



President's Message



Jim Hailey, TOS President, on the banks of the Rio Grande.

I am pleased to report that the TOS Winter Meeting held this past January in Round Rock was an overwhelming success. The local Williamson Audubon Group did a superb job in every aspect—from registration, to field trip organization, to hospitality and food. In my 20 plus years as a member of TOS, I have never attended a meeting as well organized and seamless

as this one. We had a record crowd of 250 attending, over 180 at the banquet and I am sure that both of those numbers have never been duplicated. I have received numerous compliments from those who were in attendance.

If you missed this one be sure to plan on attending the Spring Meeting in Freeport, April 24-27. The host for this meeting is the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory. Carol Jones is the point person for the Freeport meeting and I know she has been hard at work for the past several months making preparations. In our most recent conversation, Carol shared with me the field trips list. In addition to the usual local hotspots, Carol has arranged access to some areas not open to the public. There will be over a dozen trips each day and Century Club trips as well. She has recruited a great line-up of local field trip leaders, so all participants will be in very capable hands. I don't think I need to mention that the meeting is held at the peak of migration along the Texas coast; that should be incentive enough to attract a large crowd.

Now I want to discuss two important areas of communication available to TOS members. First I want to encourage all of you who have not signed up for the TOS LISTSERV to do so. This is not a TEXBIRDS type LISTSERV, one that is open to posting by the public. Instead this is a LISTSERV used to communicate with our members and is only open to posting by officers and board members of TOS. By joining this LISTSERV, rest assured, that you will not be overwhelmed with new email as only one way communication through the LISTSERV is possible. Such things as new field trips, meeting registration information, etc. are what you can expect to receive. To subscribe:

- Go to <http://www.freelists.org/list/tos-list>
- Put in your email address and hit **Go**
- You should now be subscribed.
- To search the archives (very limited at this time going back to August 2013) go to www.freelists.org/archive/tos-list/. In addition, older archives of TOS-list can be found at <http://listserv.uh.edu/archives/tos-list.html>.
- As only the TOS board has the ability to post to this list, the number of messages is generally low.

Secondly, I want to remind all of our membership that **beginning this Fall our newsletter will only be available electronically**, except to life and sustaining members who can request B&W hard copies for a fee of \$10.00 a year. Not only will this save us on printing cost and postage, it will also allow us to use color pictures in the publication and our members will receive them faster and all at the same time. One of the past complaints was that some members received registration material earlier than others and were thus able to get first choice on many popular field trips at our meetings. With the switch to electronic posting, all will have equal access. Therefore, it is most important that we have the current email address at which you want to receive the newsletter. I am sure there will be some glitches as we make this transformation, so please be patient with those who volunteer to make this work. The next publication of our newsletter in early March will be provided in both forms of publication. This newsletter will contain the registration information for our Spring Meeting.

I look forward to another successful meeting in Freeport and I hope to see as many of you as possible there. Where would any birder want to be than on the Texas coast during spring migration!

—Jim Hailey, President TOS

TOS Announces New Honorary Life Member



At the recently held meeting in Rockport the TOS Board added distinguished naturalist Roland "Ro" Wauer to the list of Honorary Life Members. Ro is the author of 25 books and over two hundred articles focused on birds, butterflies and the naturalist world. Ro served 32 years with the National Park Service and was Chief Naturalist at Big Bend for a number of years. Ro was honored for his many contributions to Texas birding. A plaque was presented to him at his home by President Jim Hailey.

TOS Honorary Members

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| • Roland Wauer | • Mrs. Jack Hagar* |
| • Keith Arnold | • Mrs. J. L. Hooks* |
| • Lytle Blankenship | • Edgar B Kincaid, Jr.* |
| • Clarence Cottam* | • Harry Oberholser* |
| • David Dauphin | • Roger Tory Peterson* |
| • I. Irby Davis* | • Mrs. Bruce Read* |
| • Lily Engles | |
- *deceased

Remembrances of Our Last President Steve Gross

"Whether Steve was leading a group in an obscure place like Rocksprings or in the Houston Metroplex....Whether Steve was leading a group in the State or out...He was passionate about seeing birders know and see more! Thank you Steve. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. And our prayers are with the many of you who knew him closer and longer than some of the rest of us.

Lamont Brown

"I came across this today in the Sept/Oct 2013 issue of Birding magazine. Jeff Gordon writes: "Magnanimity once meant something far larger than just generosity, literally having a big soul. More broadly it denoted a readiness for big things: an ability to seize the moment, to rise to the occasion, to recognize and appropriately exploit opportunities that others might miss. It's a quality to which I believe all birders should aspire and one that I find the best birders have in abundance."

I believe this quote describes Steve to a T. He shall be missed.

