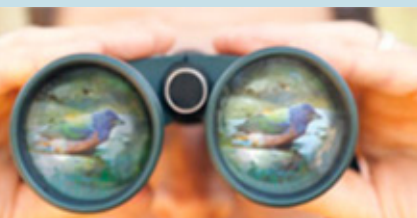
*Raul Delgado, Region 7*



*Kendra Kocab, Region 8*



# Great Texas Birding Classic



## 22nd Annual Birding Classic Tournament dates: April 15–May 15, 2018

The world's biggest, longest, wildest birdwatching tournament in the U.S.!



### Birders at the Bend

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Park: Colorado Bend SP  
Jimma Byrd  
Daniel Hodges  
Christine Bessent  
Johana Huff  
Richard Redmond  
Non-competing: Jason Hairston

### The TOS Green Jay Cardinals

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Jeromy Barajas  
Cody Flores  
EmllloeMascorro  
Mauricio Quintanil la  
Julian Salazar  
Chaperone: Victor Cantu

### TOS Papa Penguinos

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Laurynn Dominguez  
Youmna Galal  
TrinityMoreno  
Aila Ramirez  
Chaperone: Victor Cantu

### Thrashers, Orioles, and Swallows. Oh My!

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Ellie Flores  
Zakary Garza  
Kai Kilpatrick Parin  
Patel Ka'riya West  
Chaperone: Blyth Swartsfager

### Texas Owl Spotters

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Jordan Discoll  
Mason Evans  
Jayden Flores  
Melody McCormick  
Destiny Rodriguez  
Chaperone: Nikol Youngberg

### TOS Finchtastic 4

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Kade Alston  
Cannon Chapman  
Talon Kenfield  
Hudson King  
Chaperones: Martha McLeod, Bron Rorex

### TOS Outstanding Ospreys

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Kaleb Conner  
Anthony Deleon  
Keaton Solis  
Chase Waggoner  
Chaperones: Martha McLeod, Bron Rorex

### Team TOS-n-Tern

Frank De Hoyos  
Pete Hernandez  
Irene Sanchez  
Javier Vazquez  
Chaperones: Glenda Barrera, Esther Alfaro,  
Daniel Perales

### TOS San Antonio ZooTEAM

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Chelsea Alvarez  
Jarrett Dean-Von Stultz  
Alexander Hoxie  
Isabelle Zentil  
Chaperones: Jessica Wolanski, Dave  
Bolster

### TOS The Burrowing Owls

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Sebastian Casarez  
Linnaea Clarke  
Lisi Clarke  
Cody Logue  
Chaperones: Sandra Casarez

### TOS-SAYBC Senior Chickadees

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Alaina Blue  
Marie Johnson  
Delaney Kempf  
Jordan Rochlitz  
Nicholas Siller  
Chaperones: Tom Inglet, Lauren Kempf

### TOS Oldtime Oystercatchers and Youthful Yellowlegs

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Martha McLeod  
Laila Flowers  
Michael Jones  
Brody Karl  
Bron Rorex

### TOS Dallas ZOOM Gliders 1

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Evan Jansen  
Markaela Adkins  
Christian Hernandez  
Chaperones: Ben Jones, Courtney  
Jonescu, Susi Rinck

### TOS Dallas ZOOM Gliders 2

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Juan Garza  
Miranda Rinck  
Jon Ritter von Weber Hansberg  
Chaperones: Ben Jones, Susi Rinck,  
Courtney Jonescu

### TOS Dallas ZOOM Roughwings

*Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society*  
Preslee Hilliard  
Dawson Quillian  
Kingston Ruiz  
Emersen Van Horn  
Elias Vasquez  
Chaperones: Ben Jones, Courtney Jonescu,  
Susi Rinck

### Great Horned Owlets

*Sponsor: Artist Boat and Texas  
Ornithological Society*  
Colby Clift  
Violet Schubert  
Cypress Schubert  
Marshall Marks  
Chaperones: William Schubert, Leslie Clift  
*Sponsor: Artist Boat and Texas  
Ornithological Society*

## Welcome to Kendra Kocab New Region 8 Director



*Kendra Kocab, Region 8 Director*

Please help us welcome Kendra Kocab as our new Region 8 Director. Gailon Brehm and Byron Stone, as members of the Nominating Committee, researched and talked with several members and recommended Kendra for this position. The Executive Committee voted unanimously to appoint her to fill this open position. We are very much looking forward to working with Kendra!