Susan Foster

"I have refrained from publically commenting on this tragic event. When I first saw a post from Bron saying something about "isn't that sad about Steve" I really had no idea who she referenced. To put it mildly I was shocked when I learned it was Steve Gross. In my brief 4 years of knowing Steve and our limited time together due to going in opposite directions at our meetings, I only had limited time with Steve one on one. We did spend an afternoon together before the Houston meeting as he showed me around a site at which I was to guide a trip. Clearly Steve was a kind and gentle soul and my regret is that I had such limited time to spend with him."

Jim Hailey

"It has taken me a while to accept the loss of my friend Steve Gross. In my reflections I remember the Steve who so enjoyed life, birds & birding, wine, guitar and most of all, people. His joy of life is reflected by the multitudes who considered him to be their special friend. That was Steve's most wonderful gift to us, he was a wonderful friend to many and all considered their friendship to be unique and special. What a joy he was to so many! May we always remember him in our hearts for that.

In regards to a tribute to Steve, I second Doctor Dave's suggestion that it be associated with both young birders and a birding site. Perhaps Magic Ridge would be the appropriate site as Steve enjoyed the birds & also the bay view from there.

It was Steve who suggested we incorporate our local group of Rockport young birders to raise funds for the TOS sanctuaries by requesting pledges for each species they identified during a Big Day during the Port A TOS meeting.

He was part of their team in the pre-dawn darkness as the kids set off on their challenge and they proudly identified 144 bird species that day to raise funds for TOS sanctuaries. They very much enjoyed Steve's company that day. How I dread sharing the sad news of Steve's passing with them at next week's bird classes!

The idea of engaging kids in birding was originally addressed locally by our acclaimed science teacher, Martha McLeod, who has since been enrolled in the National Teaching Hall of Fame. This summer (via TOS) Martha plans to conduct a Texas teachers workshop to aid teachers of young folks to develop a program to develop their students' interest in birding. It will provide CEU units for attendees. It is the hope of the TOS Board that this will set in motion an interest statewide encouraging our young folks to go birding.

Naturally Steve Gross was the first to volunteer to help Martha with the event immediately after she accepted this challenge. Steve was always there to help when it came to birds and especially when they were associated with young birders. More about this workshop later. In the meantime, let's all keep Steve in our hearts, he was a very special friend to many. And, thank you to Ron Weeks for introducing Steve to us years ago associated with one of their famous Big Days.»

Bron Rorex

"I had the pleasure of meeting Steve in the field several time in the Houston area. He was always ready to help with an identification problem. He seemed to be so young (maybe 50's) to have passed away. What a loss to all of us in the birding community."

RIP Steve.

David McDonald

"The thing I admired most about Steve was his work with young people both through birding and through his teaching. I supported the Kids Birdathon because I believe young people are the best hope for the future. We need to encourage them to care about birds, all wildlife, all over the planet.

Young people are doing some good work and we need to help them do more.

Steve got that and worked to make it happen...very cool."

Lori Markoff

"I did not know Steve Gross nearly as well as I would have liked ... I only began running with the TOS crowd fairly

recently ... and did not get to 'bird' with him as much as I would have like. It was, to me, a singular honor to be invited to his 'after' parties at the TOS meetings and, from those parties, I do know that what he enjoyed, he enjoyed thoroughly! If he liked something (music, wine, birds, words) you could bet that he knew a lot more about it than he might initially let on. He was absolutely fantastic when it came to kicking back, listening to the conversation, and, when the moment was absolutely right, dropping the perfect comment.

I feel that, aside from what we do to officially honor Steve, the best way to honor his memory is to keep him in our hearts and in our minds and do our level best to discover what we love, to know what we love, and to share what we love with others."

Anthony Hewetson

"The last time I saw Steve was when I chased the Palacios Gray Kingbird. Steve provided me with lots of good birding advice and tips over the years. We even discussed some future trips both in and out of Texas.

Steve—when I finally get my Gray Vireo next year, I will be thinking of you and thanking you for telling me where to look!"

Good Birding!

Brad Lirette

"I'm still having a hard time believing that I am mourning Steve's passing. I always assumed that he'd be around for many more years (and birding adventures) to come. Such a shock, and such a loss.

I think others have eloquently stated how much Steve meant to the birding community and how much we will all miss him. But he will be missed by the wider community as well. Steve was a passionate educator for Klein ISD, and frequently dealt with troubled and non-traditional high school students. I was continually amazed by the dedication and energy he had for helping these kids, and was glad there was someone like him to take on such a difficult, often underappreciated, role.

I echo Howard Smith's feeling that Steve probably would not want us to mourn him too long. I'd like to think he'd want us to get out there and spread the joy of birding, help out someone in the community, make a difference. And have a little fun along the way. Perhaps this is one of the ways we can honor his memory."

Farewell, Steve. I'll miss you.

Ken Hartman

"I had the opportunity to meet and eat with Steve when I went up to Houston with Teri Zambon. My experience with him was a lot of fun and I was fascinated with his many stories about birding not only in Texas but around the country. He will be missed."

David True

"Steve and I shared a similar love for viewing the world through a slightly cracked glass and making humorous comments about what we saw. Well, at least we thought they were funny, but we freely acknowledged that often the joke was on us. He could take it as well as he dished it out - an attribute that is becoming increasingly rare these days. I will miss him."

Clay Taylor

Incredibly sad and a great loss. My condolences to his family.

W. Dennis Shepler

Very sad news, I birded with Steve many times as I know most on Texbird have, he was always cheerful and happy to find a bird for anyone who asked.

I will miss seeing in in the field.

Art MacKinnon

This one hits pretty hard. Steve and I spent a lot of time together especially in Idaho where we spent many days scouting for Big Days. And there were chase trips to the Valley and many TOS meetings as we both cycled through to the president's role. A real shame as we had more trips planned. Memories that will never happen. Yet another reason to reflect on the briefness of life on earth and all the friends and family we still have with us this Thanksgiving week.

My guess he is still ticking off birds for his list - do you call those «after-lifers»?

Ron Weeks

Man what a loss!

My last memories of Steve (just ten days ago) were just like the first—he was constantly helping other birders see both the Amazon Kingfisher and the Rose-breasted Becard. Steve was always helping other birders. I remember him taking me (who he barely knew then) to see the chuck-will's-widows at Jones Forest in 2005. I'll remember numerous chase trips with Steve and I'll especially remember the best planned and executed TOS meeting I ever attended in Houston last winter—that Steve was in charge of. What a great loss personally and to Texas (& Idaho) birding in general.

John Berner



Steve Gross

Steve Gross was a true renaissance man. You may know that he was a top birder, but did you know that he was a wine connoisseur, a talented musician, photographer, and above all else an extraordinary teacher by profession as well as in life in general. He taught troubled teens as well as he taught birders, guitar, and life lessons. He was one of the smartest people that I have known as well. Most importantly, he gave of himself to those who needed him willingly and with such a freeness that you thought that you were very important to him, and you were.

I met Steve at the 2009 CBC on the Katy Prairie with Howard Smith, and we spent the day birding on private property with the owners. That was one of my most enjoyable days of birding as a new birder, because both Howard and Steve made me feel not only comfortable, but also like I was somebody of value, even though I was still very green as a birder. I still look forward to birding with Howard whenever I can because of this. I met up with Steve again at Featherfest in Galveston. We hit it off and became fast friends afterwards. We birded together regularly, and eventually started going on trips across Texas, starting with the chase to Big Bend to see the Tufted Flycatcher. After that I was hooked and travelled with him as much as possible, the highlight trip being his trip to Idaho in 2012.

One of Steve's many talents was his almost perfect memory of the Texas roadmaps. I could call him and ask for directions and he would get me to someplace or out of someplace without looking it up on the internet. He would regularly remember where he saw birds years before and look in that location and refind the same species. This obviously increased in efficiency with his use of eBird. He was very good at accessing data from eBird, but was initially not as good about posting findings there, until I started calling him on that inaction. He got better this past year.

Steve was good at both visual birding as well as birding by ear. This helped him in his competitive birding with big day events that gave him, Ron Weeks and Bob Kemp the Idaho record in 2004 and still standing in 2005. His breeding bird surveys were fun to watch as he called out singing birds in the early morning hours. He enjoyed birding, but I think he enjoyed the excitement that new birders got when he helped them get a new lifer. He was there when I got a majority of my lifers and directed me to a lifer from Houston as I was driving back from seeing the Amazon Kingfisher. It was so memorable. "Pull into the rest stop and park as soon as you can on the left. Look back towards the first picnic table and the Painted Redstart should be right there." I pulled into the parking spot and I saw this bird before I even had the door halfway open! Steve was magic in that way. I got on the phone with him and you could just hear how pleased he was.

Steve passed away less than a week later from still unknown causes (I think I know but will wait for the medical examiner to

confirm my suspicions). The birding community lost a leader who introduced birding to the uninitiated in such a way that they couldn't walk away from the hobby/ lifestyle. And many of us lost a great friend who made us feel special. It turns out that he made lots of people feel that way as illustrated by the 300+ people at his service. What a waste that such a talented and positive part of society was taken from us at such an early age. I hope that we can learn from him and take that knowledge to the next level to help others the way he helped us.

David Dolan

Century Club Relunched

At the October Board meeting of the Texas Ornithological Society it was decided to relaunch the Texas Century Club Website as a self-service website.

The relaunch took some time to complete, but it is now ready for the general public to use it. It is now built on the Mediawiki platform, the same platform that is used by Wikipedia.

If you have been frustrated by not being able to get your totals updated that should no longer be a problem. Once you register your account and verify your email address you can edit almost every page on the site.