### **Here's a short bio from Kendra:**

I am a native Texan, born and raised in Houston. I went to college at the University of Texas, where I earned a B.S. in Ecology, Evolution, & Behavior. My passion for birds began while taking a course in Vertebrate Natural History. Immediately after graduating, I worked as a fisheries observer in the Bering Sea. The highlight of this job was when our boat's rudder broke and we got towed to St. Paul island. I got to see puffins, murrelets, and more while the boat was in repair! After Alaska, I did field internships in Nicaragua, studying Rufous-and-white Wrens, and in Florida, studying Florida Scrub-Jays. I then began working as a naturalist at Kleb Woods, and I have been there for nearly 10 years. At Kleb, I lead bird walks and birding bus trips. I also develop and teach nature-related classes for all ages, and I organize our annual Hummingbird Festival. I am a co-compiler for the Cypress Creek Christmas Bird Count, and I am a co-organizer of the Red-vented Bulbul Census in Houston (we just completed our 3rd annual census this June).

I am doing an "impromptu" Texas Big Year. I hadn't considered doing one originally, but my year list was so good by February that I couldn't help myself! My most recent quest on this Big Year was to see the Mexican Violetear at Quinta Mazatlan, and my favorite bird so far was the Snowy Owl in Odessa, who I named "Snowdessa".

— *Shelia Hargis*

## Black-Capped Vireo Delisting



*Black-capped Vireo. Photo Greg Lasley.*

On 13 April, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced the successful recovery of the Black-capped Vireo, thus removing the species from Endangered Species List protection for this once-beleaguered species. Thirty years ago, the population was down to only about 350 individuals. Today, however, there are more than 14,000 birds estimated across the bird's breeding range in Oklahoma, Texas, and Mexico. No longer will this species be listed among those species considered Endangered and Threatened. The vireo was Federally-listed in 1987, primarily due to the impacts of habitat loss and nest parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds. During this time-period, Texas especially had a large number of goats on the landscape, browsing on shrubs and reducing the cover that Black-capped Vireos needed for nesting. Fortunately a serious effort to eliminate cowbirds, combined with habitat restoration efforts, had beneficial consequences. Part of the vireo's recovery could also be attributed to decreasing goat densities in Texas, especially since the repeal of the National Wool Act in 1993, terminating wool price-supports by the end of 1995 and helping increase vireo numbers across much of the species' breeding range. Across Texas and Oklahoma, the USFWS worked with the U.S. Army, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. Department of Agriculture, The Nature Conservancy, the Environmental Defense Fund, and other partners to help the Black-capped Vireo recover. Conservation activities included the use of prescribed fire, arranging for conservation easements, and the control of Brown-headed Cowbirds. Using their scientifically rigorous Species Status Assessment protocol, the USFWS concluded that the primary threats to the Black-capped Vireo have been reduced or adequately managed, and vireo populations are now expected to be viable in the future. But this does not mean that a "hands-off" approach will be justified. To ensure that Black-capped Vireo populations remain healthy, the USFWS has developed a post-delisting monitoring plan in the states of Texas and Oklahoma, along with Fort Hood (Texas), Fort Sill (Oklahoma), and The Nature Conservancy of Texas. This plan outlines the methods to be used to monitor the status of the vireo and its habitat, in cooperation with partners for a 12-year period, and it also provides an approach for identifying and responding to any future population declines or habitat loss. Source; Ornithological Newsletter 244. June 2018

## **TOSNEWS Staff**

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