The Texas Century Club website address is <http://www.texascenturyclub.org>

On the site there are some basic instructions on how to edit pages.

If you have been an editor for a county or counties, we still need your help. We still need administrators to monitor pages and roll back vandalism and just help fix problems with bad edits. If you would like to continue as an administrator for your counties please sign up for an account and drop me a note and I'll upgrade your account. I've contacted several county editors already. If I haven't contacted you it's because I don't have an email address for you.

Once you sign up, you may create extra pages on the site. You can create a personal page with your totals, and I would encourage you to help maintain pages for birding sites. This will help others playing the game.

It will also help create a crowd sourced guide to local birding in Texas. Think of it as a Texas Birding Wikipedia. You are free to add to any county page, new sites, big years and big days, and sample century day routes are encouraged.

What is the Texas Century Club? It was launched in 2003 as an award program to encourage Texas birders to explore all of Texas, not just just the famous hotspots. The goal is to record 100 species in 100 counties in Texas. To date, 7 people have achieved that and none have stopped birding! Using eBird to track your sightings is encouraged, but not necessary. Your 100 species in 100 counties would be 10,000 datapoints in eBird and builds the value of eBird and helps document the birdlife of Texas.

Mediawiki supports lots of extension and one of the first that will get added is a mapping one for documenting where birding sites are and routes. If you know of or discover an extension that would add value the site let me know and we can look at adding it in.

David Sarkozi

TOS SPRING MEETING TO BE AT LAKE JACKSON

April 24-27, 2014

The Spring Meeting of the *Texas Ornithological Society* will be held in Freeport. Our host group is the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory. They have been hard at work setting up an impressive list of birding locations and trip leaders. We have chosen the weekend at the height of spring migration, April 24-27 to be on the Texas coast. With the excellent locations for our field trips we should be able to have maximum exposure to the many migrating species present at this time. Make plans to come and join us there. In addition, we will have an excellent line up of evening speakers. Our keynote speaker will be Drew Lanham, PhD., Professor of Wildlife Ecology at Clemson University. Drew is a wonderful speaker and strong proponent of ecology. And we will welcome back Mark Lockwood. Mark is the author of several books on Texas birds who works for the Texas Parks & Wildlife, and is the co-author of the soon to be released updated version of *The TOS Handbook of Texas*. Our final speaker will be Lee Hoy. Lee is a longtime birder, herp enthusiast and photographer from the Austin area. Our host hotel is the Cherotel at 925 Hwy 332 in Freeport. Rates are \$84 for a room with two queens or \$79 for a single king—and, of course, taxes will be added. To get your accommodations call 979-297-1161 or 1-800-544-2119 and mention you will be attending the TOS meeting. See you there.



Meeting Program

Thursday April 24

From 5:30 to 6:30 Your local hosts will provide a welcome event with finger foods and punch. At 7:00 we will have a presentation by TOS member and photographer Lee Hoy.

Friday April 25

Friday evening at 7:00 we will hear guest speaker Mark Lockwood, Secretary, Texas Bird Records Committee.

Saturday April 26

There will be a cash bar and social hour from 6:00 to 7:00, followed by the banquet and keynote address delivered by J. Drew Lanham, PhD.

Questions regarding registration and/or field trips should be directed to: cjones@gcbo.org

Meeting Schedule

Thursday, April 24

Registration 4:00-7:00 in hotel lobby
Welcome to Southern Brazoria County Social 5:30-6:30
Presentations 7:00 & field trip announcements

Friday, April 25

Registration 4:00-7:00
Afternoon Programs 3:00 Felipe Chavez, PhD. will speak on the Whooping Crane's history, current status and future plans for saving this magnificent crane.
4:00 at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory headquarters sanctuary—Sky Kings Falconry will present a live raptor show and up-close encounter with an owl, hawks and a falcon.
7:00 Guest speaker Mark Lockwood

Saturday, April 26

Afternoon Programs 3:00 TBA
4:00 Susan Heath, PhD will speak on the first 3 years of her research regarding the American Oystercatcher of coastal Texas.
Cash Bar Social 6:00-7:00
Dinner 7:00-8:00
Keynote Address 8:00

Sunday, April 27

Morning cleanup and some local field trips for those that are interested.



J. Drew Lanham, a native of Edgefield S.C., is a Certified Wildlife Biologist and holds the B.A. and M.S. in Zoology and a PhD in Forest Resources (wildlife ecology) from Clemson University where he is currently a professor teaching and conducting research in the area of wildlife management, land and conservation ethics, hunting ethics/philosophy and conservation ornithology. In his 19 years as a Clemson faculty he has mentored over 40 graduate students and is an award winning teacher and researcher. He was recently selected to hold an endowed chair as an Alumni Distinguished Professor and was also selected as an Alumni Master Teacher in 2012. Drew's research projects, generating over one million dollars in revenue, have been funded by a diverse array of grantors. Dr. Lanham speaks extensively on natural resources conservation to professional and lay audiences alike with a focus on blending science and motivating others to passionately observe and conserve. He is a co-host of the Your Day birding and nature show on SCETV public radio and has contributed to the Emmy-nominated PBS television show Expeditions with Patrick McMillan.



Mark Lockwood is a conservation biologist with the Natural Resource Program of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. He has a master's degree in Biology from Sul Ross State University. He has actively birded Texas for over 35 years and is a member of the Texas Bird Records Committee of the

Texas Ornithological Society (TOS) and of the American Birding Association's Checklist Committee. He is also the regional editor of the quarterly Texas column that appears in *North American Birds*. Mark has over 50 publications in popular magazines and scientific journals, including *Birding*, *The Wilson Bulletin*, *Cotinga*, *North American Birds*, and *The Southwestern Naturalist*. He is also the author of five books, including *Birds of the Texas Hill Country*, *The TOS Handbook of Texas Birds*, and *Basic Texas Birds*.



Lee Hoy began birding during a trip to Big Bend National Park in 1989 when a large, plain sparrow-like bird caught his attention. Turned out the bird was a Canyon Towhee and for three years Lee birded through the lens of a camera. He birded on his own for the first five years of his interest and it wasn't until 1993 when he

moved to Texas that he began to meet other birders. Lee is passionately pursuing 700 for the ABA area and his journeys have taken him from St. John, Newfoundland in winter to the Pribolof Islands in Alaska to 160 miles in the Pacific Ocean off San Diego. He has served on the board of directors for Travis Audubon and is the vice-president of the Williamson Audubon Group (WAG), teaches birding classes for the WAG, and loves to lead field trips. His current nemesis bird is Spruce Grouse and he hopes to get to Minnesota to see one!

LAKE JACKSON FIELD TRIPS

Field trips depart from hotel. Any changes will be announced

FRIDAY ONLY

- 1. First Time Birders**, ½ day. Co-leaders Laurie Foss and Shelia Hargis. Go with Laurie and Shelia as they show you how to first find the birds using binoculars and then the basic keys to identifying the species. Basics of Field Guide use will be included. Don't be intimidated—it will be a fun trip! Come and learn from two patient and enthusiastic birders. *Departs 7:00 am*
- 2. Brazos Bend State Park**—Full day trip. This area has a range of contrasting habitats from grasslands representative of the Texas Gulf Coastal Plain, bottomland hardwood forests along the Brazos River and freshwater sloughs, bayous, and lakes. Moderate walking. State Park entrance fee required. Handicap access. *Departs 6:00 am*

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

- 3. Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge**—Full day trip. Will focus on birds of fresh and saltwater marshes with a short upland hike possible. This is mostly a car based trip with light walking possible. *Departs 6:00 am*

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

- 4. San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge**—Full day trip. Will include birds of fresh and saltwater marshes with walks through Columbia Bottomland Hardwood Forest remnants and involves moderate hiking on flat substrate or boardwalk. *Departs 6:15 am*
- 5. Nature Conservancy Mad Island**—Full day trip. Normally closed to public access. This area supports a variety of species from coastal salt marshes and freshwater wetlands in addition to upland grasslands that include tall grass prairies and dense shrub lands. Moderate walking. *Departs 5:45 am*
- 6. Mad Island TPWD Wildlife Management Area**—Full day trip. Normally closed to public access. This area consists of a range of coastal wetland habitats from salt marsh to freshwater, with upland areas dominated by grasslands and sparse shrub land areas. Moderate walking. *Departs 5:45 am*
- 7. Surfside to San Luis Pass**—Full day trip. Trip will focus on shorebirds and beach birds along this 14 mile stretch. Some coastal salt marsh. Anticipate some driving on the beach and on dirt/mud roads back to the bays. *Departs 6:15 am*
- 8. Dow Woods & Hudson Woods**—Full day trip. Will focus on woodland birds with riparian habitat and Columbia Bottomlands hardwood forests at both locations. Handicap access at both locations. Moderate walking. *Departs 6:30 am*
- 9. Quintana and Freeport Wetlands**—Full day trip. This trip will focus on a variety of habitats including freshwater wetland species at Freeport LNG created wetland and additional coastal habitats including beach, dunes, jetties, and the wooded patches of Quintana Bird Sanctuary. Light walking. *Departs 6:15 am*
- 10. Big Pond & Dance Bayou**—Full day trip. Normally closed to public access. These are properties belonging to the USFWS. Gorgeous Columbia Bottomland hardwood forests, fresh water bayous and marshes. Open grassy areas. Lots of walking on uneven terrain. *Departs 6:00 am*
- 11. Snow Woods & Oyster Creek Park**—1/2 day trip. Snow Woods is a privately owned property and closed to the public. It is the closest hardwood forest to the beach from Surfside. This trip will focus on woodland birds. Some grassy areas at both locations. Moderate walking on uneven surfaces. *Departs 6:30 am*
- 12. Photography with Lee Hoy**—Full day trip. *Departs 6:15 am*
- 13. Century Club Trips**
- 14. Matagorda County**—an all day trip to seek 100 species in Matagorda County. Habitats include fresh and saltwater marsh, Columbia Bottomland Hardwood Forest remnants, oak mottes, and coastal prairie. *Departs 5:45 am*
- 15. Brazoria County**—an all day trip to seek 100 species in Brazoria County. Habitats include fresh and saltwater marsh, Columbia Bottom-land Hardwood Forest remnants, oak mottes, and coastal prairie. *Departs 6:00 am*
- 16. Galveston County**—an all day trip to seek 100 species in Galveston County. Habitats include fresh and saltwater marsh, oak mottes, and coastal prairie. *Departs 5:45 am*
- 17. Fort Bend County**—an all day trip to seek 100 species in Fort Bend County. Habitats include freshwater marsh, Columbia Bottomland Hardwood Forest, and coastal prairie. *Departs 5:45 am*
- 18. Non-birder spouses**—Full day trip. Visit some of Brazosport's most highly acclaimed visitor attractions. The Center for the Arts and Sciences, Sea Center Texas and a trip to the beach. Lunch at a local, non-chain restaurant *Departs 9:00 am*

SATURDAY ONLY

- 19. Young birders trip**—Full day trip. Agenda determined by participants

SUNDAY ONLY

- 20. Brazos Bend State Park**, leader is David Heinike. Same description as the Friday trip.
- 21. Breakfast with the Birds at GCBO.** Have a light continental breakfast at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory and relax at the various feeding stations to see what migrants and resident birds are around this morning. Led by the staff of the GCBO. *Depart hotel at 7:00 am*

REGISTRATION

(Please complete a separate registration form for each individual)

T.O.S. Member Registration Fee (check one X)

_____ You are a student	_____ <u>fee waived</u>
<i>If student but not a TOS member add \$15.00 for Student's Membership</i>	
_____ Leading a field trip at this meeting	_____ <u>fee waived</u>
_____ You are a Presenter at this meeting	_____ <u>fee waived</u>
<i>Note: Membership in TOS is required for registration.</i>	
_____ Standard registration fee for current members	\$ 40
_____ Not a TOS member or dues are not current? Add dues below to standard registration	
new member? _____ renewal? _____ Individual \$25; Sustaining \$50 Family \$35	\$ _____
Late Fee (After April 7, 2014)	_____ \$10

BOX LUNCHES

- All sandwiches come with pickle spear, potato chips and cookie
1. Smoked Turkey breast with Swiss cheese, lettuce, tomato, mayo.
 2. Hickory Smoked ham, cheddar cheese, lettuce, tomato, mustard.
 3. Veggie Croissant, avocado, lettuce, tomato, pickle, red onion, cheese & condiment.
 4. Jalapeno Pimento cheese, Texas twist on a southern staple served with mayo and leaf lettuce.

Friday, April 25 (Indicate Box lunch choice 1, 2, 3 or 4) _____ number of lunches _____ @ \$12.00 \$ _____ . _____

Saturday, April 26 (Indicate Box lunch choice 1, 2, 3, or 4) _____ number of lunches _____ @ \$12.00 \$ _____ . _____

SATURDAY BUFFET BANQUET

Choices are for kitchen use in preparation. Banquet is a buffet

Buffet shall include (1) Beef Stroganoff (2) 3 Cheese Chicken Spinach Penne (3) Vegetarian
 Meals include a salad, sautéed green beans, carrots in wine, and passion peas and dessert.
 (1) beef, (2) chicken, (3) vegetarian

	Choice (write 1,2,or 3) _____	\$ 30.00
Extra banquet ticket?	Choice (write 1,2, or 3) _____	\$ 30.00
TOTAL		\$ _____ . _____

Send Registration forms and checks to:
Alice Roemer, GCBO, 103 Hwy 332 W., Lake Jackson, TX 77566
(Makes checks payable to: GCBO, (Gulf Coast Bird Observatory))

Name _____ (if registering under family membership check box)

Name (for Name Tag) _____

Address (Street) _____

City and State _____ **Zip** _____ - _____

Cell Phone Number () _____ - _____

Email Address _____ @ _____

(Please print email address clearly as it will be the principle means to contact you)

Field Trips Preferences

(If you prefer to participate in a field trip with a spouse, car mate or roommate, please send all the group's registrations in together in one envelope.

Trip # 1-18
 Friday Signup, April 25 Field Trip #
 1st choice _____
 2nd choice _____
 3rd choice _____

Trip # 3-19
 Saturday Signup, April 26 Field Trip #
 1st choice _____
 2nd choice _____
 3rd choice _____

Trip # 20-21
 Sunday Signup, April 27 Field Trip #
 1st choice _____
 2nd choice _____

NO REFUNDS AFTER APRIL 18, 2014

IMAGES FROM THE TOS ROUNDROCK MEETING



Possession is Nine-Tenths of the Law

The next installment of “Keep Birding Weird” was inspired by a talk that Victor Emanuel gave at the January 2014 TOS meeting. He gave an enviable talk about his experience viewing the now extinct Eskimo Curlew in Texas from 1959 through approximately 1964. He made a statement something to the effect of: “this was my bird.....my bird of a lifetime”.

His talk made me think about how weirdly possessive we birders become about not only special birds, but also special birding places. My special bird is the Greater Roadrunner. I am so amazed when I see or hear a Greater Roadrunner. This is a bird that “is where it is”....there is no predicting where it will be, so any sighting is always special. I even collect roadrunner figures and pictures.....it is *MY BIRD!*

A couple of years ago, I traveled to San Antonio for work and timed it expertly to see the Ruddy Ground Dove that was at Crescent Bend Nature Park. I later mentioned to Sandi Wheeler (TOS Treasurer) that I had visited the park for the dove, and her comment was “why didn’t you call me, *that’s my park.....that’s where I go, that’s my park*”.

At the recent TOS meeting, Dell and I were talking to Ken Williams who lives in Austin. He has birded Travis county and other surrounding counties extensively. He was participating in the Falls County Century Club field trip. He stated: “I have to go....*that’s my county*.”

For the past few years, Dell and I have participated in the Tyler Audubon CBC. We have a really good territory. In 2013, we could not do the Tyler count. I contacted Peter Barnes and told him we could not do it in 2013, but I stated that we wanted *our territory* back the next year. I was so nervous relinquishing *our territory* to someone else for one CBC period. Peter later acknowledged how good *our territory* was, which made me even more nervous that someone would take away *our CBC section*. Hey.....*that’s our section* of the count! Peter graciously returned *our count section* to us for the next year (thank you Peter!).

Dell and I have been birding Richland Creek WMA either together or separately for 13 years. It is a fantastic place and is only 16 miles from our house in Henderson County. The WMA recently underwent a major expansion after approximately 2 years of construction. We have always been really attached to it, but after the expansion, we are now claiming it as *OUR PLACE!* We are now *REALLY ATTACHED TO IT!* You can come visit, but it is *OUR PLACE!*

So in closing, I have to mention one other special birding place which has sentimental value. This special birding place is Village Creek Drying Beds in Arlington, TX. Ironically, this romantic location, which is a *sewage treatment plant*, is where my husband, Dell Little and I met in 2003. We were both on the same field trip. The group was trying to identify a winter sparrow which I correctly identified as a Swamp Sparrow. Obviously, he was impressed with my skills....the rest is history! So, I’m claiming Village Creek Drying Beds retroactively as “*our special romantic, sentimental place*”! Yeah....I’m weird, but it’s ours!

D.D. Currie

The new TOS Director for Region 3 –
Pineywoods.....this is now MY REGION!!



TOS Alaska 2014

June 7-22, 2014

Once again TOS will offer a trip to the amazing State of Alaska. Participants will enjoy the beautiful, wild landscape of real wilderness and the amazing birds and wildlife that inhabit it. We will visit the Anchorage bowl which features Westchester Lagoon, the largest city park in the United States—Kincaid Park (1500 acres), Eagle River Nature Preserve and the famous Potter’s Marsh. Then our adventure takes us to the farthest most northern point in North America, Barrow. In Barrow the House Sparrow equivalent is the Snow Bunting, but we also have a chance at the four eiders, Red Phalarope, Snowy Owl and Arctic Fox. Our next journey will be to Nome, where we will spend four days exploring the 225 miles of wilderness roads available to us. Here we will have opportunities to see thousands of waterfowl, shorebirds, Bluethroat, Bristle-thighed Curlew and Harlequin Duck, Musk Ox, Grizzly Bear, Reindeer to name a few. On our return we will head to Seward for a day in the Kenai Fjord NWR. Our boat will seek out both Common and Kittlitz’s Murrelet, Red-faced Cormorant, Thick-billed Murre, Sea Otter, Humpback Whales, Orca and the amazing nesting islands for thousands of seabirds. The high point of the day is lunch at the calving Holgate Glacier. And last but not least we will drive the 135 mile wilderness road of the Denali Highway where we parallel the magnificent Alaska Range and hopefully will get a glimpse of Mt. McKinley. There we look for the Arctic Warbler and Smith’s Longspur as our target birds. The cost of this trip to TOS Members is \$3350.00 and non-members \$3400.00 (includes a one year membership). This price covers all transportation within Alaska (including two flights to Barrow and Nome), guide, pelagic trip, and all entry fees. It does not include transportation to/from Anchorage, meals, incidentals or lodging expense (hotel arrangements are made for the group and you book your room). Those interested should contact Jim Hailey by email at irasciblej@gmail.com.

TOSNEWS Staff

Jack Eitniear Editor

Bron Rorex Copy Editor

Contributors Carol Jones, Sandi Wheeler, Judy Kestner, Jim Hailey, David Sarkozi, David Dolan, Shelia Hargis, D.D. Currie and numerous individuals that posted their fond memories of Steve Gross on *TEXBIRDS*.

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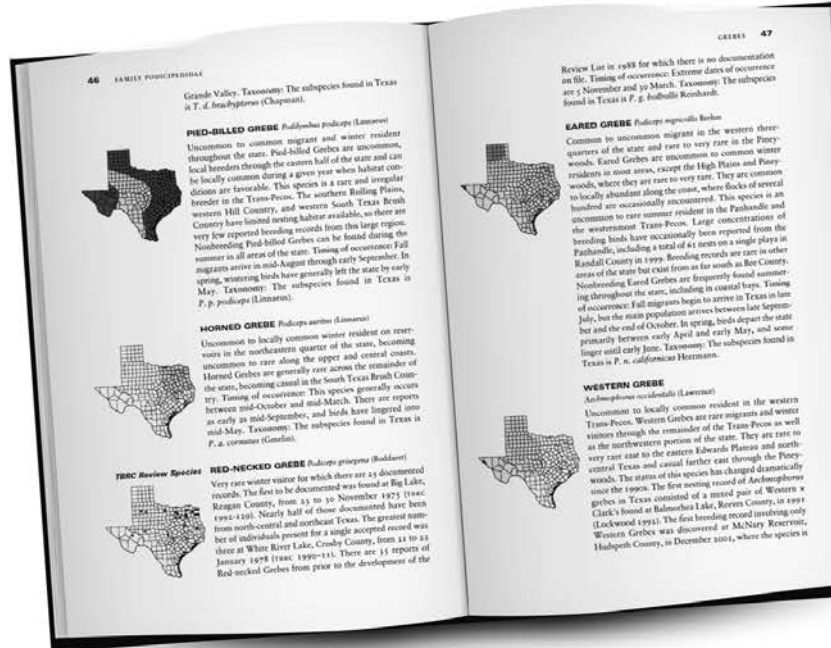
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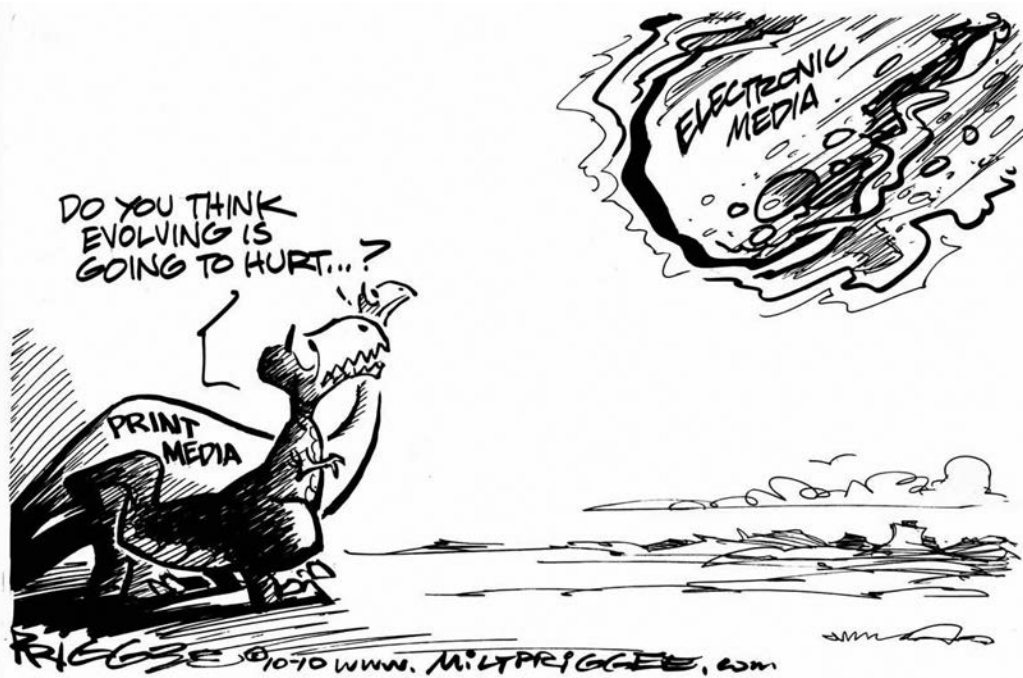
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